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## **When Does The Word 'Minority Nationality' [Shaoshu Minzu] [First] Appear in Our Country?**

by Jin Binggao

(Extracted from Jin Binggao's article in 'Nationality Solidarity' [Minzu Tuanjie], Volume 6, 1987.)

The history of the wide usage of the word 'nationality' in our country has been a long one. We can at least say that in the latter half of the nineteenth century the word 'nationality' [minzu] had begun to be introduced and used. Meanwhile new concepts related to the word 'minzu' [nationality] also began to emerge. Examples of these are 'nationality movement' [minzu yundong], 'nationality autonomy' [minzu zijue] and 'nationalism' [minzu zhuyi], and so on.

'Chinese' [Hanzu] and 'Mongolians' [Mengfu zu] began to be used to refer to the respective nationalities. However, the emergence and usage of the word 'minority' [shaoshu minzu] began relatively late.

While such words as 'nationality' [minzu] and 'oppressed nationality' [beiyapuo minzu] are used generally in the relevant documents of our Party's First to Fourth Conferences, the following words are also used: 'alien nationality' [yizhong minzu], 'every nationality' [gezhu minzu], 'weak and small nationality' [ruoxiao minzu], 'small nationality' [xiao minzu], 'every nationality in the country' [guonei ge minzu], etc.

In January 1924, with the help of the Chinese CPC, Mr Sun Zhongsang chaired the First Conference of the Chinese Kuomintang. In the announcement of the meeting, while using the expression 'each nationality inside China' [zhongguo yinei ge minzu], the word 'minority nationality' [shaoshu minzu] is used for the first time. This is the earliest traceable occurrence of the word 'shaoshu minzu' [minority nationality].

The first time our Party used this word was in November 1926. In both the instruction of the Central Party Authorities on the work of the North Western Army and in the decision on the working policy of the Nationalist Army, it is commented that the army of Feng Yuxiang must have the appropriate policy in Gansu towards the Hui people and that the political and economic rights of this minority nationality should not be harmed. Later on, the word 'minority nationality' appeared again in the Party document 'The Charter of the Chinese Communist Party' and in 'the Decision on the Nationality Issue' passed at the Sixth Party Conference in July 1928. By then, the implication of the word 'minority nationality' had become much wider than it was in 1926 and it included the Mongolian, Hui, Korean, Gaoshan, Tibetan and Uighur peoples, etc., as well as southern nationalities such as the Miao and the Li.

Since the Sixth Party Conference, relevant documents of the Party have frequently used the word 'minority nationality'. Meanwhile, such words as 'weak and small nationality' [ruoxiao minzu], 'small nationality' [xiao minzu] and 'backward nationality' [luohou minzu] were also used. These concepts were used interchangeably to refer to the same or similar status.

After the establishment of the nation, the use of the word 'minority nationality' was inherited. It is popularly used in Party and State documents as well as legal and social life. Other words in much use have been 'brother nationality' [xiongdi minzu] and 'minority brotherly nationality' [shaoshu xiongdi minzu]. In general, it has been sixty years since the [first] use of the term 'minority nationality' as a name for any other nationality who has equal status and rights to the Han people among the nationalities in China. Now, the concept of 'minority nationality' includes fifty-five brother nationalities in our country.

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