THE IMPLICATIONS OF GOVERNMENT POLICY AND IDENTIFICATION OF MINORITIES IN CHINA

by

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THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Department of Anthropology and Sociology)

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 1997

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Department of **ANTHROPOLOGY/SOCIOLOGY**

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Date **APRIL 22, 1997**
Abstract

The government of the People's Republic of China officially recognizes China as being composed of 56 nationalities. China's 55 minorities only make up 8.8 percent of its total population, while the majority, the Han, compose approximately 91.2 percent (Gladney 1991: 223).

This investigation of minorities in China attempts to reveal that the government has adopted special policies for its 55 recognized minorities. The reasons for, and the consequences of minority policy will be addressed, as will the complex relationship that exists between the minorities and the Han majority. Finally, the policies themselves and their utility will be examined in order to ascertain whether the policies have been beneficial and to whom.

The methodology used in this investigation consists of participant observation and personal interviews. I travelled to North-East China's Jilin Province, where I conducted ethnographic research. This fieldwork focussed on the Chinese-Korean minority living in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, and is used to put the scholarly literature into perspective.

The Korean-Chinese hold a special position, unlike no other nationality in China. Not only are the Korean-Chinese fairly recent immigrants, but their educational levels are believed to be the highest in the nation, considerably higher than national averages (Lee 1986: 3-4, 117). The birthrate of the Korean-Chinese is also highly commended as it is the lowest of any one
nationality, including the Han (Gu and Zhao 1994: 19). Thus, although the Korean-Chinese can be used to show the linkages between the literature and fieldwork, one must not forget the special circumstances that they enjoy, which I elaborate upon further in this thesis.

Essentially, through examination of the literature and the ethnographic fieldwork I have conducted, several conclusions are put forth in this thesis. First, special policies exist that favour China's 55 minority groups over the Han majority. Second, these policies could have been enacted for several reasons. These include: 1) to allow China to continue along the socialist path; 2) as an attempt to correct past injustices; 3) to increase the overall standard of living of China's citizens; 4) to provide defence against border attack; 5) to reduce minority discontent; 6) to promote a better image of China; 7) to relieve population density problems in urban areas; 8) to allow China to better exploit its natural resources; and 9) to promote national unity, and loyalty and reduce local nationalism and Han chauvinism. Third, these policies benefit both parties, with no one party being totally dependent on the other. Finally, although some authors disagree (Gladney 1991; Mackerras 1994), it will become apparent in this thesis that minority policy in China has been successful for the most part.
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Acknowledgement

There are many individuals whom I wish to thank for having assisted me with this research. However, three such individuals are indelibly printed in my mind. These individuals are special to me, because of their selflessness, dedication, good humour and perseverance. They aided me in my research through the translation of literature, interpretation, and the introduction of invaluable information, as well as encouraged me to persevere and succeed. Therefore, I wish to thank Wang Hong, Wu Xiao Huir and Xiao Qi for the parts that they played both as my assistants and life-long friends.
Introduction

Since the establishment of China in 1949, its government has recognized the country as being composed of 56 nationalities. Presently China's 55 minorities comprise 8.8 percent of its population, with the Han majority making up the other 91.2 percent (Gladney 1991: 223). Those in power, both in the Communist Party of China and the State, are Han.

In this essay I will use a number of methods to show that the government of China has allowed special leniency or benefits to its 55 recognized minorities. Why the government felt this was necessary and how the minorities receiving these benefits feel is perhaps of more importance than the actual legislation itself. It will become obvious that there is a complex relationship between the institutions and the individuals affected by them, and that this relationship aids both the Han majority and the minorities.

The government of China has enacted special laws to benefit its minorities. It has stipulated that these laws are necessary to solve what is known as the 'nationality problem'. It is believed that once the minorities' levels of education, and economic statuses are raised similar to the level of the Han, the 'nationality problem' will cease to exist. When this occurs, those in the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) believe that the nationalities of China will move together to the next stage of
development, socialism. Thus, the ultimate goal of the PRC (People's Republic of China) and the CCP is to continue along the socialist path until socialism is reached.

Keeping this in mind then, the PRC government has allowed certain benefits for its minorities. The PRC's reasons for these benefits are stated to be directly, and solely linked to the socialist path and to the realization of the four modernizations (a prerequisite of socialism). However, perhaps there were other reasons for the implementation of minority policy on the part of the PRC. It is not the purpose of this work to debate whether these objectives were planned or unintended, but rather to show that the implementation of special policies does have more consequences than those recognized by the CCP and the PRC Government. It is important to point out then, that this does not mean that the government has a 'hidden agenda' or ulterior motives, but rather that the official view neglects some factors that have contributed to, or resulted in, government support and assistance for China's 55 recognized minorities.

The above mentioned benefits are not merely one-sided however. The minorities not only receive assistance, but in turn aid the country and the communist cause themselves. (A more detailed analysis of the complex relationship between China's majority and its minorities will be a main focus of this work). Therefore, the minorities themselves have reasons for wanting, and accepting, these benefits. For example, some minorities posit that repayment of past injustices (poor treatment of
minorities by the ruling classes) is the major reason that special policies must be implemented. Also, it is clear that generally speaking, discrepancies in the standards of living, education, and overall well-being of the minorities and the Han do exist. However, other reasons must be considered factors as well.

What these last two paragraphs point out is that the relationship between the government and the minorities is far from simple. Rather, there is a complex relationship, where neither the government nor the minorities is acting as a parasite on the other. Instead, the present situation of affording special treatment to minorities in China and the acceptance by the minorities of this aid tends to benefit both parties. Each group has its own perceptions (official and un-official) as to why policies have, and should be implemented, as well as whether these policies have succeeded or failed. It is the purpose of this sociological investigation to examine the inter-relationships between the two groups, to discover the intended and unintended results, the overt and hidden reasons for such policies, and whether these relationships do indeed serve to benefit both groups concerned.

In order to accurately compare the government's position to those of the minorities, both an examination of scholarly literature as well as fieldwork have been undertaken. The literature has been compiled in both China and Canada, using a variety of sources. I have translated a large portion of the
literature from Chinese to English with assistance from others. Ethnographic fieldwork has been incorporated to add strength to this investigation. The fieldwork that has been undertaken consists of two methods: participant observation and personal interviews. It is not within the scope of this essay to point out the weaknesses or strengths of such approaches, but rather to use the information gathered to enrich the work at hand. However, one must not forget that the information was gathered in a Communist country which likely has bearing on the results.

The majority of the fieldwork was accomplished on three separate occasions in two different cities. The first location, Aladi, is situated in North-East China's Jilin Province approximately 40 kilometers outside of Jilin City. It has a population of about 2,500 individuals, all of whom are Korean-Chinese. The individuals and their lives in this village can be seen as different from other Korean-Chinese in several ways. First, this area is inhabited solely by Korean-Chinese. Second, Aladi was set up as an experimental commune in the 1960s. For this reason, and because of their successful agricultural yields and high standard of living, Aladi is used as an example for other units in the area to follow. Therefore, third, Aladi is host to a fair number of tourists, and some families now make their living by relying solely on tourism. Fourth, at the time of my visit approximately 90 percent of the men aged 18-35 were not living in Aladi, but were voluntarily relocated to Korea to work. This not only effected those left behind, but has also
resulted in increased prosperity for the region. One Korean-Chinese individual from Aladi estimated that the men who go to South Korea to work as labourers come home with ten to twelve times as much money as they would have made in Aladi in the same time period. Information gathered at this location consisted of participant observation, in both public and private spheres, and informal interviews with some of Aladi's citizens.

The second location, where the majority of the fieldwork was conducted, is the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture also located in Jilin Province. A more detailed description of its location and economic situation will be discussed later. I travelled there on two separate occasions to observe as well as to interview Korean-Chinese. Ten individuals were interviewed both formally and informally for a total of three hours. The individuals were of both sexes, ranged in age from 18 to late 60s and held a variety of occupations (including students and the retired). The interviews were conducted by myself, with assistance from a translator when necessary. This fieldwork lends support to the last portion of this thesis on the Korean-Chinese in an effort to put theory to practice and to examine the complex interrelationship between the Han and the minorities. This fieldwork also accurately depicts the dual nature of minority policy and how both parties are dependent on each other, yet both benefit at the same time.

Now that the main purpose and methodology have been addressed it is important to examine how the thesis will be
revealed. First, the problems encountered during the process of minority identification and the ambiguity of such terms will be addressed. Also, the influence of Stalin's definition of 'nation' in the identification of minorities and the practical application of his theory will also be elaborated upon, as they have undoubtedly played a role in the creation of present minority policy in China.

One of the first official policies to afford special treatment to China's 55 minorities was the Regional Autonomy Law of 1954. This law, and the second version in 1984, are the largest, most all-encompassing forms of legislation enacted with regard to nationalities in China and are therefore worth close scrutiny. These two regional autonomy laws as well as others with be examined with specific emphasis on education and family planning and then the practical utility of these minority policies will be addressed. The application of policies for minorities and the subsequent effects on the minorities themselves will be examined both at the macro and micro levels. This will serve to uncover the relationship between the minorities and the majority and to illicit the benefits gained by both parties. Documentation compiled through ethnographic research will not only allow one to compare existing literature with field experience, but will also serve as a guide when assessing the shortcomings or benefits of nationality policy in China. Since liberation then, the Chinese Government has developed certain policies that have separated the rights of its
55 minorities from the Han majority. It is these policies, their necessity and effectiveness that will be examined in this sociological investigation.

Before I present my discussion and findings on my research in China, it is important to point out where this thesis fits in the larger realm of sociology. By attempting to delineate the boundaries and relationships between groups in China, one may be able to use this information to better understand nationality relations in other areas of the world. However, one must not forget that China's situation, and that of its nationalities, is quite distinct. China is a communist country with an excessively large population problem. Although China itself boasts a long history, most nationalities that live there do not. Each nationality has its own customs, habits, ideology and history. Also, each nationality has its own wants and needs and has made different contributions to the nation. Therefore, although useful, this thesis may not be considered by some as a 'true' sociological representation of nationality relations that can be effectively carried over as a universal model.

**China's Minorities: General Information**

Although the population of some minorities can be seen as concentrated in certain areas, many nationalities are scattered throughout China. One minority, Gaoshan, are an exception to this as they reside only in Taiwan and have a population of 2,909 according to the 1990 census. This makes them China's second smallest minority (Refer to Chart 1; Pgs. 8-10). Although
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<th>1982 Census</th>
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Chart 1: The Populations of China's Nationalities.
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<td></td>
<td>(12.27)</td>
<td>(63.24)</td>
<td>(26.54)</td>
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<td>Primi</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>14.298</td>
<td>24.257</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>(69.51)</td>
<td>(22.36)</td>
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<td>20.441</td>
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<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>(69.89)</td>
<td>(35.55)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nu</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>15.047</td>
<td>25.166</td>
<td>27.125</td>
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<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>(52.96)</td>
<td>(17.08)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(95.30)</td>
<td>(99.80)</td>
<td>(36.04)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gin</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4.293</td>
<td>11.995</td>
<td>18.915</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>7.261</td>
<td>12.295</td>
<td>15.462</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
<td>(69.33)</td>
<td>(25.76)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(43.57)</td>
<td>(61.27)</td>
<td>(16.45)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>22.656</td>
<td>1.326</td>
<td>2.935</td>
<td>13.504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-94.15)</td>
<td>(121.54)</td>
<td>(360.10)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>1953 Census</td>
<td>1964 Census</td>
<td>1982 Census</td>
<td>1990 Census</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Growth %)</td>
<td>(Growth %)</td>
<td>(Growth %)</td>
<td>(Growth %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugurs</td>
<td>3.861</td>
<td>5.717</td>
<td>10.569</td>
<td>12.297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(48.07)</td>
<td>(84.87)</td>
<td>(25.28)</td>
<td>(16.35)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonan</td>
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<td>5.125</td>
<td>9.027</td>
<td>12.212</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.19)</td>
<td>(76.14)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(25.28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monba</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3.809</td>
<td>6.246</td>
<td>7.475</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(—)</td>
<td>(64.03)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oroqen</td>
<td>2.262</td>
<td>2.709</td>
<td>4.132</td>
<td>6.965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(19.76)</td>
<td>(52.53)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derung</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3.090</td>
<td>4.682</td>
<td>5.816</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(—)</td>
<td>(51.52)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(24.22)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tatars</td>
<td>6.929</td>
<td>2.294</td>
<td>4.127</td>
<td>4.873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-66.89)</td>
<td>(79.90)</td>
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<td>(18.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hezhen</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>1.476</td>
<td>4.245</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(—)</td>
<td>(105.57)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(187.60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaoshan</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>1.549</td>
<td>2.909</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(11.25)</td>
<td>(323.22)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(87.80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lhoba</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>2.065</td>
<td>2.312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(—)</td>
<td>(—)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(11.96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nongren</td>
<td>195,670</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(—)</td>
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<td>Sharen</td>
<td>112,433</td>
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<td>(—)</td>
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<td>Others</td>
<td>1,072,642</td>
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<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(—)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others not yet identified</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>22,413</td>
<td>881,838</td>
<td>749,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(—)</td>
<td>(2,612.66)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(15.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>582,603,417</td>
<td>691,220,104</td>
<td>1,003,957,078</td>
<td>1,133,682,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(18.64)</td>
<td>(45.24)</td>
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<td>(12.45)</td>
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Taken from Mackerras 1989: 238-240.
China's minorities only occupy 8.8 percent of the total population, they inhabit over 60 percent of China's total land mass.

The land in China has been divided into various administrative units, and some of these areas have been recognized as special nationality autonomous areas. There are presently five nationality autonomous regions: Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, Xinjiang (Uygur) Autonomous Region, Tibet Autonomous Region, Ningxia (Hui) Autonomous Region, and Guangxi (Zhuang) Autonomous Region. The Inner Mongolian Region, the first region to be established by the Chinese Communist Party, came into being on May 1, 1947 (Ma 1994: 25). "Tibet, the last minority area liberated, formally inaugurated the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965. By the end of 1985, China had five autonomous regions at the provincial level, 31 autonomous prefectures, and 96 autonomous counties" (1994: 25). Counties are the smallest administrative units, followed by prefectures and then regions. Yunnan province, located in China's southern region, boasts the largest variety of minorities, having over twenty different groups residing within its borders. Correspondingly, Yunnan also has the largest number of autonomous administrative units. According to the Communist Party, seven more autonomous counties will be established in the future (Ma 1994: 434-448).

The regions that are presently designated as nationality autonomous areas have some common characteristics. First, they are primarily located on China's borders, and therefore have
strategic relevance. Second, these areas tend to be sparsely populated, when compared to the other regions. Also, these special zones are divided into larger chunks of land per unit than the rest of the country. Lastly, these nationality autonomous areas are abundant in natural resources (Ma 1994: 3). The significance of these areas and their locations will be discussed later.

At present, China's largest minority, is the Zhuang, who already had a population of over fifteen million in 1990 (Mackerras 1994: 238). Other minorities with a population of over one million include: Manchus, Hui, Miao, Uygurs, Yi, Tujia, Mongols, Tibetans, Bouyei, Dong, Yao, Koreans, Bai, Hani, Kazaks, Li, and Dai respectively (1994: 238). At the opposite end of the spectrum, there are seven minorities with a population of less than ten thousand people. These are: the Monba, Oroqen, Derung, Tatars, Hezhen, Gaoshan and Lhoba. The smallest minority, the Lhoba, has a population of only 2,312. At the time of the 1990 census, 749,341 Chinese citizens remained unidentified with regard to their nationality status (Refer to Chart 1; Pgs. 8-10).
Chapter One: Clarification of Important Terms

Who is 'Chinese'?

One of the first tasks that must be undertaken in this investigation of nationalities within China, is to delineate the boundaries between 'Chinese' and 'non-Chinese'. "[A]re the seventy million non-Han inside China 'Chinese'? By nationality, certainly. By race, often.... By persuasion, occasionally... By assimilation, very widely...." (Sinclair 1987: 111).

Some individuals refer to the 'Chinese' as one entity and China's minorities as another. In this respect, they do not equate being 'Chinese' with citizenship, but rather to some biological notion of race. This became clear in two of my interviews with Han individuals. Both of them, when discussing the role that the Han had played in aiding the minorities, used the word 'Chinese' to mean Han. They both stated, "We, the Chinese must help the backward minorities". When confronted with this dichotomy, one Han individual noted that 'Chinese' sometimes refers only to the Han, and the second Han individual stated that the Han were the only 'true Chinese'. Therefore, when the word 'Chinese' is used, one must first discern whether it refers to the whole population of China ('Chinese' as citizens) or to the Han ('Chinese' as biological). The use of the word 'Chinese' as for both meanings can lead to confusion. This author's use of the term 'Chinese' will always be related to citizenship as will be explained in the next paragraph.

It is not within the scope of this essay to debate whether
the classification 'Chinese' is biological, situational or a combination of the two, but rather to examine the formation and ideology of nationalities within the 'Chinese' spectrum. Therefore, in this work and "[i]n the official viewpoint of Beijing, a Chinese is any citizen of the People's Republic of China" (Sinclair 1987: 111). It is important to reemphasize however, that by supporting this particular definition of 'Chinese' I am not accepting that there is a 'Chinese race', nor that there is a particular 'Chinese' ethnicity. Rather, the term 'Chinese' will be used to refer to those people that have citizenship as accorded by the People's Government of China. According to the laws of China then, "a Chinese citizen is a natural person who possesses citizenship in China" (Liu 1991: 1390). Under this definition, a natural person must possess two characteristics: s/he must have already been born and still exist, and her/his position as a citizen must have been confirmed by the nation and relevant citizenship rights accorded as a result (1991: 1390). Since in reality those who have already been given, or have not received, citizenship cannot be disputed, the term 'Chinese' in this essay will not be debated. By attempting to categorize individuals as 'Chinese', one also groups those who are not 'Chinese', as 'un-Chinese' or 'foreigners'. "Therefore to say that about a quarter of the world's population is Chinese is also to say that about three-quarters are not Chinese" (Wee 1988: 2). It is from this starting point that we will begin to discuss the unique situation of China's 56 nationalities.
Who Comprises the 'Chinese' Majority?

Now that the definition of 'Chinese' has been examined, it is essential to go one step further and look at the differences between those so-labelled. As mentioned earlier, the recognized majority in China, that composes approximately 91.2% of the population, is Han. "The formation and development of the Han people was a continuous process of integration of the earliest Huaxia tribe with other related tribes and ethnic groups. It was in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220) that they adopted the name 'Han'..." (Ma 1994: 2). Nationality, as officially defined by the PRC government and many 'Chinese' scholars, does incorporate a biological component. However, it becomes apparent that the Han are in no uncertain terms a homogenous, biological group. "The process of historical development of the Han nationality completely proves that Han are formed by mixing the blood of various nationalities over a long period of time" (Liang, Chen and Yang 1985: 347). Instead of accepting that those labelled 'Han' are pure-blooded, with common ancestry and strong biological linkages, one should instead realize that "the word Han is a cultural rather than a racial description.... Even within the Han race there are enormous cultural, linguistic and physical differences, just as there are in the 'European' race" (Sinclair 1987: 9). Thus, in China the recognized majority, although so labelled by the Chinese government, is in no way a homogenous, ideological entity.

What is a Minority?: Problems of Definition

Defining nationality, although usually a complex issue, is
extremely difficult in the case of China. There appears to be no
conceivable definition of minority, it being labelled only by what it
is not — namely the Han majority. When examining minority "from
the Chinese perspective it would imply an ethnic group that is
relatively small numerically compared with the largest
nationality, and that is distinguished from society at large and
from the Han by certain specifically national characteristics"
(Heberer 1989: 12). As was put forth earlier, those
characteristics can be real or imagined and could have been
invented before or after the process of nationality
identification. In this sense then, "[a]ll ethnic groups that do
not belong to the majority Han nationality in the People's
Republic of China are today designated 'national minorities'
(shaoshu minzu)" (1989: 10). Thus, minorities in China are non-
identified, gaining their status by what they lack, or by what
they are not.

**Definition of the Chinese Term Minzu**

Upon undertaking research about/in China, one becomes aware
that the words 'nationality' and 'ethnicity' are often used
interchangeably. This does not create as large of a problem as
one might expect because in China nationalities are also
synonymous with its ethnic groups.

This confusion of English terms is not unwarranted, however.
There appears to be little consensus as to the English meaning of
the Chinese term minzu. "The Chinese draw no distinction between
people (minzu), nation (minzu), nationality (minzu), and ethnos
(minzu). This of course causes problems in defining terms"
Although technically speaking, the word used to represent China's recognized minorities is shaoshu minzu (which literally translated means 'low number nationality'), in government literature minzu is sometimes substituted. "The policy pursued with these minorities and the terms used in defining that policy employ the reference word 'nationalities' (minzu), as in nationality policy, nationality commission, nationality cadres, nationality territories, etc." (1989: 10-11). This could cause some confusion however. The rights accorded to minorities (shaoshu minzu) are not the same as those accorded to the Han. Yet if one peruses the official government documents sometimes no distinction is made.

On the other hand, some scholars point out that the use of a single term for both groups in these policies promotes a sense of equality and integration between the majority and the minorities.

The terms national minority and nationality are largely identical in China.... Minzu is used to refer to all of China's nationalities, the Han as well as the minorities. In common usage the term, on the one hand, indicates legal equality and, on the other, documents that all of China's nationalities are subordinate to a higher authority (the state) (1989: 12).

In conclusion, although the term minzu is used to represent several English words and undoubtedly confuses the minority issue in China, it does not appear to pose a major problem.
Chapter Two: Minority Identification and History in China

Nationality Identification in China

In China before liberation, ethnic identification or division of groups based on nationality (or ethnicity) was not an issue open for debate. "Sun Yat-sen, the founder of the Republic of China, recognized China merely as a 'republic of five nationalities' in the twenties" (Heberer 1989: 34). Later when the Guomindang came into power, they saw the different groups as extensions of the Han, not as distinct nationalities. Thus, before 1949 nationality identification was not attempted (1989: 34). It was not until the early 1950s that efforts were made by the government of China to delineate the boundaries between ethnic groups. At this time the process was far from simple, as there was little agreement as to what a nationality constituted, and how the citizens of China should be separated into nationality groupings.

Even presently scholars seem to disagree on the basis of nationality identification in China. The majority point out that identification, which began in earnest in the mid-1950s, took its roots from Stalin's theory of 'nation'. Others however, support the idea that perhaps subjective or situational factors were taken into consideration as well.

There is little doubt that the official definition of nationality in China as advocated by the CCP (Chinese Communist Party), can be seen as heavily influenced by Stalin.

According to this theory, a nation is a historically
evolved, stable community of people, based upon the common possession of four principal attributes, namely: a common language, a common territory, a common economic life, and a common psychological make-up manifesting itself in common specific features of national culture (Mackerras 1994: 141; Liu and He 1989: 5).

As mentioned above, four main factors were used as a basis to officially identify people and classify them into the corresponding nationalities in China. It is important to examine each factor individually in order to better understand the process and how it resulted in the formation of China's 56 nationalities.

Common Language

The first determining feature of nationality in China is common language. "[C]ommon language is the most important, stable and prominent one the four features. Every nationality has its own common language, if there is no common language, there is no nationality. But this is not to say that, people that speak a common language belong to the same nationality" (Liu and He 1989: 5-6). The above quotation does not infer that each nationality must have its own unique, common language, but rather can be interpreted that within each nationality a common language must exist. Sometimes more than one nationality may share the same common language. For example, Mandarin, the official language of China, is the common language used by several nationalities. Although these groups share the same language, this does not mean they have been misidentified, or should automatically be considered the same nationality. Americans, Canadians, Australians, and British all speak English but are not
the same nationality. In the 'Chinese' case "[t]hough Han and Hui nationalities speak a common language, they are not the same nationality because they differ in other features" (1989: 6). Thus, sharing a common language does not mean that no variation exists. Liu and He state that a common language does not have to be exactly the same, but that there may be some differences in pronunciation or dialects as nationalities have been influenced by other groups. In fact, sometimes minor variations in language can be traced back to the different histories of nationalities (1989: 6). Therefore, the first criterion of nationality, although it must be common, does not need to be identical. The degree to which it can vary is a concern that will be addressed later.

Common Territory

Next, according to Stalin's theory, to qualify as the same nationality, individuals must reside in a common territory.

The same territory mainly refers to the area where a nationality inhabits, as they are geographically connected and not divided by some inaccessible natural conditions such as sea, and mountains; they are basically united in politics, they are not divided by country borders or political zones for a long period of time (1989: 6).

'Chinese' nationalities are clearly not divided by sea, although other natural conditions perhaps separate some of them. "Of course, saying a nationality must have a common region is not to say that the people who inhabit the same region are the same nationality; it is also not to say that the same nationality should inhabit the same region forever" (1989: 7). Rather it points out that members of one 'nationality' must live/or have
lived in a common area to be given a label as such.

Common Economic Life

In line with Stalin's characterization of nationalities is the third determinant, common economic life. "A common economic life is the objective material strength that unites a nationality together and is the decisive condition for the forming and development of a nationality. If there is no common economic life, nationality itself does not exist" (1989: 7). In China's recognized autonomous areas, nationalities often share the same economy and receive the same, or very similar benefits on the macro-scale. Cohabiting in the same territory facilitates a common economic life, and this in turn allows members of minorities to reaffirm their membership in the group. "If the individual parts of a nationality are divided by economy for a long period of time, then the individual parts will be assimilated by other nationalities or they will form a new nationality..." (1989: 7). Not only is a common economy essential in Stalin's view, but it also regulates and influences the other three aspects as well (1989: 7).

Common Psychological Make-up

According to Stalin, the last characteristic is related to the mind-set or psychological make-up of the group.

Nationality psychological characteristics are the reflection of historical, natural and economic conditions of the different nationalities. Because of differences in historical development, historical encounters, natural environment and social-economic life, different nationalities form their own unique cultural art, customs and also psychological features (1989: 8).
For example, although Man, Hui and Han speak a common language, inhabit a common territory and are closely linked with regard to economy, they do not comprise the same nationality, because their thoughts and feelings are not the same (1989: 8). Therefore, as can be seen in the other cases mentioned above, a dependent relationship between common psychological make-up and the other three factors is evident.

**Application of Stalin's Theory to China**

Not only do these previous elements comprise what one refers to as a 'nationality', but they are essential characteristics of this group. Stalin emphasizes that these characteristics separately cannot compose a nation. Rather, it is the four together that defines this boundary. If even one characteristic is not evident, then the nation ceases to exist (Stalin 1955: 307). But by rigidly adhering to the notion that all four characteristics MUST be evident for a 'nationality' to exist, obvious contradictions arise.

To avoid inconsistencies between this theory and its application, two separate paths have been attempted. Some scholars "ignore or downplay Stalin's demand that none of the four criteria could be omitted from any identification" (Mackerras 1994: 141). Others have attempted to redefine or make subtle changes to his definition in order to make it applicable to China's particular situation. I support the second method because although Stalin stated these four criteria ALL must be evident if a group were to be considered a 'nationality'; he did not point out to what degree.
When we take out different nationalities and compare them with each other, though sometimes one feature is quite prominent (such as a nationalities' psychological make-up), sometimes another feature is fairly prominent (such as language), sometimes another feature (such as territory, economic life) is quite prominent. Every nation is made up of the four features (Liu and He 1989: 8).

By insisting that all of the aforementioned characteristics must be evident, but still allowing for differences in degree, one is able to successfully adapt Stalin's model to the 'Chinese' situation.

Attempting to interpret Stalin's view in this manner however, lends itself to new problems. Many scholars disagree as to how loosely these characteristics should be interpreted, and in fact, whether they should be adapted or followed with rigidity. For example, not every minority has its own language, unique in itself, and some minorities do not all speak the same common language at all. Rigid application of Stalin's theory then, would not classify groups such as Hui, who use the same common language as the Han, as a separate minority. However, if common language is loosely interpreted as simply recognizing the same language as their main method of communication, this would not result in contradictions for minorities such as the Hui. Also, individuals could sometimes use a language for communication that is not their recognized common language. For example, when I travelled to Shanghai I noticed that the people spoke a special dialect, Shanghaiese. They were able to converse in Mandarin, but used this other dialect instead. Interpreting common language in this way then, means that pronunciation and
word usage would merely be seen as variations of the same language. Some nationalities are spread over China's vast area, their common language has evolved separately over time and can only be understood by those residing in that area. For example, the dialects spoken by the Han in North-East China, Shanghai and Guangzhou differ greatly although they are based upon one common language. These variations do not permit individuals from these three areas to comprehend each other in oral conversation. Only in written language can these problems be overcome as their written characters have not evolved separately.

The scattered nature of the Han population and the minorities also prove that the rigid application of the 'common territory' criterion would result in some nationalities losing their status as separate groups. Minorities such as Hui, Manchu and Miao are not concentrated in one geographical area in China, and are separated by natural conditions such as mountains. However, the common geographic area that Stalin referred to should be examined in a broader context. Namely, that these minorities all reside in the same geographical area - China, and therefore are not separated at all.

Next, a common economic life does not adequately characterize many nationalities within China, as those minorities situated in autonomous areas often enjoy economic benefits that their peers in non-autonomous regions do not. In fact, the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy devoted several articles guaranteeing that minorities within autonomous areas receive special economic considerations. This is not to say that they receive large
numbers of individual benefits, but rather, they obtain group privileges such as investment in schools, public facilities and companies as a result of living in certain areas.

As far as Stalin's fourth factor, common culture is concerned, in some situations nationalities, although still belonging to one group, exhibit cultural characteristics most often found in another. Since culture is constantly shifting and readjusting, assuming that there is a stable non-changing entity labelled 'common culture' is problematic in itself. In sum, because Stalin did not emphasize how rigorously one must adhere to these four criteria for a nationality to remain a distinct entity, one is able to successfully modify his theory to the 'Chinese' situation.

Although, the Chinese government used Stalin's model as a basis for nationality identification and allowed the minorities some degree of autonomy, the Chinese situation cannot be seen as identically parallel to the Soviet one. Dreyer points out that the minorities in the (former) USSR were republics in themselves and therefore could secede from the Union. However, as is evidenced above, the autonomous areas of China were in no way afforded the same luxury, even in theory. She also goes on to state that on the whole, there was more freedom with regard to culture and language under Soviet policy (1976: 263-264). So by adopting Stalin's theory to the Chinese situation, the Chinese government did not accord the nationalities in China the same power and rights that were allotted to the republics in the Soviet Union.
Nationality Willingness as a Factor

The use and adaptation of Stalin's theory to characterize and identify nationalities in China is not enough in itself. The objective nature of the above mentioned criteria ignore the dual process and subjective nature of nationality formation. Many individuals, who support the more flexible approach, place heavy emphasis on the actions of the people themselves. "[I]n China a consensus has been reached that scientific criteria are not sufficient for a definitive classification of an ethnic group as an independent nationality, that in addition the opinion of the members of such a group carries just as much weight" (Heberer 1989: 33). Rather than stating that Stalin's four features are the only determinants necessary for nationality identification and categorization in China, many scholars (myself included), emphasize the dual nature of identity. By this it is meant that categories are not merely imposed on nationalities, but that they also make contributions and have input in this process.

The second basis of nationality identification is nationality willingness. In researching the identification of nationalities, nationality willingness refers to the subjective willingness expressed in terms of whether they are Han or minority nationality after all, whether they are a single nationality. Nationality willingness can be understood as the common subjective ideology and common willingness of a nationality. While deciding how to identify nationalities, we must respect the willingness of nationalities as this is one of the starting points of nationality identification (Liang, Chen and Yang 1985: 403).

Support of willingness in the identification process represents an important step for nationalities in China, as it tends to suggest a decision made by the minorities themselves rather than
something imposed upon them. However, one must not be too optimistic by assuming that 'respecting the willingness' of nationalities in effect means that the minorities themselves actually have input in the official identification process. Although one may accept that nationality willingness is a necessary component in the identification and maintenance of nationality boundaries in China, one must not forget that the identification by the PRC government does not factor the subjective feelings of the nationalities themselves into its decisions.

Heberer supports my position that the classification of minorities is based on both the will of the community as well as on a scientific (biological) basis (1989: 32). Fei Xiaotong, one of the social scientists involved in the initial nationality identification processes of the 1950s pointed out that the criterion identified by Stalin should be employed flexibly to the Chinese situation, and that self-consciousness should also be included. He believes that the feelings and beliefs of a nationality, separate from its common ideology, should also play a role in ethnic identification (Fei 1980: 155). Fei's own opinion should not be confused with the stand taken by the PRC Government and the methods used in the official identification process. Thus, although Fei supports nationality willingness and ideology as a factor, it was not part of nationality identification in China. It is interesting however, that the subjective will of the people is being considered as relevant as this was something that Stalin strongly opposed (1989: 32).
Not one of the individuals that I interviewed felt that nationality willingness was/or should be a factor in nationality identification. Instead, they took nationality as a given, biological fact. One individual in particular related an interesting story with relation to his nationality identification. Born Han, at about age 45 his father found out that his great-grandfather had actually been Miao, a recognized minority. Along with his two siblings, his father petitioned for a change in status. His siblings were granted status, and he was denied, although they had been brought up together and had the same family ancestry and history. The individual accepted this decision by the government without challenge and attributed his failure to government bureaucracy. He rationalized his defeat by stating that the district already had too many people that were designated minorities, and therefore it was more difficult to change one's status. After his application was rejected, he did not reapply. He did not consider himself Miao, and yet he labelled his brother and sister as such. Thus, since the government had characterized him as Han, Han he would remain (Interview #11 April 1996). The ramifications of this categorization will be examined further in the next section.

I Know Who You Are, But Who Am I?

As the PRC Government's methods of categorization do not tend to take into account the subjective nature of nationality formation and the willingness of the people, this creates contradictions between the official categorization and the feelings and beliefs of some nationalities. This can be shown
using two examples. First, although the man who petitioned to become Miao and was refused accepted this decision, at one point at least, he believed himself to be a nationality that was different than his government classification (Interview #11 April 1996). Perhaps one could argue that it was not his feeling and subjective belief that he was Miao but 'reality'. However, the end result was the same - a discrepancy between the government distinction and that of an individual was evident.

The second example becomes obvious when one examines the number of individuals who as yet remain unidentified. After the official designation of China's 55 minority groups and the Han majority, there still remained individuals or groups that were not officially part of a specific nationality, or who rejected the groupings imposed on them. According to the 1990 census, 749,341 people were categorized as 'not yet identified' by the government (Mackerras 1994: 143). This is an especially large number in view of the fact that: 1) the identification process took place over 40 years earlier, 2) ten years after identification (1964) there were only about 32,000 individuals that were 'unidentified' (1994: 240), and 3) recently there have been large numbers of individuals who have successfully petitioned to have their nationality statuses changed.

Since the first classification process, the success of whole groups to become recognized as new nationalities has not been successful. Heberer notes that in the late 1970s and early 1980s over 80 non-recognized groups, comprising more than 900,000 people, reapplied for minority status. The majority of them had
been rejected in the 1950s, but due to renewed efforts to classify those still without status in the 1980s, these groups repetitioned (1989: 37). For example Mackerras wrote of one group classified as Miao that recognizes itself as a separate ethnic group, the Gejia. "Their grounds for this separate identification are differences in language, religion, village style, and clothing" (1994: 144). However, the State Nationalities Commission refuses to acknowledge them as a separate group. In sum, in adapting Stalin's method of nationality identification, the PRC Government must not neglect the willingness or ideological mindset of those so-labelled.

First Attempts To Classify Groups

When representatives from the newly established People's Republic of China first attempted to separate its peoples into nationalities, several obstacles arose. Firstly, some groups were not willing to come forward and obtain minority status as they were fearful of the consequences.

Before liberation, because the former reactionary rulers carried out the nationalist policy of nationality prejudice and nationality oppression, they denied the existence of many minority nationalities and minority prejudice which made many minorities dare not admit their own nationality, and this brought difficulties in identifying nationalities after liberation (Liang, Chen and Yang 1985: 395).

Some of those officially classified into groups did not want to be seen as such. On the other hand, many other groups that had applied for status were rejected. This was shown earlier in the case of the Gejia who were refused status as a separate nationality, and also in the case of the Han individual who
wanted to be recognized as Miao. The complexity of the political situation at that time (China being a newly established republic) also added to the confusion when nationality identification was first attempted. In fact, as we will see in the next paragraph, the identification process was influenced by politics as well.

The first attempts to officially delineate minority groupings in China can be traced back to the mid-1950s. From 1953 it sent out special identification groups, including ethnologists such as Fei Xiaotong, to check the validity of claims being made by various groups for status as minority nationalities. Since the new government had made it known that it regarded the minorities as equals, over 400 groups registered as nationalities by 1955 (Mackerras 1994: 142). This created a dilemma. Were there really 400 nationalities in China? And if there were, how could China successfully accommodate them and unite them toward her common goal of socialism? "In identifying a nationality in China, two basic determinations had to be made: (1) whether the group was a national minority or a part of the Han nationality; and (2) if an ethnic minority, did it constitute an independent nationality or only part of such a nationality" (Heberer 1989: 35). Keeping these questions in mind while using Stalin's theory as a basis for identification, Fei Xiaotong "found more than 100 minorities. As such diversity was politically not admissible, he attempted to work out a classification that would reduce the total number" (Eberhard 1982: 157). The reduction of groups from over 100 to 55 strengthens the argument that Stalin's theory was used as a model, not as a rigid framework.

Not only were the large quantity of groups that fit the
model (and should therefore be afforded status) a problem, but clashes with current ideology also arose. Heberer notes that a group of over 2,000 individuals claiming to be Jewish were denied ethnic status as a single entity by the government because at that time Judaism in China was supposedly non-existent. "In this case the Chinese government rejected recognition as a minority because of the 'external political explosiveness' of the issue" (Heberer 1989: 39). In sum, such considerations as political feasibility seemed to outweigh 'true nationality' status in some situations.

In the end, only a small percentage of those groups that had applied for status were officially designated as 'Chinese' nationalities. "By 1957, fifty-four ethnic groups were recognized as independent nationalities (the Jinuo were recognized in 1979, making fifty-five). The official recognition was granted to the nationalities by the Chinese State Council" (1989: 34). It is important to note that since 1979 the number of recognized nationalities remains unchanged. Although some groups have migrated to different areas throughout China and no longer share all of Stalin's four features, the official designation of 56 nationalities has remained intact. "[S]ince the clear demarcation of ethnic boundaries is drawn officially, one is now unlikely to see new minority groups emerge, assimilate, or amalgamate as they did historically in China's peripheral lands" (Wu 1989: 22). In summary then, it has become apparent that: 1) Stalin's model was used as an adaptation and was secondary to other factors in some cases, 2) over 700,000
individuals still remain unidentified in a country where identification techniques and criteria have clearly been established, and 3) the PRC's objective definition and classification of nationalities does not fit with its subjective reality. This is because

... an objective classification cannot be confused with people's subjective ethnic identity, and, furthermore, cannot be represented by a clearcut, independent cultural category.... [A] minority group may be culturally similar to the majority group, although by law and self-identity they are separate ethnic entities (Wu 1989: 22).

Thus, although the laws and government classifications remain rigid, in reality a process of shedding and adopting new ethnic identities still exists in China. "Culturally, these various processes of change of ethnic composition may still continue, while individuals may still pass ethnic boundaries due to the allowance of choice of 'ethnic identity' for persons with 'mixed' ancestors " (1989: 22). Whether the boundaries of ethnicity in China allow for these shifts or changes has still not been touched upon. This will be discussed further using the Korean minority in North-East China as a concrete example.

**Objective Differences and the Classification Process**

Liang, Chen and Yang state that eight different situations arose during the identification of nationalities in China during the mid-1950s. The diversity between groups in China at that time, and the fact that some groups were afraid, or did not want to be recognized as minorities led to extreme difficulty when attempting to classify nationalities based on Stalin's concept of 'nation'. Many of these difficulties can be linked to the
contradictions between minority self-identification and the government's official designations.

Fei Xiaotong, one of the scholars responsible for the separation of nationalities into groups in the 1950s, pointed out that they encountered eight different situations that hampered and/or confused the classification process. The first situation arose where the Han occupied minority territory, kept typical Han characteristics and culture, did not realize they were Han and therefore assumed they should be grouped with the minority. The second occurred when several Han groups moved into a minority area, and conflicts and differences amongst the Han were evident. This conflict resulted in one or more groups of the Han seeing other Han groups as 'Other' or 'different' and therefore some Han tended to identify with the minority groups prevalent in the area. Thirdly, some minorities exploited other non-Han nationalities as ordered by the Han. As a result, the oppressed refused their oppressors entrance into their nationality grouping. Fourth, through internal migration, minorities came into contact with, and were greatly influenced by, the Han. However, there was prejudice that precluded mixing amongst them, and therefore they wanted to retain their independent status. Fifth, in some cases a single minority split due to migration. Although their culture, language, and customs remained the same, they were renamed. Sixth, parts of a nationality were separated geographically, accepted the new culture, but retained their own language. They were labelled by others as belonging to the new grouping. Seventh, some minorities became scattered over large
areas and their language and culture evolved differently. However, they were still regarded as composing the same minority. Lastly, within an individual minority there was sometimes dissention with regard to being one, or more than one, grouping (Liang, Chen and Yang 1985: 425-426; Fei 1980: 148). What becomes apparent once again is that although Stalin's model was used as a guide, subjective decisions were made during the classification of minorities in the People's Republic of China.

The Creation of Ethnicity in China

Before the specific policies created for China's minorities are examined, what their creation has meant in the larger scheme of nationality relations in China should be discussed. The creation and implementation of specific policies does not only result in changes in the living situations of the minorities, but also greatly effects both their culture and customs as well. By this it is meant that the creation of such policies could, and has, led to the construction of ethnicity, minority groups, culture and customs.

Equality of all nationalities and respect for minority cultures are foundational principles of China's minority policy today. This is a political statement and the implementation of such a political policy has consequences on the construction of ethnicity and culture of the minority groups in the nation (Wu 1989: 21).

By creating policies to deal with 'minorities' then, 'minorities' are created as a group. This in turn makes them a concrete entity different from the 'majority', the Han.

Not only is ethnicity in China created, but it is objectified and has resulted in the invention of concrete
identifiers and labels. An example of an identifier of ethnicity would be Chinese residence permits. Every individual has a residence card which must be kept on his/her body at all times. This card is required for almost anything from registering into a hotel, to buying a train ticket. The nationality of each individual is stamped on the card itself. "In China, national identity is not only 'imagined'; it is stamped on one's passport" (Gladney 1994: 98). In summary, after nationality was created as an entity, and China's 56 recognized groups established, identifiers arose that served to delineate the boundaries between the different groups.

Another example of identifiers that tend to reinforce created ethnicity in China are the exoticization of minorities. "Their 'primitivity' contrasts with supposed Han 'modernity.' Minorities become a marked category, characterized by sensuality, colorfulness, and exotic custom. This contrasts with the 'unmarked' nature of Han identity" (1994: 102). Some minorities have few outwardly visible customs and habits that set them apart from the Han (i.e., Manchus). In some cases these are groups that have surpassed the Han in some respects. For example, the Koreans are not portrayed as primitive or backward, perhaps because they boast the highest education levels and lowest birthrates in China. Rather, these minorities, and especially the Han, have been characterized as 'normal' and exemplary by the government and the CCP. This perhaps in part explains why the word 'Han' sometimes replaces the word 'Chinese' - here 'Han' refers to 'normal' or 'average Chinese'. Gladney is
very critical of this creation of ethnic identifiers, and states that they are nothing more than "[t]he homogenization of the majority at the expense of the exoticized minority" (1994: 94-95).

The creation of ethnicity in China goes much further than just attributing identifiers to the minorities in order to make them appear mysterious and exotic. In some cases the minorities are treated as a commodity. An obvious example can be seen if one travels to a number of minority palaces throughout China. Upon visiting two minority palaces, one in Beijing and the other in Shenzhen, it became apparent that minority culture was created and exaggerated in order to commodify and exoticize China's 55 minorities.

In both cases scantily clad minorities meet tourists near the entrance, dancing to music with a heavy, savage beat. Upon walking around the attraction, one finds many minority individuals performing 'traditional' rituals and customs under the eager eyes of tourists. Pictures are taken, traditional dishes are eaten, 'differences' are emphasized and finally the minorities can rest. However, if one stays around long enough, one will see a different picture. It is of those same individuals speaking Mandarin, China's official language, not the language of their own minority, and wearing jeans and T-shirts rather than long, brightly-coloured costumes. One also sees them eating the same kind of (or similar) food that the Han eat, training new recruits how to act like minorities, how to dance or greet in their special 'ethnic' way. It would be difficult to
prove that these customs have never existed. The fact that the minorities have to be taught what they technically should know about their culture in order to work, points out that ethnicity has been created, or at the very least, re-created. The purpose of this illustration is not to criticize or debate the creation of ethnicity, nor to belittle the nationality areas or the people who live there, but rather to reemphasize the constructivism that has taken place and to recognize it for what it is. Some parts of these minority palaces were fairly accurate depictions of minority lifestyles, while others were not. What is essential to remember then, is that the creation of policies for minorities has in turn led to the creation or recreation of the ethnic groups or ethnic customs themselves.

Another concern related to the creation of ethnic identities is the fact that (like some of the minorities above), although some individuals are legally recognized as minorities, they lack the identifiers. By this it is meant that they have no obvious customs, habits, etcetera that separate them, or make them 'different', from the Han. For example, children whose parents are not of the same nationality are sometimes able to choose which ethnic group they will belong to. People in China are choosing more and more to have themselves officially identified as minorities whether or not they truthfully identify themselves as such in order to be eligible for minority benefits. Therefore it is quite feasible that "[c]hildren from mixed marriages receive a Han upbringing, no longer speak any language other than Han Chinese, and as a rule also consider themselves Han. They
are members of 'national minorities' only on paper" (Heberer 1989: 92). This tendency could not only lead to a false increase in the minority population (and corresponding decreases in Han births) as well as to other problems. This will be discussed in more detail using the Chinese-Korean minority as an example.

**Minority Policy: Official Aims**

After the definition and categorization of nationalities was finished, the Chinese government took on the task of creating specific policies for its 55 recognized minority groups. However, they soon realized that "trying to balance the privileges of the minority races with the rights guaranteed to all citizens of the People's Republic is a task than can be both demanding and delicate" (Sinclair 1987: 13). In attempting to create such policies, the government focused on six main tasks as a framework, and developed policies correspondingly. These were: to persist in quality of nationalities and strengthen nationality unity, carry out nationality regional autonomy, develop minority cadres, aid the development of the minorities' cultures and economies, emphasize the use of minority language, and to respect the customs and habits of minorities (Liang, Chen and Yang 1985: 417). One must keep in mind that the policies that will be discussed later use these aims as their starting point. It will also become apparent that these tasks and their fulfilment is part of the PRC's greater ambition - socialism. The linkages between minority policy, these aims and the socialist path will become clearer as this essay unfolds.
The Treatment of the Minorities in the Past

When one examines the present position of its minorities, China's long history cannot be neglected. It is argued by many scholars that China's history plays an integral role in its peoples' present circumstances, as well as being a reminder of past injustices. Perhaps nationality policy evolved as such a consequence. It is essential then, to examine past treatment of nationalities in China in order to better comprehend their present circumstances.

Before the twentieth century, minorities in China did not exist as such. By this it meant that they were not considered citizens of China and were not accorded status, minority or otherwise. These individuals, who would later be known as China's minorities, suffered persecution and abominable treatment, both by the ruling classes and other minorities themselves. "In the hundred years or so before China's liberation, people of all nationalities shared a common misfortune, being subjected to imperialist aggression and feudal oppression" (Ma 1994: 25). In the time of Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties and Kuomintang rule, this resulted in an increasingly large number of rebellions and uprisings (1994: 18-19), which in turn resulted in little unity and total chaos.

Under the various feudal dynasties and the Kuomintang government, national oppression and inequality remained the rule, and a unified, multi-national state was maintained under the conditions of oppression and internecine struggle, including wars between various nationalities tormented by local separatist forces (1994: 20).

These groups did periodically unite in order to overthrow their
oppressors, however. In the Taiping Rebellion of 1851, the
Revolution of 1911, and the May Fourth Movement in 1919, the
people united to overthrow feudalism and to combat imperialism
(1994: 19). Even during these periods however, the minorities
were still viewed as 'savage' and inferior to the ruling classes.
As minorities were not citizens of China, special policies for
minorities were not even seen as an issue before the twentieth
century. However, as the twentieth century emerged, the
treatment and therefore, situation, of the minorities underwent
drastic changes.

Government Policy Toward Minorities in the Twentieth Century

The treatment of minorities in China since the beginning of
the twentieth century can roughly be separately into four phases:
Nationalist, Pre-Communist, Communist (just after liberation)
and present day treatment.

The first phase of the twentieth century saw the influence
of the Chinese leader Sun Yat-Sen and his Nationalist approach.
As noted earlier, he believed that China was made up of five core
nationalities. Although he at first adopted an assimilationalist
stance, he later altered his view in favour of the willingness of
the people.

Sun Yat-Sen, the leader of the revolution of 1911 and
for a short time president of China, was at first of
the opinion that China's minorities should be quickly
brought to a level similar to that of the Chinese, so
that assimilation would be possible. Later he began to
speak of the need to raise the cultural level of the
minorities so that they themselves could decide whether
they would like to be integrated or be allowed self-
government (Eberhard 1982: 14).

This later change in thinking is said to have influenced Sun Yat-
Sen after he witnessed the Russian Revolution, ... and his policy of 1924 spoke of self-determination and autonomy, the same terminology that Lenin had used. The government should help and guide small, weak racial groups toward ultimate self-determination and self-government - this was Lenin's important change of the original Marx-Engels theory that each society would have to develop stage by stage from a primitive society to socialist society. Lenin proclaimed that this long process could be shortened by the guidance of a 'developed' country (1982: 153-154).

Although during this period minority groups as we know them had yet to be identified and so-labelled, Nationalist leaders supported the autonomy and self-determination of the minority existing groups.

The next stage, Pre-Communist, was characterized by cooperation (although somewhat limited), between those in power and China's nationalities. This however is perhaps not so much due to the fact that Communists actually supported this kind of approach, but rather they recognized the importance of gaining the minorities' assistance and support for their Communist struggles. "During the confrontations with the minorities in Southwest of China at the time of the Long March the Communists became aware of the problem of minorities. They often needed help from the minorities through whose areas they marched, or at least their permission to pass through" (Eberhard 1982: 155). As a result of successful relations during the Long March, Mao Zedong took this cooperation one step further. He supported a new position

All minorities should be given equal rights with the Chinese. They should not be forced to learn Chinese but rather be encouraged to develop their own cultures. They should control their own affairs - but they must
live in a unified state together with the Han Chinese. Mao's statement of November 6, 1938 led to the adoption of the concept of 'autonomous areas,' which Lenin had developed (1982: 155).

The position to include autonomous areas for minorities in China must not however be recognized as autonomy without conditions. Autonomy was only considered possible if it did not endanger national cohesion. Aside from facilitating the Communist cause and gaining allies to support them during the war, Mao Zedong and his followers planned for the future as well. They realized that with the present hostilities of the minorities intact, once the Communists were in power the minorities would not so readily volunteer to become members of New China (Olivier 1993: 32). Therefore, the Communists' change in thinking not only facilitated their success during the Long March, but was adopted in order to solidify China's success under their reign.

Shortly after liberation the first official minority policy was established under the influence of Mao Zedong. This policy emphasized integration rather than the assimilationalist policies of the past. Under this kind of policy nationalities were guaranteed both equality and autonomy, but it was stressed that this would not be at the expense of national unity (Mackerras 1994: 145). Although it appears that the minorities' situation has improved under the leadership of the Communists, one must realize that the minorities do not enjoy total autonomy, but limited rights. This is because

[O]n one point, however, the CCP has always been similar to the Guomindang. It places an extremely high priority on national unity. Its first task was to effectively unify the state it had created. Next to
its own overthrow, its greatest fear has always been the secession of nationality regions and the consequent disintegration of the PRC (1994: 140).

Consequently, whatever power accorded to the minorities was carefully allotted, keeping national unity in mind. Eberhard points out that this policy derived from Lenin's theory of 'national in form, social in content' (1982: 157). In order to accomplish this, the CCP promoted the image of the 'older brother' who helps his 'younger brothers' to develop and raise themselves up to his level. This not only would result in national unity it was hoped, but also embedded the spirit of patriotism in both the minorities and the Han that would aid them (Eberhard 1982: 157).

Heberer points out that during the Cultural Revolution substantial changes were made to nationality policy in China. First, at this time nationality policy was deemed unnecessary as China was no longer regarded as a multinational country. Second, there no longer were special economic policies in minority (autonomous) regions. Third, regional autonomy was characterized as evil, as contradicting national unity and therefore the dissolution of some autonomous areas was the result. Fourth, languages, traditions, religions, customs, manners and minority holidays were condemned and/or abolished as they were seen as 'backward'. Fifth, economic policies were developed and implemented that did not take into account the natural resources or skills of minority members which often resulted in increased poverty for these groups. Sixth, illiteracy among minorities also rose due to the abolishment of minority schools and other

The present Communist Party in China blames the Gang of Four for the intentional persecution of the minorities in the past because during the Cultural Revolution the Gang of Four denied the existence of minority problems.

Humiliation, insults, oppression, and an attempt at forced assimilation; destruction of the ecological equilibrium and ruinous exploitation; economic plundering of the minority regions: these were the consequences of the Cultural Revolution for the national minorities and their regions (Heberer 1989: 29).

The Gang of Four carried out a fascist dictatorship and held tight control over the minorities. They also forced assimilation on the minorities who faced persecution if they did not readily submit (Renmin Ribao 15 Dec. 1978). "Beginning in 1958, a campaign developed that called for the assimilation of the minority peoples, with a total disregard for the rights of self-government guaranteed by the Constitution" (Ma 1994: 31-32).

During the Cultural Revolution, the nationalities' institutes that looked after minority affairs were closed down, and those that did not comply were dealt with accordingly. This only served to negate all of the past advances that had been made in minority relations and to severely injure nationality policy in China (1994: 32).

After the Cultural Revolution and the overthrow of the Gang of Four however, the Communist Party of China attempted to correct past injustices. At the same time they set out to educate the masses on nationality policy and how the aims of the Communist Party coincided with the aims of China's nationalities.
They combined this with a strenuous effort to aid the minorities, especially in the areas of labour and material resources (Renmin Ribao 15 Dec. 1978).

This last phase then, can be seen as having begun in the late 1970s after the reign of the Gang of Four ended, and is continuing on today. One of the important milestones in this era of minority relations is the publication in 1980 of Zhou Enlai's 1957 speech on nationality policy. Although Zhou first made the speech on August 4, 1957, at the time it was suppressed as it did not fit with the ideology of the ruling powers. In 1980 however, it was recognized as an important speech as it strengthened the attempts of the Chinese government, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, to unite the minorities and reduce oppression (Mackerras 1994: 153-154). Zhou Enlai wrote "We oppose two types of chauvinism, namely, big-nationality chauvinism (in China this refers to Han chauvinism) and local-nationality chauvinism, with particular attention to combating Han chauvinism. Both types of chauvinism are manifestations of bourgeois nationalism" (Beijing Review 3 March 1980: 14). In fact, concerted attempts to reduce the ever-spreading Han chauvinism and local nationalism by the CCP had begun even before Zhou Enlai's declaration was made public. They in fact can be linked with this new period of minority policy. Therefore, the government's approach and continued emphasis on national unity was not only emphasized in order to raise the standards of the 'backward minorities' as had been the aim of Mao Zedong after liberation, but was also a mechanism used to defuse chauvinist and secessionist attitudes in
China's majority and minorities respectively. To reiterate, Han chauvinism is the tendency of the Han and other dominant nationalities to look down upon, to discriminate against, or otherwise ill-treat the smaller or weaker nationalities. At the opposite end of the spectrum is the other evil, that of local nationalism, meaning the tendency of minority nationalities to secede from the PRC (Mackerras 1994: 146).

The attempts to defuse these and the influence this campaign had on the Korean minority in specific will be analyzed later.

**The Discontent of the Minorities**

Although specific laws for the minorities and their autonomous regions were put into effect not long after liberation, government policy has continually been criticized by them. In fact, these kinds of legislation are sometimes seen as little more than token displays of equality, that in reality, are neither adhered to, nor really accord any concrete benefits.

Heberer states that although some rights were established in the 1950s, they were not backed by the 1954 constitution and therefore there was little guarantee that these rights would be enforced (1989: 41). Even worse, those rights that were guaranteed on paper were not reinforced when the Constitution was amended in later years. "[T]he 1978 constitution did not even grant minorities the rights that they had been given under the 1954 constitution" (1989: 41). In the early 1980s general discontent with these laws, or perhaps the lack of adherence to them by the government, led the minorities to put forth a largely united effort in order to bring about change. The *People's Daily* reported on this conflict.
The minorities' discontent erupted at the third session of the National People's Congress (the Chinese parliament) in September 1980, when heavy criticisms, proposals, and demands from minority delegates were for the first time presented to the public in the daily press. These concessions must be seen from the perspective that the minorities have effectively enjoyed no more than mere paper autonomy since the fifties (Heberer 1989: 41).

They in fact demanded realization of past promises and the establishment of total, rather than limited, regional autonomy. As part of the push for more control over their nationality autonomous regions, the minorities also stressed the need for self-administration (Heberer 1989: 42). Although the airing of the minorities' criticisms was closely followed by the implementation of new minority legislation (in fact the largest and most all-encompassing law to date), it should not be assumed that this was a direct result of their demands. Rather a unique set of circumstances, including China's belief in the socialist path, played a greater role.
Chapter Three: The Aims of Minority Policy and the Law of Regional Autonomy

The present situation of the minorities in China has now been examined. The problems with nationality identification, its theory and the results of the identification process have been discussed as well. It is now time to examine the reasons for this identification on the part of the government. As will become evident in the next few paragraphs, these purposes are closely linked to China's desire to follow the Socialist Path.

The Socialist Path

China's long-range political aims have played an integral role in the implementation of policies for minorities since liberation. Although it is not within the scope of this paper to offer a detailed analysis of Marxist theory, it is important to briefly show how the Chinese belief in this doctrine has influenced current nationality policy in China.

The Marxist theory, that the unification of the proletariat will lead to the emancipation of the masses, has led to continued stress on cohesion and unity for China's nationalities. According to Marx's doctrine, "[i]n history, only the proletariat can really eliminate the segregated state among various nationalities and emancipate every nationality, because only by emancipating all the oppressed nationalities can the proletariat achieve its own final emancipation" (Qiu 1989: 38-39). In this classist analysis then, the proletariat must work to better the situation of those disadvantaged, which in the case of China, are its 55 recognized minorities. Therefore, a policy to promote
equality among the nationalities as well as efforts to improve the minorities' situation have been stressed.

The Socialist Path and Regional Autonomy

In order for China to successfully move along the socialist path, the Law of Regional Autonomy was introduced. "The spirit of strengthening and developing socialist relations among nationalities is reflected in every chapter of the regional autonomy law. It might even be called the law to maintain and develop socialist relations in China" (Beijing Review 25 June 1984: 19). After the introduction of the second Law of Regional Autonomy in 1984, Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, Chairman of the NPC Nationalities Committee pointed out that under Communist Party policy, nationalities in China, regardless of size, are all equal. In fact, the CCP's policy of equality and unity has been implemented to ensure prosperity for all of the various nationalities in the People's Republic of China (25 June 1984: 17). Therefore, laws to help raise the living standards and conditions of the minorities have been established. In this way, "[t]he national policies of the Party and the state are for the benefit of China's national minorities. They are manifestations of the socialist relationships of unity and mutual-aid between different peoples, and are the basic guarantee of the interests of all people in China" (25 June 1984: 19). The chairman also stated that "[b]y implementing regional national autonomy in a multi-national country like [China], the right of each minority group to administer its own internal affairs and the unity of the minorities and unification and independence of the country are
both guaranteed" (Beijing Review 24 June 1984: 17). Thus, the Law of Regional Autonomy and other such policies for minorities in China both benefit the minorities themselves as well as support the socialist aims of the Communist Party and the State.

Not only are socialist relations strengthened by adopting regional autonomy, but this policy also supports Marxist theory. On the structure of the state, Marxists hold that, all else being equal, a unified, large nation is superior to a small nation or a country with a federal system. Lenin developed Marxist theory on national regional autonomy in a unified multi-national country, and pointed out that so long as the nationalities are able to set up a unified state, they should seek national regional autonomy rather than federation or secession (Beijing Review 4 May 1987: 14).

A combination of faith in Marxism, historical circumstances, and the CCP's long-range political goals perhaps led to the adoption of the Law of Regional Autonomy.

Not only does the Law of Regional Autonomy promote unity and cohesion through equality, but it also prohibits discrimination, chauvinism and local nationalism. "In order to reinforce and develop socialist relations, the regional autonomy law points out in its preface that Han nationality chauvinism and local-nationality chauvinism should both be opposed" (Beijing Review 25 June 1984: 19). Therefore, in contrast to the approaches of the past, the Communist Party of China is making an effort to gain the assistance of the minorities by allowing them a greater deal of autonomy and freedom as this will in turn assure the success of the CCP's long-range goals.

Thus far, emphasis has been placed on the implementation of minority legislation and how this will lead to improvement of the
minorities' position as well as accomplish China's aims. However, one must not neglect the role that the minorities themselves play in this process. This situation is not created in a vacuum, but also relies on the willingness and effort put forth by the minorities themselves. "It is because of the minority peoples' own efforts and this assistance that some minority nationalities have been able to leap over several historical stages of development and march forward on the broad road of socialism together with the Han nationality" (Qiu 1989: 38). Although unity is essential, without the agreement and cooperation of the minorities, China would not be able to prosper and realize its aims.

How could socialist construction in China be carried on smoothly if the Han nationality had not gained effectual cooperation from the minority nationalities? There is no doubt that the close cooperation among the various nationalities will greatly promote the economic contacts and cultural exchanges among them and achieve the great goal of common development and common prosperity (1989: 38).

Although the implementation of regional autonomy suggests that the Chinese government supports equality for all and wants to improve the situation of its 55 recognized minorities, one must not forget that implementation of such policies has also benefitted the Han and has helped the government to achieve its own agenda. The minorities themselves benefit China, as citizens that have helped to build China and they continue to play an important part in its success. How the minorities have positively contributed to CCP and State goals, and the dual relationship between these institutions and China's 55
minorities, will be elaborated when possible reasons for the introduction of minority policy in China is addressed.

**The Four Modernizations, Regional Autonomy and the Socialist Path**

Although the first Law of Regional Autonomy was introduced in 1952 and put into effect in 1954, it was not until after the introduction of the four modernizations that concrete measures were put into place for China's 55 minorities.

However, on the whole, China was not firmly set on the road to reform until the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee in December 1978 gave top priority to the four modernizations of industry, agriculture, science and technology, and national defence, and established Deng Xiaoping firmly in power (Mackerras 1994: 140).

Thus, unity, cooperation and emphasis on the four modernizations were seen as necessary factors that could lead China to its ultimate goals. In an effort to maintain these factors then, China has placed importance on its national minorities and laws that benefit them.

**Regional Autonomy: Necessary Conditions for its Implementation**

There are three situations where regional autonomy will be exercised, and autonomous areas established. Keeping in mind the complex relationships between the nationalities of the area, their economic development, and their various historical circumstances, autonomous areas will be established where: 1) one main minority inhabits an autonomous area, 2) one minority in the area comprises a large percentage of the population and other minorities who reside in that area, make up a smaller percentage of the population, or 3) when two or more minorities occupy the same area, with no one minority comprising the majority of the
population (Government of China 1954: 270-271). It is important to note that no specific percentages are used and therefore the Han often comprise the greatest percentage of the population in a minority area. This law also states that some Han MUST reside in these areas, although how many or what percentage is acceptable is not stipulated (Liang, Chen and Yang 1985: 423). Thus, one of three situations must be evident for autonomous areas to be established.

What is Regional Autonomy?

In the preface of the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy, regional autonomy is defined as follows. "Nationality regional autonomy is the fundamental policy of the Chinese Communist Party that uses Marxism and Leninism to solve the nationality problems of our country, and is one of the most important political systems of the nation" (Government of China 1984: 2). According to this theory, one of the ways that nationality problems are to be solved is through the establishment of regional autonomous areas. "According to the Constitution and the Law of Regional National Autonomy, regional national autonomy means that the minority nationalities, under unified state leadership, practise regional autonomy in areas where they live in compact communities, and establish organs of self-government for the exercise of autonomy" (Beijing Review 23-29 Nov. 1987: 25). Regional autonomy and the benefits accorded to minorities in the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy are only practiced in certain areas of China. This results in a large percentage of China's area being allocated as autonomous areas, prefectures or counties.
"Together, the autonomous administrative regions in 1987 covered a total area of 6.1 million square kilometers (64 percent of the area of the country) and comprised a population of 142.5 million people, including more than 62.5 million members of national minorities" (Heberer 1989: 40). Even though these statistics are slightly outdated, two points become evident. First, although China's 55 minorities only comprise a little over eight percent of the total population in China, special areas designated as autonomous comprise over 60 percent of the total land mass. Second, in those specially designated areas, the minorities do not represent the majority, as they only comprise approximately 42 percent of the total population there. The implications of these statistics will be examined when we look at possible reasons for the division of China into autonomous areas and the implementation of nationality policy by the PRC government.

As emphasized above, the main aim of minority policy, and more specifically the two Laws of Regional Autonomy, is to aid the Communist Party of China and its citizens to continue on the socialist path. In order to ensure a unified, concerted effort then, it has been decided that regional autonomy should be implemented.

Nationality regional autonomy, under the unified leadership of the nation, is to carry out regional autonomy in the areas inhabited by each minority, to set up autonomous administrations and to exercise autonomous rights. The implementation of nationality regional autonomy reflects the nation's spirit of fully respecting and protecting every minorities rights to control their own internal affairs, and reflects the nation's principle of continually carrying out equality, unification, and common prosperity for every minority (Government of China 1984: 2).
To state that these are the guiding principles that led to the adoption of special minority policies is not to say that these were the only considerations. Other possible reasons or benefits from the implementation of such legislation will be looked at shortly.

**The Law of Regional Autonomy: The Policy Itself**

The first Law of Regional Autonomy that accorded rights and privileges to China's minorities was passed on February 22, 1952 and implemented two years later. Although this law has been reformulated and amended over the years, this first legislation should be carefully examined. By comparing the two laws of regional autonomy that were written thirty years apart, one will be better aware of any changes that have taken place with regard to minority benefits. This is important because the 1954 Law of Regional Autonomy was heavily criticized by the minorities on the basis that it actually held few benefits and was merely a vague piece of legislation that promised great changes but held few. Therefore, it is important to compare the 1954 and 1984 laws to see if any concrete differences are evident, and if these changes in fact actually 'make a difference' as far as the minorities are concerned.

**The Regional Autonomy Law of 1954**

The Regional Autonomy Law of 1954 guarantees many rights to the minorities that are already guaranteed to the Han. The majority are fundamental rights guaranteed to all citizens of China, and are merely reification of the constitution. For example, "[a]ll the people from the minorities enjoy equal rights
with local Han Chinese in thought, speech, publication, meetings, association, communication, body, residence, movement, religion, and demonstration, which everyone must not discriminate against" (1954: 260). However, there are other clauses in the Law of Regional Autonomy that refer to special benefits allotted only to China's 55 recognized minorities.

The majority of the articles in the 1954 law refer to the regional autonomy of minorities, and appear to be somewhat vague. For example, one article reads "[t]he higher levels of the people's government must respect the autonomous rights of each autonomous region, and help to realize those rights" (1954: 275). At no point is 'respect' defined, and how those rights will be 'realized' is also not clearly delineated.

Another area that is mentioned in the 1954 law has to do with representation of minorities in the administrative units of autonomous governments. The law states that

[t]he people's administration of the autonomous region should mainly be comprised of members from that nationality which carries out regional autonomy; at the same time, it should also include appropriate numbers of members from other minorities and Han Chinese from that autonomous region (1954: 272).

It becomes apparent that this clause does not give concrete benefits to minorities as it uses the word 'should' which leaves some degree of choice open to those in power. Also, it states that 'appropriate numbers' should come from other minorities and the Han. Who decides, and how many people (or what percentage) make up 'appropriate numbers' is also left to the discretion of those in power. Also, by including the Han in this legislation
it is in fact not only benefitting the minorities, but is also protecting the rights of the majority.

Along with rights come duties and obligations. These are also delineated in the 1954 Law of Regional Autonomy. The emphasis on autonomous regions as being parts of a larger whole, inseparable from the People's Republic of China is evident, as is the fact that the autonomy afforded to the special units is strictly regulated by the PRC Government. "Every Nationality Autonomous Region is an inseparable part of the territory of the People's Republic of China. The autonomous administration of every Nationality Autonomous Region is a first rank local regime under the common leadership of the Central Government" (1954: 270). The fact that the autonomous administrations must report to, and have their laws accepted by, the Central Government is also written in the 1984 legislation and is a constant source of discontent amongst the minorities.

**The Regional Autonomy Law of 1984**

The 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy is the most all-encompassing piece of legislation giving rights to minorities in China to date. The State Constitution of December 4, 1982 paved the way for the implementation of this amended policy, and in fact, many stipulations in the constitution were later written into the actual regional autonomy policy itself. "The Law of Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities was adopted on 31 May 1984 and came into operation on 1 October the same year. It followed very closely the ideas already laid down in the State Constitution of 1982, but further embellished and strengthened
them" (Mackerras 1994: 156). In fact the first clause of this legislation states that "[t]he Law of National Regional Autonomy in the Peoples Republic of China is created according to the Constitution of the Peoples Republic of China" (Government of China 1984: 3). Like its 1954 predecessor, it guarantees minorities the basic rights that the Han enjoy. For example, under Section 1 Article 10 of the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy, it states that minorities in autonomous areas have the right to develop their own language and writing, and also the freedom to keep or reform their own customs and traditions (1984: 4-5). But unlike the former 1954 law, it seems to offer more concrete benefits for China's 55 recognized minorities and attempts to expand those autonomous powers accorded to them 30 years earlier (Mackerras 1994: 155).

Altogether there are seven sections in the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy, which is seventeen pages in length. Officially it was put into effect to maintain, and emphasize the need for, unity amongst the nationalities living in the PRC, as well as to facilitate movement along the socialist path. As its name infers, this law's main focus is to delineate the boundaries and to some extent ensure the implementation of autonomy for China's minority groups.

The 1984 law states that China's nationality areas are divided into autonomous regions, prefectures, and counties with the greatest power being held by the regions. Like its predecessor 30 years earlier, the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy also emphasizes that these areas are inseparable parts of the
People's Republic of China (Government of China 1984: 3). While examining some of the specific benefits that the minorities have been accorded in greater detail, it is important to point out that most of these benefits can only be realized by those minorities living within the autonomous zones mentioned above.

A large part of the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy is devoted to delineating the control that the minorities have in their own autonomous zones. "Autonomy does not mean that these regions have the right to secede from the sovereign territory of the People's Republic of China, but it does mean that, under the 'direction of higher authorities,' they enjoy certain special rights over other administrative units" (Heberer 1989: 40). The limited autonomy that they receive is one of the most criticized aspects of nationality law. Although technically they are allowed to decide whether to adopt, change or not implement State laws, their own laws must be approved by higher levels of government.

If resolutions, decisions, decrees and instructions of the higher-level state departments do not suit the practical situations of the autonomous localities, the organizations of self-government may alter or simply not implement them, provided that they have the approval of the state department concerned (Government of China 1984: 7).

Although the minorities are supposed to be able to create their own laws according to their specific circumstances and needs, it becomes apparent that they do have limitations. The policies that they choose to adopt must not only be in accordance with the Constitution and the law (Beijing Review 25 June 1984: 18), but must be approved by higher levels of government, which have the
ultimate decision when it comes to adopting or vetoing a law.

The People's Congress of the nationality autonomous areas have the right to create autonomous regulations and separate regulations according to the characteristics of their local nationality politics, economy and culture. These autonomous regulations and separate regulations in the autonomous region go into effect after being reported to the standing committee of the National People's Congress. The autonomous regulations and separate regulations of the autonomous prefectures and counties go into effect after being reported and approved by the standing committee of the People's Congress of the province or the autonomous region and put on record after being reported and approved by the standing committee of the National People's Congress (Government of China 1984: 7).

Therefore, one must realize that the minorities do not exercise total control over their areas, but rather partial autonomy. This often does not result in the minorities actually governing their own affairs.

According to their local situation, the autonomous administrations of the nationality autonomous areas have the right to adopt special policies and special measures to accelerate the development of the economy and culture in nationality autonomous areas when they are not against the principles of the constitution and the law (1984: 4).

It seems that they are permitted to develop their own policies in order to suit their unique situation. However, the next article points out that this autonomy is never at cost to the whole. "The autonomous administration of the nationality autonomous areas must put the overall interests of the whole nation first and enthusiastically fulfil every task given to them by higher levels of the national administration" (1984: 4). Therefore, what appears to be control of government in recognized autonomous areas, in fact results in little more than paper privileges.

Another of the more well known sections in the Regional
Autonomy Law of 1984 focuses on the representation of minorities in government. According to the law,

The chairmanship of the autonomous region, head of the prefecture, and county magistrate shall be citizens of the nationality exercising regional autonomy. The other members of the People's Government in the autonomous region, prefecture, county shall be chosen from members of that nationality and other minorities exercising regional autonomy (1984: 6-7).

As a result of enacting this law, minorities, once numerically underrepresented at all levels of government, now more than outnumber their actual percentage in the population. "Of the 2,978 deputies to the Sixth National People's Congress (NPC) in 1983, there were 405 from minorities, constituting 13.5 per cent of the total. The smallest ethnic minorities - the Hezhe and Lhoba - which have fewer than 2,000 people, have their own representatives in the NPC" (Beijing Review 22 Oct. 1984: 7).

Not only do minorities comprise a larger percentage of those who sit in government positions, but rights governing legal hearings have also been established. For example, when carrying out litigation every minority individual has the right to have his/her own language used (Mackerras 1994: 156).

The 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy also contains economic provisions for minorities who reside in autonomous regions. "The nationality autonomous areas can launch foreign economic trade activities with the approval of the State and can also set up foreign trade ports with the approval of the State department" (Government of China 1984: 9). Not only are they permitted to deal in foreign trade, but nationality governments are able to spend their own revenue from these transactions, and are able to
receive subsidies from higher level departments to offset their losses if they have them (Beijing Review 25 June 1984: 18). Also, the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy stipulates that special funds must be set aside to help the minority areas develop their own culture and economy (Government of China 1984: 15). "To promote economic and cultural development in the minority areas, the state allocated more than 83 billion yuan (about US $33 billion) between 1950 and 1983" (Beijing Review 22 Oct. 1984: 8). These minority regions even enjoy lower taxes on some projects as well (Government of China 1984: 8). Also under this legislation, "[t]he autonomous administration of the nationality autonomous areas can, under the guidance of national planning and according to the characteristics and needs of the locality, create economic principles, policies and plans" (1984: 8). However, as mentioned earlier, higher levels of State government can reject any laws or decisions that they do not deem suitable. Lastly, when the state administration decides upon its means of production and means of subsistence, they must look after the needs of the minority areas according to the Law of Regional Autonomy (1984: 15). In conclusion, when comparing the two regional autonomy laws, it becomes apparent that some economic benefits were added to the 1984 document. Whether these adjustments resulted in any concrete economic dividends for China's minorities remains to be established however.

Educational Benefits and the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy

When China's minorities achieved the right to adapt or enact new policies and laws this also indirectly allowed them autonomy
in other areas. One of these is education. "Autonomous areas may develop their educational system independently in accordance with the state's educational policy, making their own plans, deciding on the establishment of schools, and the forms of schooling, the curriculum, the language used in teaching and method of enrolling students" (Beijing Review 25 June 1984: 18).

The present situation and benefits allotted to minorities in the area of education will be addressed when education policies are examined in greater detail.

According to the state's education policy and the stipulations of the law, the autonomous administration of the nationality autonomous area decides its local education programmes, school systems, forms of running schools, teaching content, languages of instruction, method of enrolment for different levels and different kinds of schools (Government of China 1984: 11).

Of course, these decisions all have to be approved by higher levels of government and there appears to be little variation between minority educational institutions and Han institutions.

The state establishes nationality colleges and nationality classes and nationality preparatory courses specially for the enrolment of minority students in higher level universities. They can also adopt directional enrolment and education measures. When higher level universities and vocational schools enrol new students, they must appropriately relax the enrolment criteria and requirements for minority students (1984: 17).

The stipulations above are somewhat vague as the words 'appropriately relax' and 'can' allow for choice on the part of those required to enact special policies. Also, variations can sometimes be seen in the individual treatment of students, as some receive benefits because they are living in recognized autonomous areas.
Aside from the areas of politics, education, family planning, and economics, minorities living within the autonomous regions enjoy other privileges as outlined by the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy. For example, the law states "[w]hen the enterprises and institutions in the nationality autonomous areas recruit more members, minorities must be given priority ..." (1984: 8). Also, the autonomous areas have the right to recruit their own public security forces, although these first have to approved by the State department (1984: 8). This does not mean that all, or even a large percentage of, the police and other security forces are minorities, but rather that the administrative unit holds the power to choose its own force.

**Criticisms of China's Laws of Regional Autonomy**

There are many criticisms levelled at the laws set up to benefit the minorities. The first is with regard to representation in government. The government and its officials point to increases in the number of minority representatives in parliament to show that the Law of Regional Autonomy has brought about definite change. They quote that "[o]n a per capita ratio this gives them twice the number of seats to which they would be entitled on a simple percentage basis" (Sinclair 1987: 114). Having a higher percentage of minority delegates in government promotes a positive image of the minorities, as well as shows the willingness of the government to bring about change. However, as Sinclair makes clear, "these delegated are all loyal Party or government officials who are not going to rock the ship of state..." (1987: 114). This means that it does not matter if
these minority representatives occupy seats in government as they are often loyal to those in power and are not loyal to their own minority. Also, larger percentages in the government do not correspond to increases in CCP membership. Mackerras states that this increase in elected representatives only refers to the government, not to the Party (CCP). In China there is a distinction between Party and the government, with the members of the CCP holding more power than elected government representatives (Mackerras 1994: 156). Therefore, promising the minorities larger representation in government is not as important an act as it first appears, because control still remains with the Han.

Although the 1954 and 1984 Laws of Regional Autonomy accorded some fundamental rights to minorities throughout China, these laws focussed on those living within the various designated autonomous regions. This presents a problem for those minorities who live outside of these domains.

Approximately 11 million members of national minorities (roughly one-sixth of the total) live outside autonomous regions in 'mixed' regions; another 5.7 million have no autonomy because of their relatively sparse settlement patterns. Since these 18.7 million enjoy no effective autonomy, it is doubly difficult for them to lay claim to any rights at all, let alone to realize them (Heberer 1989: 53).

This leaves them with two options: to move to a minority area or to go without many of the privileges accorded to others who are the same nationality as themselves. If they wish to relocate in minority areas, minority members must first have permission from the Central Government and then from the autonomous
administration of the minority area. Also, they, in moving into an autonomous area, have far greater likelihood of being with those labelled the same as themselves and will reside in the border regions as this is where the majority of autonomous areas are located. Thus, although the laws of regional autonomy accord minorities equal rights and benefits, some minority individuals are unable to realize them.

The next criticism of minority legislation lies in the discrepancy between adoption of laws and evidence that these laws are being carried out. That is, adopting a policy does not necessary mean that it will be put into practice. "For that reason, laws are ineffectual because they remain subordinate to the party's claim for political power, and thereby leave the minority population subject to the despotism and arbitrary wills of authorities and functionaries" (Heberer 1989: 43). Even if these laws are implemented as they are written in the Constitution, many clauses are too vague or difficult to enforce and do not offer any concrete benefits to China's national minorities.

Formally, the 1984 law grants the autonomous units more rights. But evaluation of the law reveals that the clauses are formulated in such general terms that the law is ineffectual without supplemental and substantial legislation. They may provide guidelines for future legislative regulations, but for now their legislative bark is stronger than their bite (1989: 43).

Therefore, although the laws appear promising at first, perhaps the symbolism of adopting laws for minorities carries more weight and significance than the actual laws themselves. Also,

The Communist Party of China considers a set of legal
instruments sufficient protection for the rights of minorities. But Chinese experience has shown that during periods of ideological and political radicalization, laws and legal decrees quickly lose their force. The 'laws' therefore offer no legal security, at least as long as the Communist Party stands above the law (1989: 43).

Also, as was evidenced when the history of minorities in China was discussed, policies toward minorities have fluctuated over time. Not only have different governments in China adopted various measures, but the governments themselves have been known to change their views toward minorities while in power. Thus, actually having the laws does not mean that they will be enforced.

Is Controlled Autonomy Really Autonomy?

As has been mentioned above, the largest criticism of Regional Autonomy Law is that it does not afford enough control to the minorities and their autonomous administrations.

Autonomy is subject to the interest of both the state and the Communist Party of China. The constitution (which inter alia implies adherence to the socialist system) and precepts of the state at large are binding for all nationalities. Within this scope, the nationalities are theoretically entitled to make their own decisions on development concepts - that is, with approval from above. This approval requirement is in effect a safeguard against a region or minority in one way or another pulling out of the union. Thus autonomy is severely restricted from the very outset (1989: 52).

In theory, the autonomous administrations have the right to create their own laws or choose not to implement state laws. In reality however, if the state does not support the changes proposed by the autonomous administration, it can override these decisions as a parent does a child.

In these regions, the language(s) and writing(s) of the
region's autonomous nationality (or nationalities) should be used; administration must (or should) be in the hands of functionaries from the minority population; the regions can promulgate their own laws and regulations, draw up their own production plans (within the bounds of the central state plan), and choose their own path of economic and cultural development (within the lines of the constitution). Furthermore, the autonomous regions can administer local finances themselves (within the framework of financial planning for the state as a whole), and can have their own local security forces (1989: 40-41).

In the above quote, Heberer notes that following these laws is not a necessity but a choice. In sum, the autonomy afforded the autonomous regions is limited autonomy at best.
Chapter Four: Other Policies that Affect Minorities

China's Minorities and Education: Other Benefits

Aside from those stipulations in the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy, minorities enjoy other educational benefits as well.

'Nationality Schools,' in which the language of the local minority or minorities is the language of instruction, have been restored or new ones established in recent years in minority regions. Children from ethnic minorities may study in these nationality schools at state expense until they complete the upper level of secondary school, which allows them to take part in the universities' admission examinations (Heberer 1989: 50).

As will be mentioned later, during the late 1970s a campaign against local nationalism led the government of China to change the language of instruction in minority schools and universities. Since the 1900s nationality schools have had the option of teaching in their own languages. However, in the late 1970s this privilege was lifted and classes were all taught in China's official language regardless of what institution students were attending. This is because instructing minorities in their own languages was seen to promote local nationalism and superiority complexes amongst the minorities and to contradict integration and national unity. However, in the 1980s,

...guided by this new orientation toward minority nationalities, the Chinese government restored the use of minority languages, provided additional funds for construction of minority schools, developed textbooks in minority languages, and paid more attention to training minority cadres and teachers (Lee 1986: 100, 103).

Aside from investment at the institutional level, individual study incentives were also increased. "It also increased annual
educational subsidies to minority students from three to five yuán per student in primary schools and from fourteen to twenty yuán per student in middle schools" (Lee 1986: 103). These sums of money, although very little, perhaps play an important role in the delineation and maintenance of nationality boundaries as they separate minorities who receive benefits, from the Han who do not. Although members of the same minority living in the same area receive the same monthly allotment, the amount of this study incentive varies from minority to minority. The perspectives of some minority students who receive this money will be discussed when examining the specific situation of Korean-Chinese students in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture.

Minority students who enter university or college also enjoy other advantages that their Han peers do not. "Many universities have set up courses to help prepare minority applicants for the examinations, for which their passing grade is lower than for Han" (Heberer 1989: 51). Minorities can enter universities with lower entrance exam scores than the majority. However, this privilege varies from minority to minority and is region dependent as well. Nevertheless, preparatory courses and lower entrance requirements allow some minority individuals a chance to receive the higher education that they would not have had if these laws were not in place. Also, there are nationality universities, colleges and institutes, that admit Han students, but for the most part give enrolment preference to those belonging to China's 55 recognized minority groups.

To ensure greater participation of minority students in
Some minority students are even offered special courses and scholarships in order to encourage them to remain in their autonomous region after graduation. "Eleven Nationalities Institutes (minzu xueyuan - special universities) offer specialized courses for students from minority regions if they agree to return to their region. Admission is based on a quota system of so many persons of each nationality" (Heberer 1989: 51). It will become apparent however, that some of these benefits also come with obligations. Thus, although these privileges allow for greater opportunities for minority students, they also place added stress and pressure on these individuals.

**Concerns With Regard to Minority Education**

The advantages that minorities enjoy also come with some disadvantages as well. The first can be seen as an indirect result of the newly renewed emphasis on aiding minorities in general. Yanjiu Tuanjie, a popular journal in China, stated that some Han individuals are resorting to bribery and other false measures in order achieve minority status.

Since members of ethnic minorities should be given priority in admission to institutions of higher learning as well as in hiring and promotion, Han Chinese have attempted in recent years to register their children in minority regions through illegal means, including bribery and connections, and have them declared members of national minorities. They also submit falsified proof that their ancestors were members of minorities (1989: 51).
Although officially, government spokespeople do not admit that this is a large problem, both Han individuals and minority members note that this is often the case. One Han individual stated that he had paid 10,000 Renminbi (equivalent to about $1600 Canadian) per person for himself and his wife to become minority citizens. He stated that it is quite easy to change one's status from Han to minority if one has the money. In their case, the couple wanted to change their official status so that they could enjoy minority benefits, which include educational opportunities for their daughter, as well as the chance to have another child. After their minority status was changed, they decided not to have a second child but still wanted to maintain their newly established status (Interview #5 June 1996).

Another problem voiced by minorities with regard to education is the concern that with educational aid and an increased education level, some individuals will either subconsciously become more like the Han, or will deliberately turn their backs on their minority identity. Although China has special nationality universities, this does not necessarily mean that the language of instruction is a minority language. As will be seen later, although Yanbian University in Jilin Province was the first minority university established in China and is situated in the heart of the Korean Autonomous Prefecture, Mandarin Chinese is used as the language of instruction. Therefore,

[t]here is a danger that the future upper stratum of minorities will no longer know their own ethnic language and will spurn their own ethnic group... A
rise in the level of education would come to mean an increased assimilation and sinification of the minority populations, and a decreased level of identity for these people (Heberer 1989: 51).

As was evident when discussing minority members in congress, it is feared that an increase in educational level could result in individuals distancing themselves from their cultural heritage and way of life in favour of the Han lifestyle.

**Family Planning and China's Minorities**

Presently the one-child policy in China is strictly enforced. It has been in effect since the 1970s and is an effort to reduce China's growing population and aid its socialist drive.

The plan calls for each couple to have only one child, and for families with one child to enjoy certain advantages (monthly subsidies, better kindergartens and schools, larger residences, larger plots of tillable land in the countryside, etc.). These advantages are to lapse if an additional child is born. However, if the first child is handicapped or dies, another birth is permissible. Exceptions to the rule are peasants in problem areas, ethnic minorities, and couples themselves who were only children, all of whom are allowed to have more than one child (1989: 74).

When asked how China enforces this policy, Chen Muhua, Director of the National Family Planning Committee, had several responses. She stated that the launch of propaganda campaigns and the education of the masses are effective measures (*Guangming Ribao* 27 Oct. 1981). Other methods include to:

- Enthusiastically advocate late marriage, late pregnancy, fewer births, eugenics, encourage one child per couple, supply couples that adopt birth control measures with free preventative pregnancy medicine and instruments, offer free sterilization operations, and offer paid recuperation for those who undergo such operations (27 Oct. 1981).

It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the merits or
drawbacks of such legislation, but rather to point out briefly that the one-child policy does exist.

China's recognized minorities have by and large been exempt from following this policy. However, in the early 1980s, the Chinese government officially stated that minorities would no longer be totally exempt from family planning, although it was stressed that they would not have to follow the policy to the same extent as the Han. "In The Instructions About Further Improving Family Planning announced by the Central Government of the Communist Party and the State in 1982, it clearly stipulated: 'the minorities also must adopt the policy of family planning, but the requirements should be relaxed a little.'" (Xu 1986: 36). After this decision was passed, the Central government allowed the autonomous administrations to implement and enforce their own family planning according to their special needs. However, only two years later, the Central Government imposed its own restrictions. Changes to the 1980 policy that further restricted childbirths appeared in the Xinan Minzu Xueyan Xuebao soon after.

In 1984 the central authorities ruled that the one-child family should be encouraged for minorities comprising more than ten million members (which has so far affected only one group, the Zhuang) and that all other nationalities could have two children per couple, and under special circumstances even three; four children or more were not to be permitted (Heberer 1989: 81-82).

Thus, although it first appears that the Central Government left the issue of family planning solely up to the autonomous administrations, this was not the case.

Document 117, announced in October 1985, clearly stipulated that in cities and towns two children per
couple is advocated for minorities, three children are allowed for couples with special circumstances; in the countryside (including pastoral areas) three children are allowed per couple, and four children are allowed for those with special circumstances. One child per couple is not encouraged for the minorities (Xu 1986: 37).

Therefore, limits on minority autonomy have once again been evidenced. However, some minorities are able to support their own autonomous administration's family planning policies while not contradicting those of the government.

As some policies were implemented by the autonomous governments of each region, there has been some variation between and among groups. Some policies enacted by the autonomous governments support up to four children, while a large number encourage two to be the maximum (Heberer 1989: 82). It is interesting to note that as these policies are only valid within autonomous areas. There is no mention made of special policies for minorities that live outside of these areas.

**Possible Reasons for Relaxation of Family Planning for Minorities**

Although possible reasons for the implementation and approval of special policies for China's 55 recognized minorities will be addressed in the next section, it is important to point out that the relaxation of minority birth control policy could be related to the percentage that the minorities hold of the total population. Some minorities are afraid that if they reduce or control their births it could result in a reduction of their percentage of China's population. As they see it, this could result in a loss of rights and/or benefits, or perhaps even an end to recognition as an official minority. This could be based
on the fact that "[t]he life expectancy of minorities is lower than that of Han. There are manifold reasons for this, among them poorer living, work, geographical, and nutritional conditions" (Heberer 1989: 92). However, as Xu points out, this kind of concern is unwarranted. Since the establishment of New China the growth of minorities has exceeded that of the national average. If the family policy is followed as planned, the population of China's 55 minorities will still steadily increase (1986: 38). It is important to clarify however, that the average percentage of births for minorities will steadily increase if current trends continue. Thus, perhaps some minorities who have shown steady decreases in population growth and corresponding drops in population numbers actually do have reason for concern. Therefore, perhaps this could have been a factor that resulted in the relaxation of population policy for China's minorities.

**Conflicts Between Family Planning and China's Minorities**

Being restricted to having only one child can conflict with the values and beliefs of some minority cultures or merely not coincide with individual desires. Many minorities prefer to have more than one child in order to guarantee that someone will care for them when they are aged, because they feel the need to combat the mortality rate or the presumed mortality rate, and because some minorities place emphasis on having sons to carry on the family name (Heberer 1989: 79). "For them, to have more male heirs means more blessing for the parents" (Yan 1989: 80). Some minorities that have traditionally had large families do not see the necessity of reducing births. In fact, they tend to be
extremely wary of government encouragement, as it is viewed as a method of adaptation, where one could lose one's culture and become less like 'us' and more like 'them'. "Birth control seems to many minorities to be an attempt at assimilation, making family planning in these regions an explosive issue" (Heberer 1989: 79). Therefore, reducing the number of births, whether through force or through encouragement, presents some serious problems for many minorities.

While some minorities are concerned that their population will dwindle as a result of encouraging one child per couple, their Han counterparts are afraid of the opposite. As the one-child policy is strictly enforced for the Han, they do not see how the minority populations can do anything other than occupy a greater and greater percentage of the total population. "In 1986, according to official data, 99.7 percent of the Han but only 66 percent of minorities adhered to family planning policies" (Renmin Ribao May 3, 1987 in Heberer 1989: 83). If this trend continues, perhaps the Han will occupy a smaller and smaller majority, until the minorities become the majority. "A population expert calculated that the Han could be only a bare majority, if at all, in just 100 years if the one-child family were to become the rule for the Han" (1989: 84-85). However, the majority of Chinese, both Han and minorities, do not believe that this could happen. In fact, both sides state that there would be no need to severely restrict minority births as the Han will never be outnumbered by the minorities.
Some Other Concerns for China's Minorities

Another area of minority discontent is the lack of control they have in regulating immigrants moving into their autonomous zones.

Assimilation is not directly intended (as it was during the Cultural Revolution), but the creation of a Han majority in the minority regions will undoubtedly encourage it. And the fact that the minorities perceive it in this way is shown by their resistance to the influx of Han and to mixed marriages (Heberer 1989: 98).

In the 1984 Law of Regional Autonomy there is a stipulation that protects the Han by guaranteeing the election of Han individuals to minority regions. Therefore, some non-minorities must live within China's recognized autonomous areas. The steady increase of Han into these regions has resulted in the minorities actually comprising a smaller and smaller percentage of the population in nationality autonomous areas. The Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture is an excellent example. When the area was established the Korean-Chinese held the majority. However, in combination with their low birth rate and the increasing numbers of Han relocating to the area, the combined percentage of minorities in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture (all fifteen minorities) is not as great as the percentage of the Han majority occupying the area. As many minorities see it,

[i]mmigration policy was and is a violation of the rights of the autonomy of minorities, even if it has helped to create an industrial base for their regions. The autonomous administrative units have neither the means nor the rights to undertake countermeasures. The influx of large segments of the Han population undermines the strength of the autonomous minority of a region, and it can also disrupt the economic structure (1989: 97-98).
However, according to the government of China, there are important reasons that support the migration of Han to minority areas. Firstly, a larger population would make better use of the abundant natural resources that occupy many minority areas. Secondly, an increase in population (Han) would serve as greater protection against foreign threat and invasion and would make the borders more militarily secure. Next, internal migration from areas of high population density (Han areas) to those of low population density (minority regions) would result in an evening out of population density and relieve the burden in overpopulated areas, while still benefitting the less populated ones. Lastly, the mixing of Han and minorities could lead to lead to integration of minorities into the 'Chinese' mainstream (1989: 96). However, in conflict with the reasons espoused by the government of China, the minorities see this influx of 'others' into recognized minority areas as a threat to themselves and to the autonomy that they hold so dear (Interview #1 March 1996).

**Minority Policy: Why was it Created?**

In the previous section, the benefits accorded to just over eight percent of China's population were examined, as were the problems and contradictions that have resulted. It is now important to examine why these policies have been put in place - why those that hold the power and are clearly in the majority have willingly adopted special legislation to aid the minorities. It is important both to examine the official reasons given, as well as to speculate on other possible factors that played a role.
To successfully continue along the socialist path, China has emphasized both the four modernizations and the development of its economy. Giving aid and other benefits to the minorities who live in China's border areas then, holds strategic importance as far as the government of China is concerned. This is first due to the abundance of resources in China's border regions. "Minority areas contain large quantities of unworked mineral deposits, the majority of China's forestland, and over 80 percent of her meat-, milk-, and wool-supplying animals. Effective exploitation of these could result in a marked improvement of the Chinese standard of living" (Dreyer 1976: 4). Not only are valuable resources available, but the minorities provide a cheap work force willing to extract such minerals. Therefore, the efforts of the minorities (as well as the Han living in the area) will not only result in raising their standard of living, but will also benefit the whole nation.

Next, the area occupied by a large percentage of China's minorities is strategic for another reason as well. Located in China's outlying areas, the autonomous regions and the minorities living there are important for border defense. As Marx stated, the ideal is to have a large unified country, rather than a smaller one. By occupying the outer areas that perhaps the Han are not as willing to live in, the minorities are able to strengthen China's position.

If hostile to [Beijing] government, such minorities could weaken border defense, increase the danger of attack by a foreign power, and result in loss of territory for the Chinese People's Republic (CPR). Conversely, an enthusiastically Communist Chinese
minority group not only strengthens border defense, but provides potential for infiltrating a neighboring state's borders and for increasing the territory of the CPR (1976: 3).

The outlying areas are not nearly as densely populated as China's other regions. In fact, although China's 55 recognized minorities only comprise approximately eight percent of the total population, their occupation of about 60 percent of China's total land mass (a large percentage of which is located in border areas) allows them some power and leverage.

Since so many of China's minority nationalities live near borders, they have inevitably exercised some effect on China's relations with its neighbours, in some cases significantly, in others in only a mild or unimportant way. Many of China's minorities have conationals on the other side of the PRC's borders with foreign countries (Mackerras 1994: 167).

The Korean Autonomous Prefecture, situated in China's North-Eastern Jilin province, in fact borders North Korea, the area from which the Korean-Chinese' ancestors came from. If discontent were to surface, the Korean minority could side with its conational in North Korea, or even secede and move across the border. In conclusion, keeping the minorities content with their present situation is important for accomplishing the socialist drive as well as for ensuring that China's borders are well protected.

Another factor that could have led to the introduction of such favorable policies is the ideological importance of such benefits. Although, in the case of the Korean minority, many of the benefits accorded to them are left unused or do not amount to any major changes, they are unwilling to give them up. Three
Korean-Chinese individuals stated that this is because of the 'feelings' that come as a result of these benefits, and the fact that they are one of China's official national minorities (Interviews #1, #7, and #10 June 1996). By allocating special benefits to the minorities in order for them to 'feel special', this serves to reduce their discontent and demonstrates the success of China's political system. "A prosperous, contented minority population is living proof of the successes the Chinese model of socialism can have for non-Han peoples. On the other hand, rebellious minority groups protesting oppression can only lend credence to the claims of the enemies of the CPR" (Dreyer 1976: 4). Not only does it show off China's strengths, but it is also a mechanism used to minimize China's bad reputation as far as its human rights are concerned. These policies also serve as a way to make up for past injustices, which according to those currently in power, were not the fault of their government, but rather of governments in the past. In this sense it tends to reduce the fears of some minorities with regard to assimilation, as television, radio and other propaganda advertise China's contented minorities. Therefore, while aiding China along its socialist path, giving special considerations to its 55 minorities also has other results.
Chapter Five: Putting Theory to Practice: The Korean Case

The Korean Minority: Why it Represents a Special Case

To this point, the construction, identification and history of minorities in China have been addressed. The current laws pertaining to China's 55 minorities in the areas of education and childbirth as well as their autonomous policies have also been examined. It is now important to use this information -- to examine how the unique situation of the minorities in China, combined with the present policies have resulted in their present circumstances.

To accomplish this, the remainder of this work will focus on one minority, the Korean-Chinese, as they are a special case. As early as the late 1950s "[t]he Koreans seemed to be adapting rather well, and their achievements were usually praised throughout China: they were cited as models in the local as well as national press. The Koreans were far from being a 'trouble-making' nationality" (Olivier 1993: 89). This essay will focus mainly on their achievements in the respects of education and reduction in child births, although these are not the only areas that set the Korean minority apart from the others. Their educational level and adherence to the one-child policy praised as being the highest among the minorities, but they have even surpassed the Han in these respects. These two factors will be examined to show the steps the Korean-Chinese took to achieve their present position, how they adapted and/or used the benefits accrued to them as minorities, and the concerns they have with
regard to their lives in China and present minority policy.

The Koreans: Their Immigration To China

The historical situation of the Korean minority in the context of China is unique. Until about the 1950s, in contrast to most nationalities whose populations were regulated primarily through natural reproduction, the population of the Korean minority was dependent on immigration from Korea. Although they can be seen as relatively recent immigrants, there appears to be little consensus as to when the Koreans first came to China.

Some scholars state that Koreans migrated to China as early as the Tang Dynasty, while others believe the migration occurred at the end of the Ming dynasty or beginning of the Qing Dynasty. Some theorists argue that Koreans didn't settle in China's Northeast until much later, in the middle of the nineteenth century (Jin 1984: 80). However, the majority of scholars agree that the first waves of Koreans who came to China should not be linked to China's present day Korean minority. This is because a large percentage of them were illegal immigrants and they were not in China for a substantial length of time.

Koreans arrived in China before the middle of the 19th century. Some went willingly, while others were forced to go. During the Qing Dynasty, more Koreans entered China, this time through illegal means. However, most of them were forced to return to Korea by the Chinese government. The few settlers that remained in China, largely in Liaoning province, did not tend to keep their Korean lifestyle. Instead, they assimilated into the Han culture and adapted the Han way of life. For this reason,
the immigrants who came during these earlier periods have no clear linkages to China's present day Korean minority (1984: 80).

According to Huang, Korean immigration to China can be seen as consisting of four periods: 1) late 1600s to mid 1800s; 2) mid 1800s to early 1900s; 3) around the 1910s; and 4) 1920s to 1940s (1993: 57). The first period of immigrants, as noted above, is not considered as having strong linkages with the Korean minority in China and are therefore not relevant to this discussion. However, the latter three periods will now be discussed.

The second period of Korean immigration, which began in the middle of the nineteenth century, can be characterized as immigration due to economic hardship. In the 1860s, natural disasters which resulted in famine in two of Korea's northern provinces, Hamgyong and P'yongan, led to the immigration of Koreans across the border into China (Olivier 1993: 19). However, this was illegal immigration and was not supported by either China or Korea. It was not until 1879 that a treaty was signed to promote friendly relations between the two countries, and afforded protection for those Koreans already residing in China. However, it was made clear that further immigration would not be tolerated on both sides (1993: 19). Construction of railways, and a treaty signed in 1883 that regulated trade between Jilin Province and neighboring Korea, led to the removal of the ban on immigration just a few years later. The removal of this restriction led to mass immigration of Koreans into China's Northeastern Jilin Province, mainly along the Tumen River, in the
present day Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture (1993: 19). Thus the latter part of the 19th century saw an influx of Koreans who were escaping the famine in their home country and hoping to better their lives in Northeast China.

The third period, which began around 1910, also saw large numbers of Koreans settling in China's northeastern provinces. "According to Japanese figures, between 1910 and 1920, 98,657 Koreans migrated to the north of the Yalu River in the region west of the Sino-Korean border, while 93,883 went to the area north of the Tumen River to the east, making a total of 192,540" (Mackerras 1994: 124). At this time, Japan had annexed Korea and was a large presence in this country. Koreans revolutionaries who opposed the Japanese, and Koreans fearing Japanese exploitation, freely migrated to China (Huang 1993: 58-59). "The annexation of Korea set off a big wave of Korean immigration into Northeast China that affected not only Yanbian, but the whole Northeast. That significantly altered the character of Korean immigration, with political reasons for emigration becoming increasingly more important" (Olivier 1993: 21-22). As was the case in the late 1880s, a treaty was signed relating to Koreans living in China. This document, the Sino-Japanese Agreement, was signed by Japan and China in September of 1909 (Lee 1986: 17). "In accordance with Article 5, Koreans were given the right to own land and dwellings, to freely cross the Tumen River in either direction, and to export their products from Yanbian. Meanwhile, by 1910, there were more than a quarter of a million Koreans in Manchuria" (1986: 19). More importantly, the recognized presence
of the Koreans in China supplied the Japanese with an excuse to govern their affairs there. "As soon as Japan annexed Korea in 1910, it claimed that all Koreans in China were, by definition, Japanese subjects. The Japanese used Koreans as a convenient vehicle for expanding their influence in Manchuria at a time when China was preoccupied with the confusing dynamics of governmental changes and warlord politics" (1986: 19). Thus, the political situation in Korea during the 1910s led to the migration of Koreans into China.

The last period, 1920-1945, can be characterized as impelled immigration due to economic factors. Japanese rule in Korea resulted in many Koreans losing their land and livelihood, and this made Koreans willing to make new lives in China (Huang 1993: 57-60).

The number of Korean residents in China grew to about 459,000 in 1920 and to about 607,000 in 1930. A large majority of Koreans went to China to avoid economic hardship at home and to seek new opportunities on the bustling Manchurian frontier... Still others escaped Japan's repressive colonial rule in Korea and joined the rising anti-Japanese movements in Manchuria (Lee 1986: 22).

However, in many cases life in China was not as easy as it had first appeared. During the 1920s in Manchuria "[m]any Koreans suffered from a combination of hardship and tragedy - capricious local taxation and economic exploitation, armed banditry, mass atrocities, and various physical punishments" (1986: 22-23). Upon realizing that their circumstances had only worsened in China, some of those who had left Korea willingly returned in the 1920s. The situation was so severe that the number of
repatriates that returned to Korea reached 35 percent by 1928 (1986: 23).

In the early 1930s the trend changed again, when many Koreans were forced to relocate to mainland China. "Korean migration intensified when Japan actually set up its state of Manchuria in 1932. The Japanese adopted a fifteen-year plan to move some 1.5 million Koreans to Manchuria which, though never fully implemented, made a very substantial impact on the Korean population in China" (Mackerras 1994: 124). Lee states that the reasoning behind this plan was twofold. Firstly, the Japanese were in desperate need of labour to help carry out their ambitions in the newly established Manchukuo, which was the state that the Japanese set up in northern China. And secondly, by sending the Koreans abroad, the Japanese encountered little resistance when they took over Korean farmlands (Lee 1986: 27).

Even though the 15-year plan was not fully implemented, the number of Koreans in China passed the million mark in 1938 and reached about 1.3 million in 1941 - the year when the Pacific War started. Unlike earlier Korean immigrants, the new ones came from the southern provinces of Korea and moved not only to Yanbian, but also to the northern areas of Manchuria (Lee 1986: 28).

In the 1930s, under Japanese rule, the Koreans were awarded dual citizenship (Manchukuon and Japanese). This was not a privilege accorded to China's Han majority however. Therefore, Koreans occupied higher legal status than their Han counterparts although they were forced to move to China under the state of Manchuko (1986: 26).

Despite (or perhaps due to) their special treatment under
Japan's colonial rule of Manchuria, many Koreans returned to their homeland after Japan's surrender in 1945 (Mackerras 1994:124). Those who left China were mostly individuals who feared the Communists or had sided with the Japanese during the war. Some also wished to return to their homeland where they felt the linkages were stronger (Olivier 1993: 57-58). "Those with leftist sympathies went to the northern part of the Korean Peninsula, which had been divided at the 38th parallel as soon as liberation came, while those with more conservative leanings went south, but most simply returned to their homes" (Mackerras 1994:124). Those who decided to stay in China did so perhaps because: they had already made new lives in China and had both other family members and possessions there, they still wanted to make a success of their immigration to China, and some individuals were part of the Communist movement. Perhaps more importantly, since immediately following liberation crossing the border was not prohibited, some Koreans remained in China to see what would happen in both countries before deciding where to live (Olivier 1993: 57-58). However, after Japanese control was fully relinquished and the People's Republic of China was established, the Koreans who chose to stay in China lost their citizenship and corresponding rights accorded to them under Japanese rule.

The Koreans Become A Minority

After Japan surrendered its position in China, two important events paved the way for the recognition of the Koreans as a separate minority in China. The first was the civil war that brought about the liberation of China. "More than 50,000 Koreans
joined the struggle against Chiang Kai-shek and helped the Communist troops liberate the nation" (Yin 1994: 56). Because the Koreans risked their lives for the Communist cause, and helped to establish the People's Republic of China, this placed pressure on the Chinese government when it came to awarding the Koreans citizenship (Interview #2 March 1996).

The next event that influenced China when deciding to afford the Koreans citizenship status, was their loyalty to China during the Korean War. This war, which began in 1950 and lasted three years, forced the Koreans in China to ally with either China or the United States. "During the War of Resisting U.S. Aggression and Aiding Korea (the 'Korean War', 1950-53) some 46,000 Koreans from the Yanbian region joined the Chinese People's Volunteers, along with some 5,000 interpreters, political workers, transport workers and nurses" (Yin 1994: 56). This allegiance and assistance to a land and people that had not accepted the Koreans as citizens or accorded them any other special protection could also have been a deciding factor when it later came to citizenship issues.

When large numbers of Koreans sided with China during the war, perhaps it was not so much an obvious choice FOR China, but rather a decision AGAINST the United States (Interview #1 March 1996). This means that perhaps the Koreans supported China as they were not willing to help those who were clearly different from them, the people in the United States. "[T]he outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 gave the CCP a good opportunity to consolidate its own rule by inciting hatred of foreign
imperialism" (Mackerras 1994: 147). Olivier points out that at this time the Koreans did not clearly differentiate between country of residence and country of birth or ancestry, and therefore did not see the choice that they were making as a substantial one (1993: 59). "Like many other wars fought at the beginning of new eras in many countries, the Korean War united the people behind the new regime. It boosted their patriotism and attenuated their differences by focusing their attention on a common enemy" (Olivier 1993: 59).

Whatever the reasoning on the part of the Koreans in China, the result was the same - they supported China. Since they had done so, this forced the Chinese to recognize them as allies, and later even as residents within the newly established People's Republic of China. "An important consequence of the Korean War was that it forced China to decide the legal status of its Korean ethnic minority and accelerate the integration of this already very unique minority group into the People's Republic" (1993: 60). Furthermore, in the northeast the Koreans were recognized as an important group, and the areas they inhabited were on their way to being successfully industrialized. Therefore it was reasonable for the government of China to legalize the status of the Koreans and promote them as an example (1993: 61). As will be evidenced shortly, the success of the Koreans (especially in the areas of education and population control) are often used to encourage others as well as to prove that the nationalities in China are indeed prospering.
Korean-Chinese Identity

Korean-Chinese seem to have a very strong sense of self-identity, and actively maintain the boundaries between themselves and others. This can first be exhibited by examining their views on children who are 'mixed' - that is, according to the Korean-Chinese not 100 percent (pure) Korean. All of the individuals I interviewed stated that common ancestry is an essential factor of being Korean, so that without this blood linkage one is not Korean and never can be. However there was no agreement on how much (i.e. what percentage) of blood an individual must have. What was common however was that 'being Korean' must be passed down from the father. If one's mother is Korean, but father is not, interviewees agreed that the child would not be considered Korean. They did mention that legally it is up to the family to decide. However, they stated that in almost all cases the family would not consider the child Korean if it was not passed through the father's side (Interviews #1-10 March, April 1996).

Aside from ancestral linkages other factors that were said to 'make up' a Korean were: common history, language, tradition, culture, language, and ideology. However, if any or all of these were lacking but the individual still had 'Korean blood' passed down from the father, they would still be Korean (Interviews #1-10 March, April 1996). This differs from the official view taken by the government of China, that uses Stalin's four essential characteristics of nation. They also pointed out that the willingness of an individual to belong to a group was of little relevance, as it was only what group they belonged to (in the
objective sense) that mattered. In this sense these individuals all self-identified themselves and their group as having blood bonds - a biological approach to identification. They did not tend to identify themselves when compared to others, but through their own characteristics (Interviews #1-10 April, June 1996).

Lee points out however, that the trend to follow the father's bloodline is changing. More and more individuals are willing to identify themselves as Korean, regardless of who in their ancestry was seen as Korean. This could either suggest a consciousness or willingness to self-identify, or perhaps simply offer a ways and means to receive the added benefits that being a Chinese minority encompasses.

Even among those children who have Han Chinese fathers and Korean mothers, there is a modest tendency for them to identify themselves as Koreans not only because they are proud of their partial Korean parentage, but also because they can enjoy the advantages of a minority nationality ranging from educational opportunities and birth control (two children permitted for a minority couple) to preferences given in a rationing system (for example, more rice for Koreans) (Lee 1986: 163).

Although none of the Koreans I interviewed would have agreed with this assumption, one Han individual pointed out that even those that never had ancestral linkages are achieving minority status, albeit through illegal means. I had noticed that he was wearing traditional Korean-Chinese clothing and had therefore asked his nationality. He stated that although there had never been an individual of Korean descent in his family, he had bribed some government officials to change his minority status and that of his wife. He stated that his children and their children would all be recognized or identified as Korean-Chinese.
Although their original reason for changing their nationality status was so that they could have another child, in the end they decided one child was enough. However, they did not want to change their nationality status back to Han as they were given more benefits as a minority and they did not want to have to pay for the change. According to the individual I interviewed, people would examine his residence card, and determine whether or not he was 'truly' Korean minority solely by that. Since his residence card had been changed to reflect Korean lineage, in the eyes of both the government and other Korean-Chinese he was identified as Korean-Chinese. Therefore it appears that one can create ethnicity, join a minority group, and even convince those that maintain and protect the boundaries.

**Yanbian: The New Home of the Korean Nationality**

The majority of Koreans who immigrated to China settled in China's northeastern provinces. A large percentage of them first went to Jilin province, and more specifically the area now known as Yanbian (Interview #1 March 1996). At present, Jilin province has the largest percentage of Korean minority living within its borders, numbering over one million. Up until September 1952, Yanbian was part of Jilin Province's Special District and encompassed an area of 29,991 square kilometers. At that time Koreans represented over 60% of the total population there (Olivier 1993: 71). In 1952 however, this area changed its name and jurisdiction. "The Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture was formally set up on 3 September 1952, the first of the autonomous prefectures and among the earliest of all the autonomous areas"
Actually, when first established, Yanbian was delineated an area, but in December 1955, in accordance with the constitution, it was renamed an autonomous prefecture (Guo, Hong and Ge 1986: 41). This alteration was not meant to reduce the size or power of this area, but to correct the use of mistaken terminology and to coincide with the constitution.

"Yanbian was smaller than Taiwan and comprised only one city, Yanji (detached from Yanji county in 1953) and five counties: Yanji (with its seat of government in Longjing town), Hunchun, Helong, Wangqing, and Antu. Therefore, it could not be an autonomous region equivalent to a province" (Olivier 1993: 73). At the time, and even presently, some Korean-Chinese are under the mistaken belief that power and/or land were stripped from them during this process and it is sometimes still regarded as a source of discontent.

**Yanbian's Autonomous Administration**

Although officially an autonomous zone in 1952, it was not until 1958 that its first autonomous government was established.

Yanbian organized its people's congresses and people's councils in 1958 following the ordinances approved by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in March 1958. The people's congresses of the basic administrative units elected representatives to the prefectural, city, and county people's congresses. The term of each people's congress was two years and all meetings were conducted in Korean and in Chinese (Olivier 1993: 73).

Historically then, the establishment of the Yanbian Prefecture coincided with the Korean War. Therefore, in the 1950s when the Koreans were allowed to select delegates at these levels of government, this made them sympathetic to the Communist
Party and they consequently supported China over the United States. This was a clever tactic on the part of the Communist Party. This delegation of power was limited and did not damage their centralized control of China, yet it pacified the Koreans at a time when their help and allegiance was necessary for the Communist cause (1993: 5). "Political work progressed rapidly, and large numbers of cadres of Korean origin were trained. By 1981, over 50 percent of officials working at all levels of administration in these autonomous areas were of Korean origin" (Yin 1994: 57). However, in guaranteeing the Korean minority certain rights and the establishment of an autonomous government, the government had to assuage the concerns of the Han people who comprised a minority in the area. "The authorities assuaged their fear and insisted that both the Korean and Chinese languages be used in the local organs of the autonomous region. They set up translation offices wherever necessary and re-emphasized mutual respect of each other's language and customs" (Olivier 1993: 78). In some areas of the prefecture however, this designation as an autonomous area was welcomed by the Han. They realized that by inhabiting such an area, they would at least receive the common benefits and privileges accorded to the public as a whole (ie. investment in schools and communication, etc.). In any event, it did not take much time until the Koreans were no longer a majority in Yanbian. By the mid-1960s, they represented less than 50 percent of the total population in Yanbian (1993: 118).

Although the Chinese government awarded citizenship and
other rights to the newly identified Korean-Chinese, this does not mean that they did not suffer in some respects. "[T]his relative success was achieved at the expense of their traditional comparative advantage and wealth during the early decades of the People's Republic" (1993: 2). What Oliver is referring to is that the overall standard of living of the Koreans deteriorated after liberation.

The Koreans, who were formerly wealthier and better educated than the Han, ultimately became disadvantaged in the post-Mao period and started to fall behind the increasingly successful Han. It is only since the late 1980s that concrete efforts have been made to facilitate the adaptation of the Koreans to economic liberalization while encouraging them to continue preserving and developing their language and culture in order to re-establish the balanced relationship that had made the Korean case successful in the early years of the People's Republic (1993: 2).

Therefore, what many scholars seem to neglect or minimize is that although the Korean minority today has made progress, it is not necessarily new ground. Although the gains by the Korean minority are often praised as examples of the success of nationality policy, one must not forget that in some respects the conditions of the Koreans were already superior to the Han in the 1950s, and they were merely raising themselves to a level that they had before it was taken away from them (Interviews #1 and #2 March 1996).

The Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture

Jilin Province, in China's Northeast, occupies an area of 187,000 square kilometers of which 54,823 is occupied by minority autonomous areas, making up 29.4% of the total area (Wang and Ye 1995: 114). The largest minority prefecture within this province
is the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, which is located in the eastern part of Jilin province facing the Japanese Sea. It is bordered both by Russia and North Korea, and is made up of two municipalities, Tumen and Yanji. Yanji is the capital of the prefecture and also boasts China's first minority university, which was established in 1949. Tumen is well-known in China as it attracts many tourists who wish to view the North Korean border. Besides these two municipalities, Yanbian has five counties: Antu, Dunhua, Helong, Longjing and Wangqing. The total area of Yanbian is 42,700 kilometers with a population of 2,138,400 people as of 1993. The percentage of the population that is minority is 917,800 and occupies 42.9 percent of the total population (1995: 138). Of that 42.9 percent, Korean-Chinese compose 39.5 percent, and other minorities 3.4 percent of the population (Gu and Zhao 1994: 16).

**Yanbian's Economic and Industrial Basis**

Economically speaking, Yanbian is known for its rich natural resources especially its forests, ginseng, and fruits. It is perhaps best known as one of China's major sources of timber and forest products as well as for its production of tobacco (Yin 1994: 55). Yanbian's other natural resources include coal mines, 875 different species of plants, and hundreds of species of wild animals.

In the industrial sector Yanbian prides itself in having over 1,000 enterprises including: the industries of metallurgy; electricity; coal; chemical; machinery; food products; textiles; paper production; and medicine. In the areas of industry and
agriculture, production of tobacco, linen and fruit in the Yanbian prefecture occupy 40 percent of the total provincial production, while timber and cigarettes in Yanbian comprise 45 percent of the province's total production (Gu and Zhao 1994: 17). In 1991, this resulted in the total industrial production of the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture being the highest among the country's thirty autonomous regions (1994: 19).

Now that the history of Korean settlement, the demography of Yanbian, as well as its economic situation have been examined, it is important to turn our attention to the specific situation of the Korean-Chinese in Yanbian. To do this special attention will be paid to the areas of family planning and education as it is in these two areas that the Korean-Chinese have made remarkable progress.

**Population and Family Planning**

As of 1990, the population of the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture was over two million. Although the area is designated a minority autonomous region, the Koreans no longer make up the majority of the population, but only comprise just under 40 percent (Gu and Zhao 1994: 16). However, this was not always the case. If we examine the population of the Korean-Chinese in the Yanbian prefecture since its establishment, it will become apparent that their percentage of the total population has slowly decreased.

Since the liberation of China, the population of the Korean minority in China can be analyzed as being comprised of three high points. The first movement, from 1954-1958, saw a birthrate
of 3.5 to 4 percent, which corresponded to a 3 percent increase in the population. During the second stage, from 1962-1965, the birthrate was only 3 percent while the rate of population increase dropped to 2 percent. In the third period, 1968-1972, the birthrate was 2.5 percent for Korean-Chinese and the rate of population increase was 1.9 percent. After 1973 and the introduction of the one-child policy, the birthrate dropped to 1.5 percent and the rate of population increase to around 1 percent (1994: 3). As noted earlier, the introduction of the birth control policy for the Han in the early 1970s did not include the minorities as well. What the above figures represent is a steady reduction in both birthrate and population growth of the Korean minority.

This reduction of the Korean minority birthrate can also be seen from the proportion of babies born in per family every year. Before 1982 (1980-1982) each family still had three or more children but this proportion was extremely low, only occupying 5.6%. But in 1981 in the whole country, families that had three or more babies occupied 28.08% of the proportion of all the babies born (Zhang 1993: 94).

Since liberation the rate of population increase and the birthrate of the Korean minority in China have both continually decreased. This began well before the instigation of the one-child policy, so this was not necessarily a direct result of this law, but perhaps linked to other factors.

As the rate of population increase slowly dropped, and as some Koreans returned to their homeland after the surrender of Japan, the Korean-Chinese constituted a smaller and smaller proportion of Yanbian's population. "In 1955, Yanbian had
774,767 inhabitants with 543,800 Koreans (70.1% of the population). In 1959, the enlarged prefecture had 1,050,800 inhabitants but only 579,900 Koreans (55.1% of the population)" (Ye and Li in Olivier 1993: 117-118). As is evidenced by the figures above, other nationalities (primarily Han) migrated to the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture during this period which also resulted in the decrease in proportion of population of the Korean-Chinese. Presently, the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture has sixteen separate minorities living within its borders, although they make up a very small proportion of the population (Interview #3 1996). Although the Korean nationality's proportion of the population in Yanbian has steadily decreased, the majority of this nationality still lives within Jilin Province. The latest statistics show that of the Korean nationality's 1,763,900 total population, over 90 percent live in China's three Northeast provinces: 190,000 in Liaoning, 430,000 in Heilongjiang, and about 1,000,000 in Jilin province (Yin 1994: 34). Since the Korean-Chinese population is still increasing, but its proportion of the total population in Yanbian is decreasing one can only point out that the migration of other minorities and their higher birthrates have made substantial contributions to this process.

The Korean Minority: Reasons for the Decrease in Birthrates

One explanation for the decrease in birth rates of the Korean minority could be the recent trend to marry at a later age. Before the establishment of China, the average marrying age of Koreans living in Yanbian was seventeen years old. In the 1950s shortly after liberation, the average person chose to wait
until nineteen years of age, and in the 1960s until twenty-one years old. Statistics as of 1990 point out that Korean-Chinese presently do not get married until over twenty-four years old, seven years later than in the 1940s (Gu and Zhao 1994: 9). Therefore, the tendency to get married at a later age could play a role in the decrease in childbirths for the Korean-Chinese.

The majority of the Korean nationality attribute this decrease in birth rates and trend to marry later to individual decisions and willingness of the people, not to government policy (Interviews #1-10 April, June 1996). While one cannot argue that China's one-child policy has played an important role in these decisions, it is not a direct role. By this it is meant that according to the Law of Regional Autonomy this minority is permitted to have two children. Instead, the majority of households have made a conscious decision to only have one child. Of course, according to people living in Yanbian, the leaders in the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture place emphasis on the need to keep population low as well as spread other propaganda concerning the benefits of having only one child per household (Interviews #1, #9, #10 June 1996). However, for the most part, the willingness of the Korean-Chinese to have fewer children, is a reflection of the values that they hold.

Objectively speaking, the decision to have an extra child has economic, personal and social aspects that are often taken into consideration. Many Korean-Chinese feel that the benefits of having children include: someone to care for them in old age; the necessity of having a boy to carry on the family line;
someone to pass traditions on to; and the pride one feels from the accomplishments of one's offspring. The negative aspects of having more children could include: higher expenses and therefore an increased burden on the family. Too many children in one household is detrimental and results in less care given to each child, and excessive childbearing is not good for the mother's health (Zhang 1993: 102-103). Perhaps since they attach a great deal of importance to children's education, and play an active role in the realization of this education both financially and emotionally it also makes sense to them to have less children.

The decrease in birth rates and amount of births has had an effect on the average age of Korean-Chinese. In 1982 the average age of Koreans was tabulated to be 24.3 years, while the other nationalities average ages were all below 20 years of age, with the lowest being 16.2 years. But in 1990, the Koreans average age jumped to 28.4 years (Gu and Zhao 1994: 3). The birth rates of the Korean minority are the lowest in China, but young children still comprise 25 percent of the Korean population. Surprisingly, those aged 50 years and older only represent approximately 16 percent of the population in 1990 (1994: 5). If one takes into account the particular situation of the Koreans in China and their immigration history, this can be rationalized. Their history is not a long one, and between the 1940s to 1960s many Koreans returned to their homeland. Therefore this age bracket, those aged 50 years and older, has the lowest average. Presently almost 60 percent of the population is currently
between the ages of 15-49. In the next 20 years or so the Korean minority may be faced with the problem of an aging population.

The Korean Minority: An Example of Successful Family Planning

In 1992 the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture was named as a model for all of the other minorities to follow with regard to family planning by the National Family Planning Committee and the Nationality Committee of the country (Gu and Zhao 1994: 1).

This is because

According to the Fourth National Population Census, the birthrate in Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture in 1990 was 1.643%, lower than that of the whole country and the whole province by 0.455% and 0.193% respectively; the natural rate of population increase was 1.001%, lower than that of the whole country and the whole province by 0.469% and 0.227% respectively; the rate of population increase of the Korean minority was only 0.873%, the lowest of any nationality in the whole country (1994: 19).

Although Korean-Chinese are permitted to have two children according to the law, they are praised for tending to have only one child. However, as mentioned above, the Korean-Chinese people attribute this to their own decisions and willingness, not as an effort to adhere to the one-child policy.

From the 1970s, the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture of Jilin Province has been earnestly carrying out the government's instructions with regard to family planning. They have enthusiastically and effectively launched their task and gained gratifying achievements, resulting in an encouraging situation... (1994: 18-19).

What becomes apparent then, is that the government of China does not take into consideration the Koreans' willingness to have fewer children, but uses their achievements to point out the successes of current government policies.
One Child Per Household: The Unintended Benefits

The reduction in the number of children born into each household, has led to concrete benefits for the Korean-Chinese living in the Yanbian area. It is estimated that from 1971-1991, 487,000 more people would have been born in this prefecture if this policy had not been implemented successfully. If that had been the case, it would have placed an added economic burden of approximately 5,000,000,000 Renminbi, which is approximately 800,000,000 Canadian dollars on the people living there. Thus, this reduction in forecasted expenditures has resulted in a better economic situation in the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture than would have otherwise been the case (Gu and Zhao 1994: 19).

Earlier it was mentioned that this minority is willing to have fewer children, regardless of government policy or encouragement from the State. This willingness is for several reasons. The first can be seen as a shift in consciousness. The Korean-Chinese realize that if they want prosperity in their region, and more specifically in their individual homes, they must enhance their life chances rather than the quantity of people in the area. Secondly, in the Yanbian region a series of propaganda mechanisms were promoted to educate the Koreans with regard to family planning. These measures were combined with Korean culture and ethnic characteristics in order to have a greater effect. Third, a policy developed by the autonomous government's administration to regulate the number of births of the Korean nationality was adopted. Next, the selection and training of cadres to promote family planning was emphasized.
They tried to improve their social environment by providing more, and better services than in the past (1994: 19-20). Therefore, although it is culturally accepted and encouraged to have less children, perhaps encouragement and education by the government did play a role in the reduction of births, albeit a subconscious one.

One aspect that was not touched upon in the work of other scholars that I feel played a role in their decisions to reduce the number of births per family, is the high educational level of the Korean-Chinese on the whole. As will be elaborated upon shortly, they place great importance on education, and with education comes the knowledge and the ability to improve their present circumstances. When the Korean immigrants first came to China, they promptly opened schools to educate their children they realized that this education also had functional utility (Interviews #1 and #2 March 1996). In this respect, through education their consciousness was raised, and therefore they chose to have fewer children. In sum, education also played a part in the decision to restrict births. Now it is important to examine the educational history and achievements that led to this realization.

**The Korean-Chinese and Education**

Since their immigration to China, the Korean-Chinese have consistently maintained a high level of educational achievement and has constantly stressed the importance of education. "[A]s relative newcomers to China, they have inherited a strong cultural tradition and value system which invariably emphasizes
education both for its intrinsic intellectual purpose and for its
functional utility" (Lee 1986: 141). This belief should not be
seen as related to their relocation to China, but is
traditionally part of their own cultural value system. There is
a "... traditional Korean saying that parents must educate their
children even if they have or sell their precious land or ox"
(1986: 10). The Korean-Chinese with whom I spoke could not
stress enough the importance of a good education. The older
individuals pointed out that if there was not enough money for
meat or bread, they would still send their children off to attend
school (Interview #1 March 1996). Also when asked what
represented Korean-Chinese people and culture, what special
characteristics they had that no other minority or the Han
possessed, one hundred percent of them pointed out their high
level of education and determination to succeed in this respect
(Interviews #1-#10 March, April 1996).

The Korean minority places great emphasis on education for
several reasons. First, during the annexation of Korea by Japan,
education was promoted as a weapon that could be wielded to fight
off foreign invasion. "Most Korean educators, regardless of
their intellectual background, political sentiments, and
religious affiliation, shared a common desire to give a good
Korean education to their children so that they could resist
Japan's imperialist ambitions and restore Korea's independence"
(Lee 1986: 32-33). Secondly, the Koreans realized the practical
importance of learning the national language in China - Mandarin.
Therefore, as early as in the late 1950s Korean minority schools
began to offer classes in Chinese. "The Korean schools of Yanbian started to teach their students spoken and written Chinese together with Korean, instead of teaching them Korean first and then slowly including Chinese into the curriculum as had been the original policy" (Olivier 1993: 119). However, this placed an added burden on the Korean students, which made it difficult for them to compete on equal ground with their Han classmates.

The persistence and determination of the Korean minority with regard to education has certainly led to positive results.

Among China's 55 minority nationalities, it is widely believed that the Koreans have the highest level of educational attainment and sustain a strong sense of ethnic identity in their intellectual and cultural activities. They are also considered highly intelligent, hard-working, politically active, and artistically talented. This belief is borne out in the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture of Jilin Province, which had developed a successful model for minority educational system (Lee 1986: 3-4).

As will be evidenced below, the quantity of educational facilities and the sheer number of qualified teachers and students enroled in these institutions places the Korean minority's educational accomplishments in a leading position when compared to China's other minority nationalities (1986: 141).

**Primary Education**

In the area of primary education, the Yanbian area had established programs for pre-school children as early as 1947, and officially opened its first kindergarten, four years later, in 1951 (Lee 1986: 114). Progress moved rapidly and "[p]rimary schools were almost universally accessible in Yanbian as early as
1952; about 85% of school-age children studied at 577 primary schools at that time. The percentage was higher among Korean children (over 90%) than among their Han Chinese counterparts" (1986: 114-115). The percentage of Korean students that attended these schools is remarkable for two obvious reasons. First, it is important to remember that at this time the Koreans were involved in the Korean War on the side of the Chinese, which did not make the establishment nor the attendance in these schools an easy task. Also, the Koreans had not yet been awarded status as official citizens. In effect, they established schools in an area that was not legally their own, where they had few rights and benefits, in order to better themselves intellectually as well as for the functional usefulness of education. Presently Yanbian still holds a high record in the area of primary education. In fact, "[n]early 98 percent of all school-age children in Yanbian entered primary schools in 1981" (1986: 115), which points out that their emphasis on education is still going strong.

Secondary Education

Korean secondary schools, referred to as 'middle schools' by the Chinese, have also undergone remarkable progress since the Korean minority first came to China. In fact, presently the number of middle school graduates per 1,000 of people populating the Yanbian area is approaching that of the developed countries (Gu and Zhao 1994: 19). In 1980,

[t]he proportion of all middle school students was about 1,055 per 10,000 in Yanbian; the number of Korean middle school students was 1,214 per 10,000 Koreans in
Yanbian. The two figures were substantially higher than the national average (484), the average (263) for all minority nationalities, and even the average (880) in Jilin Province (Lee 1986: 117).

The percentage of Korean minority students attending classes at the middle school level then, superseded not only the minority average, but also the national one. What is also of interest is that, according to the survey above, the students studying in the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture also had a higher average than those who studied in the other regions of Jilin province. This suggests that the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture, not only has a high percentage of students attending classes (both Korean and other nationalities), but that the Korean minority students there also comprise a higher percentage when compared to others of the same minority in China.

One of the middle schools in the area has even been singled out as a national example because of its high level of educational achievement. "In 1978-1979, the Ministry of Education in Beijing included FYMS [First Yanbian Middle School] in the list of 20 national key schools in primary and secondary education; it was the only minority school so honored" (Lee 1986: 118). As a result, the First Yanbian Middle School now receives special treatment in the areas of budgeting, allotment of equipment and facilities, as well as having access to qualified faculty (1986: 118). Other such benefits given to the Korean minority in the area of education will be touched upon later.

One of the concerns that is often raised with regard to the specialized school system at this level is the added burden it
places on Korean students. In an attempt to adapt to the Chinese situation, students take the majority of their courses in Mandarin Chinese, the national language. Added to these however, are courses in Korean language. The extra time spent in the classroom as well as homework places an extra strain on Korean-Chinese students. However, they are quick to point out that in the long term it is a great benefit to them and therefore are willing to undergo this effort.

Another concern with regard to this extra effort has to do with spreading themselves too thin. As they must take both Korean and Chinese lessons, it is feasible that they will have a greater degree of difficulty in obtaining the same marks as those who are not Korean-Chinese. Because "students take only four hours of Korean-language courses a week in junior middle schools and then three hours in senior middle schools, it is possible that they can excel in neither Korean nor Chinese" (1986: 151). Therefore there is the fear that they will only learn the basics of both languages, and obtain middle marks or knowledge rather than concentrating on education in one language. The individuals that I came into contact with during the course of my research however, did not seem to suffer from this. When asked, they did point out that they were more fluent in Korean, but felt comfortable speaking in both languages. In fact they stated they were more than able to adapt the language depending on the situation at hand (Interviews #6-10 April, June 1996).

University Education

Yanbian University, which took its first students in 1949,
was the first minority university in China. It was originally named the Northeast Korean People's University and in the first year boasted 490 students. Its first students graduated in 1952 (Lee 1986: 124).

Even though the overall quality of Yanbian University is not at all comparable to China's major national universities or Jilin University at Changchun, it prides itself as being the oldest minority university in China. It is probably one of the most advanced institutions among China's 68 minority colleges, including 11 nationalities institutes (1986: 130).

Upon conducting my research in Yanbian, I visited this university. One could say that there were no outward signs or markers denoting its special status as a minority university. In fact, aside from the odd male wearing traditional Korean velvet pants, or a few groups speaking in Korean, this university was like any other I had the opportunity of visiting in China. However, upon visiting the recently established Yanbian University of Science and Technology, a private university whose administrators were originally from Korea, there can be no mistakes in this respect. From the signs and directions written in Korean, to the answering of the phone, one is aware that they have entered the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture. The food in the cafeteria was for the most part traditional Korean food, and the majority of the teachers have come from Korea to teach classes. In fact, many students admitted that their school is unlike any other in China, in that it has a heavy Korean influence. Some students stated that they were not comfortable speaking Chinese as they mainly speak Korean at school and home and were 'out of practice' (Interviews #6-8 March 1996).
As was seen in the case of secondary education, Yanbian's higher education has also surpassed the that of the other minorities in China in some respects. "Whatever numbers were used, there was little doubt that the number of Korean college students in Yanbian was larger than the national average in China (12.7 students per 10,000 people) and the average among China's minority nationalities (7.6 students per 10,000 people) in 1981" (Beijing Review 7 Oct. 1983: 44 in Lee 1986: 137). Lee went on to emphasize that the Koreans are generally used as an example because their educational attainment levels are also both higher than the national average as well as any other minority (Lee 1986: 6).

In the late 1950s as a result of the anti-rightist campaign in China and the specific claim that the Koreans had local nationalistic tendencies, the language of instruction at Yanbian University was changed to Mandarin Chinese.

The party was well aware of the importance of education as a tool to improve inter-nationality relations while containing and taming the superiority complex of the Koreans. It decided, therefore, to give preference to mixed-nationality schools over single-nationality ones. The party authorities portrayed mixed-nationality schools as more conducive to the strengthening of inter-nationality solidarity and unity throughout Yanbian (Olivier 1993: 114).

This also had an effect on the composition of the faculty, as courses formerly taught by Korean minority individuals were now taught by Han. However, some Han teachers were not happy in an area with such emphasis on Korean culture and teaching and therefore moved to other areas to teach (Lee 1986: 126).
Educational Benefits

As one of China's 55 minorities, the Korean minority has received certain educational benefits allotted by the government. One of the more obvious benefits is with regard to entrance into university. As a minority, Korean students can enter university with lower test scores than the Han.

The Korean students in Jilin Province were allotted 5 additional points in their college entrance examination scores - the lowest bonus among all minority aspirants. Out of the maximum possible score of 600 points, Jilin Province in 1984 established a cutoff score of 400 points for college admissions. It was one of the highest cutoff points in the country (Lee 1986: 105).

The individuals I interviewed noted that in Heilongjiang province the Korean-Chinese were allotted 10 bonus points, and attributed this difference to the fact that the students in Jilin Province had higher educational levels and achievements are higher than those of Heilongjiang (Interviews #6, #7, #10 June 1996). Some scholars and laypersons feel that this additional advantage is not needed and in fact should be refused as a matter of pride (Lee 1986: 105). In fact, the students that I talked to did not know anyone who had needed, or admitted to needing the extra bonus points and felt that it was an unnecessary gesture as Korean-Chinese in general had no problems in passing university entrance exams (Interviews #6, #7 and #10 June 1996). Aside from entrance requirements on test scores minorities also receive other benefits when entering some universities. According to one source, the Nationality University in Beijing works on a quota system: there must be a certain number of individuals from each minority admitted every year. Since this is a nationality
university, this is an equitable system as the quotas are based on the percentage of each minority in the total population.

Another advantage for minorities in the area of education has to do with their monthly allowance provided by the Chinese government.

In ethnic schools such as Yanbian University, Korean students received 100 percent of their educational subsidy (17.5 yuan a month), while an average of only 85 percent was given to Han students. In addition to a free dormitory room, this subsidy covered food, books, stationary, haircuts, entry to a public bath, recreation, and other miscellaneous expenses (Lee 1986: 106-107).

The students in Yanbian stated that they receive money for studies that supersedes that of the Han. However, it was believed that it is only about four yuan more per month (65 cents Canadian). They pointed out that this money cannot buy very much (not even one meal or a taxi ride) but that this allotment is important to them. When asked why, if the amount was so low, that it was so important, they pointed out that it is their right to have it. Some individuals stated out that although it is not needed they have always received this extra allotment. If it were to be taken away it would be as if their special privilege was taken away and therefore their recognition as a minority and its special position would also be stripped from them. They also pointed out that the allotment for other minorities was not the same as for Koreans-Chinese. They did not begrudge those who receive more money than they, and felt that the Han students should also feel this way (Interviews #6-8 March 1996).

Therefore, although the extra allotment of money is a direct
example of government aid, the amount given is so low that it is little more than tokenism as far as the Korean-Chinese are concerned. However, it is a token that they are not willing to relinquish.

Another measure that has been taken to further develop education in Yanbian is heavier investment than in the past. Lee pointed out that in 1976, Yanbian's budget was three times that of the amounts given to Han areas (Lee 1986: 113). This is not to say however, that the budget has always been three times that of Han, nor that this is solely due to autonomy policy. Perhaps it is in part due to the impeccable record and high level of educational achievement evident in the Yanbian area.

What is known however, is that "[t]he Yanbian Korean leadership paid special attention to educational programs in their budgetary decisions. Renmin Ribao noted that Yanbian's educational expenditures in 1982 showed a 96 percent increase over those in 1978 and that the budget for basic educational construction grew 2.4 times during this 5-year period" (1986: 113). Some Korean-Chinese students, while pointing out that they do not need special treatment with regard to university entrance, did admit that government investment was necessary in this regard. They stated that government investment in education is necessary because although the level of education of the average Korean is high, the conditions are not suitable (Interviews #6, #8, #10 June 1996). Therefore the students felt that they should enter university on their own merit, but that the level of teaching and general conditions should be improved and that these
aspects are the responsibility of the government. Although the level of education of the average Korean-Chinese in Yanbian is quite high, they stated it is not a result of policy, but through their own persistence and ability. This success occurs despite the educational conditions in Yanbian, not because of them. Therefore further government investment is necessary. In fact, upon one of my visits to this autonomous prefecture five universities in Yanbian had just amalgamated into one. The reason for this was said to be to strengthen the higher educational system and prepare for the next century. However, upon further discussion I learned that China was now promoting a plan to improve its universities (Interview #11 June 1996). In year 2000, the Chinese government will select 100 top universities in the nation and give them added funding, and therefore prestige. It is for this reason that five of Yanbian's universities joined forces.

Other benefits in the area of education include placing emphasis on the amount and quality of teachers, establishing more publishing companies to publish books for nationality schools and the opening of some scientific research institutions to research, and thus improving education in the area (Renmin Ribao 27 Aug. 1983). These efforts have been made because "the Party and the People's Government of Yanbian believe that the development of intelligence presupposes the improvement of nationality equality and the building of the four modernizations and so they pay even more attention to education" (27 Aug. 1983). Improvement in the conditions in the hope of improving education throughout China
would help the Chinese to achieve not only the four modernizations, but also push them further along the socialist path.

Problems In The Yanbian Education System

The Korean-Chinese' educational level has traditionally been higher than the other nationalities. However, these individuals feel that the Han are 'catching up' because the Han are also emphasizing education, and because there are some problems in the Korean-Chinese system (Interview #1 March 1996).

As mentioned earlier, "[t]he educational system for the Korean minority nationality in China is not devoid of potentially serious problems and tensions. One of the most persistent pedagogical as well as practical issues is how to deal with the dilemma of bilingual education" (Lee 1986: 150). It is usually not until middle school, when the children are eight or nine years old, that Korean children living in the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture formally learn the Mandarin language (Interviews #1-10 March, April 1996). "The total weekly curriculum for Korean students had 3 or 4 more hours than that for Han students. It is therefore a considerable academic burden shared by all Korean students" (Lee 1986: 119). The majority of Han schools that have Korean classes only make them available to Korean minority students in Yanbian. So although the Han and fourteen other minorities are living in an autonomous area where approximately 40 percent of the population is Korean-Chinese, they do not study the Korean language.

Another serious problem is how to treat the Han who make up
the majority in the area. Investment also indirectly benefits Han students, but extra money given to individual Korean-Chinese, and lower entrance requirements into university are not given to the Han. This could create serious problems and animosity between the two groups. "It is probably true that the Han Chinese people, who constitute a majority in Yanbian (58 percent), are supremely confident in their cultural superiority and do not feel threatened by their Korean neighbors" (1986: 153-154). However, having two sets of rules, one for minorities and the other for the Han, could result in resentment amongst those that are passed by, solely on the basis of their nationality (Dreyer 1976: 266). It also may create problems in the eyes of the Korean-Chinese as they do not see these benefits as accruing to anything substantial but are unwilling to let them go.

Also, in constantly being praised for their high attainment, some Koreans could become 'too proud' of their success and look down on the Han and other minorities. This educational elitism could make it difficult for intergroup relations to be successful and also perhaps make it difficult for some Koreans to find employment that is deemed suitable after graduation. "Another potential gnawing consequence of educational elitism among Yanbian Koreans is an incipient sign of brain drain" (Lee 1986: 156). Not only do Korean students have more pressure placed on them by taking additional classes, but having the reputation of being especially educated and bright also adds stress to their circumstances. Lee points out that this kind of 'brain drain' can ultimately lead to many young Korean Chinese leaving the
Yanbian area in search of more elite, suitable positions (1986: 159-160). Also, as the importance of education is stressed, the number of individuals that take on technical or skilled jobs is relatively low. This creates a problem as Yanbian is an area rich in natural resources and therefore is suited to those kinds of employment. Already, the tendency of individuals to receive a high level education and take on professional jobs or to leave the prefecture has influenced the development of their agriculture and industry, thus effecting their economy as well (Guo, Hong and Ge 1986: 43).

Perhaps to quell some of the criticisms by the Han majority in the area, Korean enrolment in Han schools was restricted in the late 1970s.

In a conscious attempt to correct the 'abnormal phenomenon' of Korean students entering Han Chinese schools, the Yanbian government initially devised a quota system in 1979: the number of Korean students enrolled in Han Chinese schools should not exceed 10 percent in each grade for primary schools and 20 percent in each grade for middle schools (Yonbyon Kyovuk, #3: 1979 in Lee 1986: 107).

Later, this system was abolished, and instead Koreans had to achieve higher entrance test scores in order to study in Han schools (Lee 1986: 107). In an interview with Kang Yong-dok, Lee learned that "[i]n 1985 only 0.7% of Korean children attended the Han Chinese primary schools in Yanbian and the corresponding figure was 12.7% in Han Chinese middle schools" (1986: 108). Therefore, attempts to maintain the balance, to accord the Korean minority the rights they have been promised while still giving the Han majority some educational chances, have been successful
The high level of educational achievement by the Korean minority, especially in the autonomous area of Yanbian, is often cited as an example throughout China. This is for several reasons. First, it encourages them to continue emphasizing their education and keep striving for further gains. The government sees it as a concrete example of the success of minority policy. Also, it provides a concrete framework or model that the other minorities can follow in order to reach the level that the Koreans have attained (Lee 1986: 9). The reasoning behind the specific policies enacted by the autonomous government when dealing with minority education in Yanbian are more all-encompassing than those posited by the national government. The main goals of the education programs in Yanbian, according to the Education Bureau of Yanji County are:

The development of ethnic education is needed to uplift China's scientific and cultural standards, to promote unity among all nationalities, to construct frontier areas, and to strengthen national defense. It is also necessary for carrying out the policy of minority autonomy, creating a precondition for training in minority languages, and producing human resources for four-modernizations. In sum, ethnic education has a significant strategic meaning (Yonbyon Kyoyuk, #10: 1982 in Lee 1986: 100).

One may notice that this reasoning coincides somewhat with the original reasons posited by the first Koreans when they immigrated to China.

**Problems and Sources of Discontent**

The successes of the Koreans in China, and more specifically in the Yanbian Autonomous Prefecture are not without hard work
and overcoming many obstacles. As early as 1957, leaders in the Yanbian area organized a meeting to discuss some pressing problems related to their area. These included: their unhappiness with Yanbian's partial autonomy, how to reduce both Han chauvinism and local nationalism as well as how to solve the decreased output of mixed nationality cooperatives (*Jilin Ribao* 6 June 1957). They stated that more control of the autonomous area should be in the hands of their own administration and that their prefecture should be enlarged as some surrounding counties contained Korean-Chinese that were not benefitting from autonomous policies (6 June 1957). The Korean-Chinese also criticized the provincial government for not paying attention to their special needs. For example, they requested an increase in soya bean sauce and decrease in cooking oil to coincide with their usage of these two products, but the provincial government continually ignored their requests (6 June 1957).

Han chauvinism has always been a problem that the Korean minority has had to deal with. As was mentioned earlier, one of the stated aims of the Law of Regional Autonomy was in fact to discourage Han chauvinism and promote group equality and unity. However, "Han chauvinism accelerated the deterioration of the overall positive achievements of the party's nationality policy in the early 1950s" (Olivier 1993: 104). Perhaps in an effort to combat Han chauvinism, or due to the praise given to the Korean minorities in many aspects of daily life, many Koreans in Yanbian began to think of themselves as superior to the Han and the other minorities. Korean-Chinese leaders made it clear that although
love and support of North Korea is good for Chinese-Koreans, they must not confuse this with their allegiance to China. They must remember that they are citizens of China, and a nationality within its bounds, no longer linked to North Korea in this respect (Jilin Ribao 6 June 1957). Also in the Yanbian Daily the Korean minority was criticized for their superiority complex and belief that the Han and other minorities were inferior. Some Korean cadres admitted that they supported local nationalism, and in criticizing themselves inferred that they would not do so in the future. Instead, these leaders pointed out the importance of nationality unity with the Han as the guiding force (Yanbian Ribao 12 June 1958). During the anti-rightist campaign of the late 1950s, the Koreans were severely criticized for these beliefs and were in fact often targeted when the government spoke of local nationalism.

Possible Concerns in the Future for the Korean Minority

One of the areas that may present some problems for the Korean minority in the future is related to their reduction in births. If the numbers of Korean minority children born continue to decrease, not only will the population grow at a slower rate when compared to other minorities, but the Korean minority will face the challenge of an aging population. This will place an immense burden on the young, who in the future will comprise the lowest percentage of the population to date. Also, this will serve to widen the generation gap and could result in contradictions in thoughts and actions as well. The gap between the younger generation who were born in China and those who are
middle-aged or older and who immigrated from Korea as Korean citizens already appears to be widening.

A significant proportion of the Koreans in their 50s and older belong to the first generation of immigrants and thus are naturally inclined to retain a strong sense of emotional and cultural attachment to their native homeland. They all have personal memories of Japanese colonial rule, the Korean independence movements, China's pre-Communist reality, and the Korean War experience. As suggested by their attitude toward Sino-Korean sports contests, some Koreans seem to show their primary sentimental attachment to Korea (either North Korea or South Korea) rather than to China (Lee 1986: 160).

When asked who they would support in sports contests, the individuals who were middle-aged or older stated they would support Korea, while the younger generation held mixed views (Interviews #1-10 March, April 1996).

Aside from allegiance to their former homeland, the two generations preservation of culture is markedly different. "While the older generation may be anxious to preserve their ethnically distinct educational and cultural programs and to transmit their Korean values, customs, and aspirations to their descendants, the younger generation is not always able or willing to emulate their parental model" (Lee 1986: 161). The younger individuals exhibited strong pride in being Korean, and plan to pass on some customs to their own children. However, this passing on of traditions was referred to as a "necessity", almost as a burden, not as something that they willingly did to teach the next generation (Interviews #7 and #8 March 1996). Whether the views of these youngsters are actually quite different than the older generations or are merely characteristic of individuals
in that age bracket cannot be ascertained. What can be said however, it the experiences that they have undergone in China are quite different and therefore have influenced them differently as well.

An example of this differentiation in thinking between generations can be witnessed in their use of language. It must be noted that some of the individuals I interviewed tended to have studied, or were presently studying at a private minority university and living in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture. They stated that in school and at home they usually speak Korean, which represents a large percentage of the time. When first meeting strangers and buying things in stores, however, all respondents stated that they speak Mandarin first as they know that non-Koreans cannot speak Korean, but most likely Korean-Chinese can speak Mandarin (Interviews #6-8 June 1996). However, one individual stated that upon meeting an old man on the street who he did not know, he spoke Chinese first. The elderly Korean-Chinese individual, criticized him for doing so, which made him question whether he had done the right thing. In the end, the student compromised and stated that if the individual 'looks Korean' they tend to speak Korean, regardless of the circumstance (Interview #8 June 1996).

Perhaps some differences in thinking among the generations will not result in any concrete changes. When the unmarried individuals were asked if they would marry people who were not Korean-Chinese many looked surprised and stated that they had never thought about marrying outside of their nationality before,
and they did not feel that they actually had the opportunity to do so. If the opportunity arose they stated they were not adverse to such a union (Interviews #7 and #10 June 1996). Approximately thirty percent stated their parents would not permit such a union, while the rest stated that if it was REALLY what they wanted perhaps they could marry out (Interviews #5, #7-10 June 1996). However, since the likelihood of meeting someone other than Korean-Chinese is very low, these individuals may marry within their group, not intentionally but just as a consequence of their situation. Therefore, although these two generations stated that their opinions and values differ in this respect, there may not be any concrete variations as a result. The Korean minority, although it has made great advances since liberation, will not be without its own contradictions and problems to resolve in the years to follow.
Chapter Six: Assessment and Conclusions

The Government of the People's Republic of China has recognized China as being composed of 55 official minorities and has afforded them favourable treatment. This thesis has been an investigation of that treatment, and how the relationship between the minorities and the majority has been effected by the creation and implementation of this legislation.

The nature of the relationship between the 55 minority groups and the Han majority is not as simple as it first appears. Although the Han majority have enacted policies that allow special privileges to China's 55 minorities, the minorities themselves have also played an important role in the building and maintenance of China as a nation. In this sense then, each group has its own reasons and expectations from this complex relationship, and no one group is totally dependent on the other. Thus, the relationship between the minorities and the majority in China appears to be acceptable to both sides and is working to improve the conditions of China and its people as a whole.

Before special policies were created, China's people were separated into nationality groups. These separations were made using Stalin's theory of nation as a model. What has become apparent from the above discussion however, is that the use of Stalin's theory is not enough in itself. Instead, this theory may be used as a guide, as a framework that must be adapted to fit China's unique situation. The People's Republic of China government has refused to examine other factors, such as nationality willingness, which also play an important role in
identity formation in China. As a result, many people still remain unclassified over 40 years after the initial identification processes were attempted. With the creation of nationalities, nationality culture has been created as well. In fact, concrete identifiers such as dress, customs and residence cards reify the notion that the minorities are non-Han or different.

This thesis has shown that China's recognized minorities do indeed receive favourable treatment that can be linked to their created identities. The most obvious examples of special privileges can be seen in the areas of education and family planning. There are even special laws and regions in China that refer solely to the rights guaranteed to China's 55 recognized minorities. The PRC has stated that these policies are necessary to raise the minorities up to the level of the Han, and unite the two in order for China to continue along on the socialist path. However, in this investigation, other factors were uncovered. These included: the need for protection in border areas; the need to extract valuable minerals and resources from China's borders; the fear that the discontent minorities may favor secession; China's need to appear humane; and the need to relocate some of China's population to sparsely populated border regions. Therefore it has become apparent that China needs its minorities just as much as the minorities need China. A complex relationship exists, that although it has its problems, seems to be an acceptable solution for a country such as China.

One may ask where the Korean-Chinese fit in the overall
scheme of nationality relations in China. Well, as has been exemplified in this thesis, the Korean-Chinese occupy a special position. At first, the Korean-Chinese suffered as a result of nationality policy, but presently they serve as an example of China's success. The Korean-Chinese are well-educated and have one of the lowest birth rates in the country. In fact, they have already surpassed the Han in some respects. An examination of the Korean-Chinese situation gives one hope for China's future. Although this nationality has already surpasses the Han in the areas of education and family planning, they still receive, and want these benefits. This returns us back to the complex relationship between the majority and its minorities. Although the aim of the nationality policy according to the PRC and the CCP is to raise the minorities to the level of the Han, the Koreans have surpassed them in some respects. Yet, the policies remain in place and the Korean-Chinese have no plans to relinquish them. Although some benefits they receive are not needed and do not result in concrete changes, the Korean-Chinese are unwilling to let them go (Interviews #1-10 June 1996). Perhaps this serves to tell us that the system in China will succeed, and that it will be self-correcting and will result in the improvement of conditions for all its people.

Not all scholars have such an optimistic view of nationality relations however. There appears to be little consensus with regard to the success of current nationality policy in China. Although I have concluded that nationalities and group relations are prospering under these policies, this research must be put
into perspective. By this it is meant that we should not forget that the nationality problem in China is by no means eradicated, and that the laws and corresponding privileges put in place for China's minorities are far from perfect. In fact, some scholars (Heberer 1989; Gladney 1994; Mackerras 1994) are quite critical of nationality relations and policies in China, as was evidenced earlier in this thesis. According to Gladney, nationalities in China are commodified and objectified at their expense, and are part of a complicated relationship based on binary opposites (Gladney 1994: 93-94). He provides several examples of this commodification to illustrate what he feels is an unequal relationship between the minorities and majority (1994: 92-95).

It is important to reify that this lack of consensus in no way negates the findings of this study, but rather shows that nationality relations in China are both complex and varied.

The fieldwork in this thesis focussed on one minority, the Korean-Chinese. I have already emphasized the special position that this minority occupies in China, and this directly influences their opinions and the results of nationality policy for them. Therefore, policies that appear to be successful for one nationality group, may be detrimental for another. Whether these policies will result in concrete achievements and a rise in the standard of living for nationalities in China on the whole, remains to be seen. Only time will tell....
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