

■ 論文 ■

The Ethnic Minorities in Tengchong County and the Anti-Japanese War

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I Minority Groups in Tengchong County and the Anti-Japanese War in Tengchong

Tengchong is home to around 46 thousand people who belong to ethnic minorities such as the Lisu, Dai, Wa, Achang, Hui and other groups, distributed over 18 towns and 94 villages in Tengchong County. Members of minority groups account for 7% of the total population of the county and scattered over 40% of its total living area. Among them, there are 17,580 Lisu people who mainly live in towns and villages like Houqiao, Mingguang, Diantan, and Zhonghe, then there are the Dai people who live in towns and villages like Hehua, Wuhe, Tuantian, Puchuan, etc., with a population of 15,196. There are also 3,336 Wa people, who mostly live in Hehua and Qingshui township. There are 1,663 Achang people live in Xinhua and Puchuan Township. In towns and villages like Tengyue and Mangbang, Hui people live, with a population of 8,733.

The dominant ethnic group in Tengchong County are the Han, in other words, Tengchong is a Han dominated Frontier County. Although they account for only 7% of the total population, the minorities in Tengchong stand out with their rich history, culture and folk customs. These minorities have two distinctive common features: the first one is that most minorities in Tengchong are cross-border minorities. For example, Lisu, Dai, Wa, Achang and so can be found in Myanmar, these cross-border minorities would interact in daily life, many of them even have relatives on the other sides. The second feature is their area of residence. Most commonly, minority groups like Lisu and Achang can be found living in cold mountainous areas and upper level areas, whereas the Dai and Hui live in valley areas and flatlands. This kind of distribution structure can be found in other places as well, as generally speaking, Lisu, Achang and Wa are typical ethnic groups of the mountainous region, whereas the Dai are valley people and the Hui are much more commercialized.

Lisu people are among the larger ethnic minorities in Western Yunnan. Their origin can be traced back to Diqiang people, who belonged to the Diqiang People. The Lisu people settled in Qiongzong (nowadays Xichang and Mianning area) in early times, they are closely connected to the Nisu, Nasu, Nuosu, Sani and Chesu branch of Yi people of today.¹ The fact that today Lisu people live in Nujiang, Boshan and Myanmar is the result of the westward migration of Lisu people in the 15th century. The first Lisu people to arrive are those who now live in Caijiazhai village, others including those in Lunma and Houtou village were separated and moved out of Cai-

1 Ethnic Affairs Commission of Yunnan Province compile: "Grand Lisu culture", Yunnan Ethnic Press, 1999, p.4.

jiazhai.² The social development of the Lisu is quite uneven, and mostly characterized by internal imbalance. The Lisu who live in Western Yunnan are known to be “the remainder of primitive public ownership system”, whereas Lisu people who live in other places are believed to have developed a landlord economy. In addition, Lisu people in Western Yunnan are still relatively backward compared to Dai and Achang people who live in the same area, and their culture is characterized by such features as originality, roughness and doughtiness.

Lisu people call themselves “Lisu”, which is believed to have four explanations: namely “people who obtain grain through slash and burn cultivation”, “people who fight for reason (justification and truths)”, “people with headcloth and belt”, and “stone people”³ here it is noteworthy that the Lisu people consider themselves to be “people fight for reason (justification and truths)”, which shows their spirit of being willing to sacrifice for maintaining justice and truths.

Dai People originate from the Baiyue nationalities, whereas the Dai people in Tengchong County are descendants of the ancient Dian-yue branch. There were Dai ancestors living in the vast area of Western Yunnan even before the Qin and Han dynasties, called “Dian-yue” or “Shan”. During the Tang and Song dynasties they were referred to as “Qinchi”, “yinchi” or “Baiyi”, and during Yuan, Ming and Qing Dynasties they were called “Baiyi(百夷)” or “Baiyi(摆夷)”, and were considered to be “Plowing, free and peace-loving people”.⁴ There are several different academic views on the clan origins of the Dai people, some believe that Dai are the descendants of the Dian-yue branch of Baiyue nationalities, who migrated from coastal areas inhabited by ancient Yue people. Some argue that the Dai people was formed by a combination of ancient Yue people with indigenous people living in the Lancang River, Nujiang River and Yuanjiang River areas. Still others believe that besides Baiyue nationalities and indigenous people, Dai people might also have integrated some ancient residents from Laos and Cambodian. Currently, the second view is considered to be supported more evidence by academics.⁵

The first village invaded by the Japanese troops entering China from Myanmar is a Lisu community – the Heiniutan Village. To reach inland from the Heiniutan Village, the invading army needed to pass through many other Lisu villages. The other invading Japanese army was coming from Longling County, along a route where there were mainly Dai inhabitants. During the Japanese invasion of Tengchong, the only minority-inhabited areas the Japanese army passed through are the Lisu and Dai areas. As for the heinous crimes committed by the Japanese army in minorities-inhabited areas, the Lisu and Dai people of today still remember well the evil deeds of the invaders.

2 Zhang Ying, Liu Zhaoshun, “survey of social history of Lisu people in Caijiashai Village, Guyong Region of Tengchong County,” Yunnan Province Editorial series: “Minority social and historical survey data compilation” (b), Yunnan People’s Publishing House, 1987 edition, p.16.

3 Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau of Baoshan City compile: “Ethnography of Baoshan City,” Yunnan Ethnic Press, 2006, p.231.

4 Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau of Baoshan City compile: “Ethnography of Baoshan City,” Yunnan Ethnic Press, 2006, p.135.

5 See Yan Feng etc., “Dai Literary History,” page 1-2, Kunming: Yunnan Nationalities Publishing House.

II Fieldwork on anti-Japanese struggles of minorities in Tengchong County

As most cold mountainous areas inhabited by Lisu people belong to Houqiao Township, and the valley area inhabited by the Dai people largely belongs to the Hehua Township, we made a detailed survey of these two townships. Now I will describe the findings from these two sites one by one. We have, according to our survey plan, made several field trips to target villages and conducted series of investigation, the following is a description and discussion of each survey finding.

i Lisu people of Houqiao Township and the Anti-Japanese War in Tengchong

Houqiao (Monkey Bridge) Township, historically called “Gu Yong”(meaning “bravely forward on ancient path”), is a town with long history and beautiful scenery. Located some 45 km to the northwest of Tengchong County, covering an area of over 1,086 square kilometers, it is the largest county in Baoshan City, and one of the only two autonomic ethnic townships in Tengchong County. It consists of 9 administrative villages, 110 villagers’ groups and 151 villages. Bordering Myanmar, Houqiao Township is 31.5 km from the Ganbaidi(甘拜地) township of Myanmar, 155 km from Myitkyina in Myanmar and 549 km from Ledo(雷多) in India. Houqiao has a 72.8 km long national boundary with Myanmar. Houqiao Township is the strategic pass and the last station on the famous Stilwell Road to the Indochina Peninsula as well as an inevitable section of the Southwest Silk Road. The only state-level open port in Baoshan City — Houqiao port is within the Houqiao Township area.

Being the largest town in Baoshan City, Houqiao Township has 9 administrative villages and a total population of 27,769, among whom there are Han, Lisu, Hui and other ethnic people. Houqiao administrative village, Lunma administrative village and Danzha administrative village are three major concentrations of Lisu people, where 4,660 Lisu residents can be found. Most of these Lisu families have relatives in Myanmar, who often comes to visit them and purchase daily necessities. The main cultivations of the Lisu people in China are rice, corn and rapeseed, but they also plant cash crops like cardamom and pepper, which are sold to peddlers and then transported as native produce to inland for sale.

1. Survey in Houqiao Administrative Village

Located some 14 km to the north of Houqiao Township and 67 km to the County seat, the Houqiao village committee is easy to access as the road from it to the township has been paved with a bituminous material. With Xiajiecun Village to its east, Dongcun Village to its South, Ganbaidi to its west and Lunma Village to its north, the Houqiao Administrative Village comprises 6 village groups, including Changtang, Mujizhai, Doujiazhai, Yujiazhai, Caijiazhai, Hexinzhai, Maliba and Xiaozhahe. The Village land area is 181.87 square kilometers, and the elevation is 1,770 meters. With the annual average temperature being 13.7 °C and the annual precipitation being 2,000 mm, Houqiao Administrative Village is suitable for planting rice, corn, cardamom and other crops. Among the 1,641 residents who live in the 13 villages and 8 agricultural cooperation groups in Houqiao Administrative Village, most are Lisu people; there are only one or two Han people who moved here through

marriage. We met a Lisu village cadre at the committee office, he told us he only heard about the war from elders, which was said to be fought at Tengchong, but at Houqiao there were only some troops passed by.

As for the name of the village Houqiao, it came from a rattan woven bridge near the village. There was no stone or steel bridge, people had to cross the river through this rattan bridge, and when they walked on it the sway of the bridge forced them to use both hands and feet like monkeys, so people had named it “Houqiao (monkey bridge)”, which later became the place name as well. Houqiao is a vital communication line between China and Myanmar, the famous Ledo Road (the Stilwell Road) crosses the Binglangjiang River through Houqiao area and extends beyond borderline. There is no doubt that during the war Houqiao had been a major traffic artery.

There are three villages within the Houqiao Administrative Village that have a connection with the Anti-Japanese War: Heinitan Village is where the Japanese army first invaded Tengchong; Lisu villagers in Houqiao Village offered help to American soldiers working on bridge construction on the Burma Road; Changtang Village was occupied by Japanese Army who remained stationed there for three months, it's the place where the Japanese crossed Binglangjiang River.

(1) Heinitan Village

Heinitan Village was the first place the Japanese Army took over after invading China from North Myanmar, and today there are over 90 households and 400 people live in the village. The village is divided into two parts: the old village and the new village. The old one is the main part of the former Heinitan village, while the new village was mostly developed in recent years by relocated households. It was called Xiazhai(lower village) and was a smaller part of the former Heinitan Village. Then the government decided to relocate Houqiao Port and set up a state level port at Heinitan, and in the new plan of land utilization it was agreed that Xiazhai needed to be removed. Through state investment, a new village was soon formed, though still called Heinitan, the new village is much more advanced in household distribution and function.

According to a Mr. Cai from Heinitan Village, though it is now a relatively large village, there were only 3 to 4 households living here back to the 1940s, and they were settled separately. Lisu people back then mostly lived in deep forests and carried out slash and burn cultivation. Their houses could be very humble, as mostly they lived in thatch hut. Their millstone was the most important property for a Lisu family, and wherever Lisu people went it would be humped to their new home. For Lisu people who carried out slash and burn cultivation, moving was so frequent and convenient that it was like hunting. So when they heard that the Japanese were coming, villagers in Heinitan escaped into deep forest. None of them encountered any Japanese, and it is said that the Japanese Army did not stop over at Heinitan but directly intrude into Tengchong. The significance of Heinitan in terms of the war is that, as the first Chinese village bordering Myanmar, it was the beginning of one invading route of Japanese Army into China.

(2) Houqiao Village

Houqiao Village is only 3 km away from Heinitan, to reach it one must pass by Heinitan. It is a small vil-

lage with over 10 households. The significance of this small village to the war is that a “kid” named Cai Wenbo contributed a lot to the construction of Houqiao Bridge by allied forces. Mr. Cai Wenbo has now passed away, but his wife Madame Cai Youzhi is still alive and she is 73 years old. (So we paid her a visit.) Hers is a traditional Lisu house, with walls all made of wooden partitions and tile-roofed. (When we first entered the house) it was a little bit dark inside, in the middle of the room there is a Chinese fireplace on which a teapot is placed, next to it is a bed which belongs to Cai Youzhi. She always sleeps on this bed beside the fireplace, which warms her a lot especially in winter. She is encumbered in much clothing, and is wearing typical Lisu style leg wrappings. She told us many of her late husband’s life stories.

According to her the Americans were here to build a bridge. Her late husband used to run errands for the Americans and thus forged a friendship with them. They had even been visited by some of these Americans after the war. However, the bridge built by the Americans had been torn down and a hanging bridge has been built instead.

According to local scholars, Mr. Cai Wenbo was called “little kid” by those engineer soldiers from America. In 1943, the American engineer unit had arrived at Houqiao for the construction of Ledo Road (the Stilwell Road). Children from Houqiao Village often went to the construction sites for fun, and from time to time ran some errands for the engineers. At the beginning when the Americans saw Lisu kids playing nearby and showing curiosity about the construction work, they would invite them into their tents and entertain them with coffee and sugars. One time, when the “little kid” asked to stay with the engineer unit and do odds and ends for them, this was permitted. From then on the “little kid” had started to do all kind of chores like cleaning, boiling water and standing guard for the engineers, and through time he forged a profound friendship with them. At that time the region was occupied by the Japanese, and one day the Japanese Army carried out a mopping-up operation. When “little kid” discovered that the Japanese were driving towards the construction site, he immediately reported to the engineer unit. Being familiar with the neighboring surroundings and roads, he successfully helped to transfer the engineer unit to a safe place, otherwise the American engineer unit could be besieged and massacred by the Japanese regular army. Once Mr. Cai told his story of helping transfer American engineer unit to a scholar interviewing him as following:

One day when I was herding horses for the American engineers I heard some villagers cry: “Guizi Bing (The Japanese Army) is coming for clean-out”, I knew immediately that they were heading for the American engineers. These engineers had no weapons but construction tools, so it would be disastrous if they were discovered by the Japanese regular army. I jumped on a horse and rode desperately towards the construction site. As soon as I saw Lance, I took his hand and went like Japanese soldiers carrying bayonets killing people with my hands, and it was immediately understood by Lance and other engineers. I told them by gesture that “I grew up here and know about the surrounding environment well, run after me and as soon as we enter the Myanmar jungle, the Japanese can not reach us”. Lance and other engineers soon gather together, dropping their tools and together we ran towards the deep forests.

With my guidance, those American engineers who had no weapons and knew nothing about shooting

ran into the Myanmar forest. The Japanese plot of besieging and annihilating American engineer unit was crushed. The engineers were grateful to me; they also made good friends with other local Lisu people. Lance would drive a car carrying food and daily articles saved by each engineer from their own share and deliver it to Lisu households.⁶

Thus “little kid” made a great contribution to the allied forces building Houqiao Bridge. When the work was done and the engineer unit was about to leave Houqiao Village, Eugene Lance himself drove a Jeep carrying Candy, cigarettes and food he had saved and paid a farewell visit to “little kid” and his mother, elder sister and little brother, as they were friends already. In 2004, after attending “the International Symposium on World Anti-Fascist War—Sino- Burma-India battlefield”, Eugene Lance went to Houqiao Village with the special intention of seeing the “little kid”.⁷ It was quite emotional when Cai Wenbo and Eugene Lance met each other, both getting old, the two of them hugged each other with tears. In the following days they together enjoyed watching the traditional Lisu stunt of climbing a mountain of swords and had a souvenir photograph taken.

Cai Wenbo had developed a deep feeling for the Burma Road. When he was invited to attend a provincial conference in 1952, he started out with a pair of sandals and reached Baoshan City on foot 5 days later before he took a bus to Kunming.⁸ As a typical representative of ethnic people who had shared a deep friendship with Allied forces during the war, his story is widely told among Lisu people.

At the end of the interview, we asked if we could have a look at those photos taken with American visitors, but were told that the family member taking care of those photos was not in.

(3) Changtang Village

When we arrived at Changtang Village, we were told that it is now a New Rural Construction model village, thus most houses in the village have been revamped with government funding. According to Xiao Hu, a publicity officer who accompanied us to the village, most houses were thatched cottages before Changtang Village was listed as model village, after which (besides house renovation) new facilities like a public latrine and a public activity room were built. There are cement roads in the village and every household is accessible by them, there is even a parking lot in the village. It is a truly clean village that has waved goodbye to muddy roads. Houses in the village are impressive, many households have built flat-roofed cement houses, and they look sturdy. Those houses that kept traditional structure have been renovated and decorated, all are fresh looking.

We interviewed a 79 years old Lisu elder named Yu Haishen. He was once village committee vice party director. He was sprawled out in front of the fire in his tile-roofed penthouse when we arrived. It is a small

6 Chen Yongzhu, “Remembrance of Tengchong,” “Minority Literature” No.6, 2007.

7 This story was first told to me by Mr. Bi Zhixian, a Tengchong county publicity department officer. I also with his accompany carried out an interview with Cai Wenbo’s wife. While sort out data I made a brief reference to documentation of Geng Deming, “ empirical study of War in western Yunnan “, Yunnan People’s Publishing House, 2006 edition.

8 See Zhang Wen, “Burma Road: national symbol of the indomitable”, “International Communications (对外大传播),” 2005, No.5.

structure separated from the main building, the fire burns brightly; near to it is a simple bed on which Mr. Yu has noon break. Over the fire stand a trivet, a teapot lies on the floor neat to it, this is a common scene if you visit a rural household, and it is the same with any other branch of Yi Nationality. Mr. Yu is wearing heavy clothes and a blue hat, with a pair of leather shoes on his feet and solid leg wrappings on his calves. Leggings are an important symbol of Lisu clothing, all Lisu men we see in the village wear leggings. Mr. Yu is sitting on his bed, with a crutch leaned on it, apparently he has some leg problems. My partner Mr. Bi is an old friend of his, the two of them are so excited to see each other that they both sit on Mr. Yu's bed and start to chat. As we begin our interview, the topic is shifted to Anti-Japanese War related issues. The following is a narration of Mr. Yu:

The Japanese Army was stationed at Changtang Village for around three months, they came from Tengchong and were to make Changtang Village the point of crossing to cross the Binglangjiang River. With a raft, the Japanese had crossed the river with machine guns and horses. Since then there were Japanese coming in everyday to cross the river. According to villagers sometimes up to 2,000-3,000 Japanese soldiers crossed the river at Changtang in a single day. The village was emptied as people had already run away into deep forest. Knowing that the Japanese were coming they had transferred grain, poultry and livestock to be hidden in the mountain to make sure nothing was left for the Japanese to loot. However, the Japanese were very cunning, and they would observe and follow the smoke from cooking or crowing cocks and barking dogs. Once they had located the hiding place of the villagers, they would just clean them out. But Lisu people were familiar with the forest and were able to escape many of Japanese chases. After several unsuccessful hunts, the Japanese gave up the plan to chase and kill Lisu people scattered in mountains. But there was one Han nationality person who had been kidnapped and brought to Changtang Village, where some Lisu people witnessed just how the Japanese tortured him to death with boiling water. The local Lisu people were filled with fury by such evil deeds, and fought side by side with other countrymen of different nationalities against the Japanese invaders throughout many tough years to come.

During the three months when the Japanese Army was stationed at Changtang Village, unprecedented damage was caused by these invaders to Changtang. Empty houses were put to military use, and many houses were torn down to make space for tents or road construction. There were many soldiers living within the village. After all Japanese soldiers had crossed the river and no more invaders were coming in, the Lisu people one by one came out of the forest to return home. Though Lisu people did not engage in direct combat with the invaders, they had timely transferred grain, goods and materials, which otherwise could have become supplies for Japanese Army, and thus indirectly helped to fight against the invaders.

Changtang Village is now undergoing earth-shaking changes, since being listed by Houqiao Township government as New Rural Construction model village, thatched cottages have been replaced by tile-roofed houses, and old tile-roofed houses been renovated. Traditional Lisu architecture enjoys a high reputation in Western Yunnan for its unique features. There are bamboo houses, wooden houses, earth wall houses and half-timbered houses to be found among Lisu households, the former three are more traditional, with thatch, plank

or tile on the roof. Though there have been some changes in Changtang Village architecture, most Lisu houses have kept some traditional features like plank partition walls and tile-roofs. Every Lisu household has a Chinese fireplace, around which families rest, chat and sleep. It is because of these architectural features (use of bamboo, plank, and wood) of the Lisu people that the Japanese could tear down buildings in Changtang Village to set up tents, make rafts and build roads with materials obtained.

There is no necessary connection between the two, but a village where the Japanese Army had previously been stationed for three months is now a New Rural Construction model village, and the symbolic meaning is obvious. The road from Houqiao Village to Changtang Village is still an earthen road, and villagers in Changtang believe the company building power station nearby should help them build asphalt road. Binglangjiang River is rich in water resources; there are 9 more rivers nearby including Lunma River and Danzha River, so a power station is under construction on the upper reaches of Binglangjiang River. Though most buildings in Changtang remain traditional style, some people have started to use bricks and air bricks to build walls, therefore the Lisu culture is undergoing transformation as well.

Though no fierce battle occurred in this village, it was closely involved with the war. Besides fighting the invaders face to face, the Lisu people supported the Anti-Japanese War through all kinds of ways.

2. Survey in Danzha Village

On our way to Danzha Village for field work, we experienced difficulties. I should especially be grateful to Mr. Bi Shixian who accompanied me throughout our fieldwork. Although he is already 76 years old, he never complains about our situation or tells us he is tired or so. On our way to Danzha Village we rented a taxi, there had been rains a few days earlier so the earthen road was impossible to navigate by taxi. We were responsible for this situation, as we had failed to investigate in advance and find out the road condition. We enjoyed a friendly farewell lunch at Houqiao Village and after that started out for Danzha Village. But only 3 km into it we found ourselves trapped on a tricky road. The road was so rugged that a taxi with its humble chassis height just could not manage it. The taxi driver we hired kept complaining: "I can not drive on like this, it hurts my car chassis too much". We comforted her by saying "the road condition must be better just a little bit ahead". However, there were constant noises of the chassis being scratched by rough road, the driver complained at first, but when this happened again and again she could not help but argue with us. As the noises suggest there indeed was scratching happening, we also felt bad for the driver, so we asked her to pull over, so we could walk some distance ahead to check if the road would be any better. If so we should carry on, if not we had to come up with other solutions. As I walked along the narrow road, it appeared to be quite dank and uneven. It was hard to tell if it would get any better if we continued walking ahead, so we decided to turn back. Just then there came two agricultural vehicles from both ends of the road, and it was really hard for us to leave enough room for them to pass by. The good news was that we could ask the agriculture vehicle driver about the road condition ahead. One driver told us: "it's impossible for you to steer through with this car; the road is even tough for our trucks". So we were assured that there was no point moving forward. Turning the car round, our driver asked us about our backup plan, saying she wished to leave for the county seat. We agreed as she could not help

even if she stayed, and that we needed to hire a stronger car.

Our plan to visit Danzha Village was temporarily frustrated, but luckily the local cadre from Houqiao Township government was quite experienced. He immediately called one of his friends by cell phone, and rented a car for us from his friend. He told us: “take it easy, now that you have spent your money renting that taxi, this time we will pay”, which was very generous of him. Not long after his friend came to pick us and we again forged toward Danzha Village. This time we had the opportunity to see how rough the road really was. It is simply impossible to steer through this road if it rains. It had rained a few days before we arrived, but luckily the sunny days following had largely dried it. We encountered many big trucks loaded with timbers, which were responsible for most of the damage to road. Due to shortages of funding, this situation could not be changed in short time. Though the road condition was tedious, there was wonderful vegetation along the way, and the air was just fresh, with a bit of a cold touch. It is characteristic of Lisu people to live at high elevation. After over an hour’s upward journey, we finally reached the top and again start to go downward. After another half an hour’s downhill journey, there appeared in front of our eyes an alpine basin. At the east corner of it there is Lunma Village, the residents of which are mostly Han and Lisu nationalities. The Han nationalities live in the basin while most Lisu people occupy the ridge area. At the west corner of the basin is Danzha Village, where Lisu residents scattered in both the basin and the ridges. Mr. Bi suggested we first visit Danzha Village when inquired by our new driver, and it was decided that we should visit Lunma Village on our way back from Danzha Village.

Danzha Village is situated at the foot of Langya Snow Mountain, adjoining Ruidian to the east, Lunma Village to the south and bordering Myanmar to the northwest. It is a township level pilot administrative village with 12 natural villages and 13 village groups, covering an total area of 133,226 Mu, of which 120,000 Mu is covered with trees, making its forest coverage as high as 90%. The cultivated land area of Danzha Village is 6,890 Mu, of which 3,470 Mu is paddy field and 3,420 Mu is dry land. Danzha Village covers an area of 156.94 square kilometers, the elevation is 1,880 meters. With the annual average temperature 12°C, and annual precipitation of 2,000 mm, it is suitable for plants like rice, corn and so forth to grow. There are 720 households and 3,107 residents at Danzha Village, of whom 62% are Lisu nationality, the rest are mostly Han people. Along the 33.3 kilometers long borderline within Danzha Village there are three channels of departure. As one of the most damaged villages during the Anti-Japanese war in Tengchong, the Lisu people who lived here were victims of the war.

After steering through a zigzag earthen road, we arrived at Danzhai Village Committee, the office area which is surrounded by the beautiful Binglang River. We were impressed both by the clear stream and the office buildings and furniture in it, with unique local characteristics. The Village Committee branch secretary who is a local Lisu welcomed us into his office, and told us things that happened in Lisu villages during the Japanese aggression.

The Jiuji Village (old street village, or “Luo Duo Mu” in Lisu Language) of Danzha Administrative Village is bordering Myanmar, and was therefore one of the villages where the Japanese rampaged about.

There are now 45 households and over 180 people live here, but there were fewer residents during war-time. Most residents in Jiujie Village ran away when they were told that the Japanese were coming, so only the elders were forced to remain in the village for not being able to run away. According to the villagers and the relevant documents, the No.2 Reserve Army Division of the 54 Army were engaged in guerrilla warfare against Japanese in this area, so from time to time some fierce fights occurred between the two. Some other villagers say that the 36 Army had come to Danzhai Village, lead by its subsidiary officer, to launch a blocking action to stop the Japanese Army from entering the village from Myitkyina. The Japanese suffered a severe defeat, but returned to avenge themselves and burned down a village belonging to Lunma Village. All in all, it is undeniable that the Japanese invaders intruded into Danzha Village.

Once the Japanese were stationed at the Dazhai Village of Danzhai, a villager surnamed Guo tried to escape when he saw the Japanese were coming, but it was too late and Japanese stabbed him to death when they found him escaping. These Japanese spent the night at Dazhai Village, and they forced a villager named Bao Cai to cook for them. When Bao Cai accidentally dropped a pot containing food that was too hot to hold, he was immediately stabbed to death.

As most young and middle-aged villagers had run away to hide in mountains, there were only some powerless elders in the village. But the Japanese soldiers wouldn't even spare the elders, two old women were raped, and one of them stabbed to death when she tried to resist. For privacy concern, we did not pry for the names of these two old ladies, but villagers all know the story and considered the act of Japanese soldiers to have been totally devoid of conscience. Some villagers say that after having their supper at Lisu households, some Japanese soldiers even defecated into the rice steamers of the households, which was unfeasonable.

The villagers of Danzhai Village Committee contributed much to the construction of the Burma Road. "General Stilwell dispatched over 7,000 persons consisting of a Chinese and an American engineer unit based in India and workers recruited from China, India and Nepal to make urgent repairs on the Ledo Road. The Caijiazhai Village of Danzha sent a work team of 18 Lisu villagers, the assistant to the foreman of this team was a young Lisu woman named Helima, who was beautiful, intelligent and capable. She had done a great job in coordination and logistic for the construction team. Later she had fallen in love with an American engineer and the two of them had developed a moving relationship, because of which her photos were published by several Western Media. Of these 18 workers there are 8 that are still alive, and Helima herself still recalls past events with deep feeling."⁹ We intended to interview the legendary lady Helima while we were in Danzhai, but were told that she had passed away early this year at the age of 81. But we did saw many of the souvenirs given to her by the Allied Forces which had been well kept by her family.

What the Japanese have done to the Lisu people living in the area is still well remembered by villagers, and we also need to remember well the contribution of local Lisu people to the building of the Burma Road, their transportation of goods and their helping our soldiers chasing the fleeing Japanese.

9 Geng Deming, "Empirical study of War in western Yunnan", Yunnan People's Publishing House, 2006 edition, p.65.

3. Survey in Lunma Administrative Village

Lunma Administrative Village belongs to Houqiao Township, and is situated some 12 km to the north of the town and 67 km to the county seat. The road from the village to the town is earthen, and is generally easy to access. The village is close to Guyong forest in the east and south, in the west it neighbors Houqiao Village and in the north Danzhai Village. It covers an area of 108.56 square kilometers (1mu=0.667hectares), lying 1,890 meter above sea level, with an annual temperature of 12 °C and annual precipitation of 2,000mm, it is suitable to grow rice, corn and other plants here. There are 11 natural villages, 10 village groups with 457 households and 1,841 people in Lunma. Among them 733 are Lisu people, the rest being mostly Han nationality. Villages where Lisu live include Sanchahe, Jiyutan, Yangchanghe, Doujiazhexai and Hetou. Maliba Village where the Village Committee office of Lunma located is a Han dominated natural village, which was burned down by the Japanese during the War. We interviewed a Mr. Guo who is 80 years old.

The Japanese arrived at our village in August 1942, they were from Myanmar. There was a fierce battle between the Japanese and the No. 2 division of the Reserve Army, who were engaged in guerrilla warfare against the Japanese. There were local guerrillas too in this area, fighting against the invaders side by side with the No. 2 division. During the following 18 months when the Japanese were here, villagers all hid in the deep forest; the livestock they could not transfer were all consumed by the Japanese. One month into persistent guerrilla opposition, the Japanese accused our villagers of assisting the guerrillas and came to burn down our houses. There were around 40 households living here back then, and every house was burned down by them, an elder was also burned to death. Though all houses had been burned down, villagers had to come out of forest and return to harvest their rice despite all the dangers, and by doing so 8 villagers were kidnapped by the Japanese and were said to be taken to Houtou Village. In the end only 7 of them came back alive, one was said to have been killed alive with hot water by the Japanese.

Maliba Village now has 98 households and 371 people, and almost everyone in the village can recount the story of the village being burned down by the Japanese. People from other villages around also know how Maliba Village was once burned down to ashes. Different from what happened in Danzhai Village, most Lisu communities at Lunma Village were not harassed by the Japanese. this was because they lived in remote mountainous area whereas most communities in the Basin were of Han nationality.

ii Dai people live in Hehua County and the Anti-Japanese War in Tengchong

The Hehua Dai-Wa nationality Township is located in the southwestern part of Tengchong County, adjoining Lianghe County of Dehong Dai-Jingpo Autonomous Prefecture in the south. It covers a large area along the Da Yingjiang River, which is quite fertile. It is 24 km away from Thengchong County seat, the total area of the township is 125 square kilometers, including 10 administrative villages, 43 natural villages and 96 village groups. There are 6,905 households and 27,146 residents. Of which 5,077 are of Dai nationality, 1,624 are Wa people, and minorities account for 27% of its total population.

The connection between Hehua Township and the war is as follows: firstly, the Japanese Army once stationed at Hehua Township and set up a comforting station, though the comfort women in it were no local Dai people, although local women being raped by the Japanese was a common occurrence. Secondly, when the Japanese Army passed by Baipai village and the Nanyan Village of Hehua Township, they abused many villagers there. The following is a description of our field work at these two villages.

(1) Baipai Village

Baipai Village is 20km away from the county seat and is one of the largest Dai communities in the neighborhood. There are now over 200 households and 1,000 people in the village. Dai people here are of the same origin as those live in Longling County, as generally speaking they are both part of Dai nationality of Western Yunnan. We meet Mr.Li who is now 82 years old; he tells us the following information:

I was 10 when the Japanese arrived at our village, so I remember things that happened. They only came into the village for once, other times they just passed by. It was a unit of over 20 soldiers; they were coming to steal our horses. We were poor and had nothing valuable but horses, so they just took our horses away. There were many good horses in the village, the Japanese took them all. One horse keeper in the village was stabbed by the Japanese with a bayonet and was pushed down to the river, but he was a good swimmer and managed to escape from under the water, and was able to save his own neck.

Villagers all ran away to hide in other places when the Japanese were coming, only some too old to escape remained in. There was this old lady who was already 60 years old, after the Japanese took our horses, some of them decided to rape the old lady, she resisted and screamed, her old husband tried to save her but both of them were killed. There were two other Dai people who instead of running away decided to have a look at the Japanese out of curiosity. They were shot by the Japanese, one was dead right away, the other badly wounded. The Japanese also killed two Chinese near our village whom they had kidnapped from some other place and brought here.

The Japanese only harassed our village once, which was for stealing our horses; they never entered our village again. But the place where their army was stationed was not far from our village, and we heard that people were frequently killed there. For what I know, in a Dai community named Xinzhai Village not far from it, an old Dai lady was killed by the Japanese.

After the interview, we went on to experience scenic spots in Baipai Village. It is now a rural tourism site Village of Tengchong County, spring and unique Dai culture are its major attraction. There are interesting cultures like paintings drew by local Dai peasants and martial art of Dai people, etc. While Paintings drawn by local peasants with Dai and Lisu nationalities as representatives enjoys a high reputation within Tengchong City, the martial art of Dai people has the characteristic of combining hardness with softness. There are 56 hot springs scattered here and there with all kinds of shapes and sizes within a 500 meters long and 60 meters wide area in Bapai village. The temperature of the spring in Bapai remains to be around 21℃ all year round, which

means they are low-temperature hot springs. During our stay at Bapai, we noticed that there are some people coming to Bapai for self-driving tour.

(2) Nanyan Village

Nanyan Village lies to the west of Baipai Village, there are over 190 households and 800 residents, all of them of Dai nationality. We visited the former village head Mr. Sun who is now 80 years old. He remembers well the things that happened during those days of turmoil.

The Japanese came to our village and remained here for a night. They came during the night without our notice. That morning when we woke up there were Japanese all over the village, there were around 1,000 of them. Three Dai young men secretly ran to Longling County in the hope of reporting to our authority, as Longling at time belonged to Tengchong County. Unfortunately it was only after they arrived at Longling that they found out Longling had already been taken over by the Japanese. They were arrested by the Japanese and two of them were killed, the other ran away with some luck.

The Japanese stayed at our village for a day and a night, while they were transferring from Tengchong to Longling. Pigs, hens, ducks and geese, the Japanese took everything edible from the villagers, and ate off all the food they robbed in their tents near the village. As there were as many as one thousand Japanese soldiers, they consumed most of our livestock. They left during the night quietly just as they did in previous night when they came. When we got up the next day all the Japanese were gone. They always moved about during the night. Since then no Japanese Army ever returned to our village.

After the interview Mr. Sun invited us to have a meal at his home, and other Dai villagers were also nice and warm to us. Just before we were about to leave for Tengchong, my partner Mr. Bi suddenly recognized Mr. Sun as one of his former colleagues. It turned out that Mr. Sun used to work with the local government, but returned home to take care of his family after his wife had passed away. He now still gets government pension for life. He and Mr. Bi used to be colleagues when he worked for the government and later became village head. They were very pleased to recognize each other, and insisted on taking a picture together as a souvenir.

Our field trip to above villages had helped us to reveal some of the evil deeds the Japanese invaders had committed in the Chinese rural area, which is in accordance with what Mr. Geng Deming says in his article:

In less than half a year since the Japanese Imperialist launched the Pacific War in December 1942, it had occupied most countries in Southeast Asia. Soon after the complete fall of Myanmar in April 1942, the Japanese quickly invaded Tengchong and Dehong County of our country in early May. The Japanese Army coded with “the black wind force” occupied Tengchong on May 10th. During the Japanese occupation of Tengchong, local Chinese suffered enormous pain from the Japanese abuse. The invading troops rampaged about in the area, killing, burning, raping, looting and every crime imaginable. Till Tengchong was recovered, there had been over 13,000 people killed by the Japanese, over 20,000 houses were burned

down, 9 bridges and 9 local were destroyed. The Japanese also robbed over 60 million kilos of grain and over 50 thousand big-stock from local households, there were many other public and private property as well as local historical relic that they looted.¹⁰

There are many stories being told in ethnic minorities' areas nowadays about how the Japanese invaders rampaged about in the area, committing every crime imaginable. We believe what we found out through our field investigation is trustworthy, as those evil deeds of Japanese invaders are alive in the memory of those unarmed helpless minority villagers. Our investigation among Lisu and Dai people has just proved that.

III The contribution of ethnic minorities for the Anti-Japanese War

Ethnic minorities in Tengchong County have through many ways contributed to the Anti-Japanese War, for example by engaging in battles, transporting war materials, repairing roads like the Stilwell Road, etc., in whichever way they could do their best.

(1) Minorities fighting against the invaders

Though they did not engage in face to face, large scale fighting like regular armies, ethnic minorities in Tengchong were through many ways engaged in Anti-Japanese struggles. In his blog Mr. Duan Shenggui from Tengchong County recorded:

Under the leadership of the Anti-Japanese government, local people organized to form the anti-Japanese armed forces. Local guerillas were quickly set up and spread all over the county, there were Tengbei Guerilla, Tengen Guerilla, Longjiang Guerilla, Guyong guerilla, Jiubao Guerilla and Zhanxi Guerilla being set up one after another. There were also a Self-defense of Able-bodied Men being set up under each village committee, whose major task was to act in concert with main force guerillas and to distract the enemy. They would attack some small unit of the Japanese Army by surprise, or they would punish the traitors who worked for the Japanese. Inspired by the spirit of the Anti-Japanese, ethnic people in the border area all drew together to fight against Japanese aggression. A Western Yunnan Border Region Self-defense Army was set up within the Tengen (South Tengchong) guerilla area, which consisted of the No.1, No.2, No.3 divisions, Lianshan Branch and Zhanxi Independent Unit. The No. 1 division was lead by Dao Baotu, the Tusi (local leader) of Ganya region; all the four teams under it consisted of Dai nationality youth. The No.2 division was lead by Gong Shouren, the Tusi of Nandian region, all members of the three teams under it were Dai people; the commanding officer of the No. 3 division was Zzhao Baoxian, his followers consisted of youth from different nationalities. Lianshan Branch was lead by local squires include Liu Jinsheng from Taiping Street, Xu Heben from Manxun, Cun Shiquan from Xima, its members

¹⁰ Geng Deming, "National Martyrs Cemetery and memorial sites of Anti-Japanese War in Tengchong, Yunnan", *Journal of Anti-Japanese War Studies*, vol.1, 1994.

were consisted of followers of the three branch troops. Zhanxi Independent Unit was lead by local officials include Li Zuke from Zhaixi, Yang Xiucheng from Shenhuguan, Meng Shouyi from Zhina, Ge Dingbang from Mengbao'ai. The above mentioned armed forces organized by local minorities, with their enthusiasm to serve the country, and by taking full advantage of being familiar with surrounding environment, performed relatively strong combat power. Armed with guns, muskets and knives, they actively fought against the invaders and slapped down the aggressors bitterly.¹¹

I believe the struggle of minorities against the Japanese in Tengchong is historical fact. There were several direct resistance combat groups organized by minorities within Tengchong County after the Japanese occupation, each ethnic group had formed its self-defense armed forces, which was not only for self-protection but also intended to deter the enemy. After the recovery of Tengchong in September 1944, over 200 Japanese soldiers fled in all directions. While the No.2 division of Reserved Army were pursuing them, many Lisu villagers took up their broadswords and killed the over 10 fleeing soldiers entering their villages, which demonstrated the spirit of togetherness of our people and their hatred of the invaders. There are still many stories being told in nowadays ethnic areas about how they fight against the Japanese invaders.

In his article titled "contribution of people of all nationalities in Yunnan Province to the Anti-Japanese War", Dr. Wang Wencheng writes:

People live in Western Yunnan including the Dai, Jinpo, Yi, Bai, Achang, De'ang, Lisu, Wa, Hui and Han nationality, had together formed Anti-Japanese armed forces like Sino-Burma Volunteer Army, Western Yunnan Border Region Self-defense Army, Western Yunnan Anti-Japanese Guerilla, Longlu Guerrilla, Luxi Youth Anti-Japanese Corps, Sanhudan Anti-Japanese Guerilla, Aawashan Anti-Japanese Guerilla, etc. These armed forces had worked closely with Chinese Expedition Forces in developing Guerrilla Battlefields behind Enemy lines and through brave struggle achieved victory in a number of blocking actions and anti-slaughter struggles.¹²

It is obvious that the minorities contributed a lot in the fight against the Japanese invaders, as they participated in the war they had helped to lay a solid foundation for achieving complete success of Anti-Japanese aggression in Yunan.

(2) Minorities engaged in helping and rescuing allied and national forces

Besides fighting against the Japanese invaders in battles, the minorities also engaged in rescuing allied forces such as pilots from the Flying Tigers, Chinese soldiers who went astray, and by helping transfer engineer units of allied forces, etc. According to Mr. Bi Zhixian, there was one American pilot, who was badly wounded and

11 See Duan Shenggui, "Iron-and-blood Yunnan-Burma (III): guerrillas behind enemy lines" also his blog (<http://hi.baidu.com/段生植>)

12 Wang Wencheng, "contribution of people of all nationalities in Yunnan Province to the Anti-Japanese War", speech at Yunnan Province forum on commemorating the 65th anniversary of the Victory of Chinese People's Anti-Japanese War.

unconscious when he was found by a Lisu woman in the deep forest. She could not find any water but had to bring him back to her village and with the help of the village head, transferred that soldier to a rear base.

In June 1942, a company of Chinese Expedition Force was encircled by the Japanese on their way back from Myanmar, and was forced to move deeply into the forest of Gaoligongshan Mountain. A Local Lisu villager encountered them there, and though there was language obstacles, the Lisu villager knew that it was a Chinese Army, and he reported to the village head and township head. A team of over 10 Chinese speaking villagers was soon dispatched to meet the company. This company stayed at the Lisu village for half a month and then crossed Nujiang River, and finally rejoined its troop.

(3) Minorities engaged in building Burma Road

With a total length of 1,146 km, the construction of Stilwell Road was fully started in December 1937 and completed in August 1938. During the process over 100 thousand or the utmost close to 200 thousand Chinese laborers of many nationalities participated in the construction work, including laborers from Dai, Yi, Bai, Jinpo, Achang, Lisu, Hui, Miao, De'ang, Bulang and Han nationality. In most villages, each household had a representative laborer carrying food, bedding and home-made tools who joined the construction team. These civilian laborers normally worked for around 10 hours a day; sometimes they even had to work during the night with the illumination supplied by fire or vapor lamps.¹³ “though each had a different language and customs, all minority groups had in order to fight against the Japanese aggression and guard the nation, participated voluntarily in the construction of Burma Road, regardless of gender and age. Some households even had three generations all working on the construction sites. The distance from different villages to each construction site was varied. Some laborers had to make a long trek from 3 to 6 days to get to the site, yet they had to bring with them food, clothes and tools such as a hoe. When they did arrive at the allocated site, they had to make temporary shelters by themselves, and then endure the hardships of living out there with a shortage of food, clothes, etc. In winter, those high up in the mountains had to sleep through the night with the warmth supplied by some fire; and in summer those working at low altitude basin areas suffered from heat and were bathing in sweat. Even worse was to contract malaria, which could take one's life in a few hours.”¹⁴ For the construction of Burma Road, over 30 thousand Chinese Laborers contributed their lives.¹⁵ Thus we say “the successful completion of the construction of the Burma Road is the result of the hard work of people of all nationalities in western Yunnan. The Burma Road is a product of their noble patriotic enthusiasm; it is road of Anti-Japanese national salvation that they built with blood and sweat. This is evidence of great contribution by the people of Western Yunnan to the Anti-Japanese War, and to the Chinese nation.”¹⁶ The minorities participated not only in the construction of Burma Road, the Burma railway, Tengchong airport and pipeline, but also undertook the task of transporting war materials for the Allied Forces and the Chinese Expedition Force, thus contributing greatly to the logistical work during the Anti-Japanese War.

13 See Peng Xunzi, “border people and the Burma Road”.

14 See Liu Zhu, “Burma Road: the patriotic spirit of the peoples of western Yunnan”, *Create*, 1995, No.1.

15 See Qi Junguo, “Yesterday and today, the Stilwell Road.”

16 See Liu Zhu, “Burma Road: the patriotic spirit of the peoples of western Yunnan”, *Create*, 1995, No.1.

IV Conclusion

We investigated the contribution of minority groups in Tengchong County to the Anti-Japanese War, and through our field work, we find that although the minorities in Tengchong were a small population by then, they suffered a variety of tortures in the process of the Japanese invasion of China, and many of them were killed. In villages bordering Myanmar such as Danzha Village, Lunma Village and Houqiao Village which were populated largely by Lisu people, we find that they not only actively participated in the war, but also through every possible means helped the Allied Force and the Chinese Expedition Force. They had participated in the construction of the Burma Road and the transportation of war materials; most critically they had contributed grain from their own barns to the Chinese Expedition Force. On their way to transport the grain to the front-line they rather starved to death than to take a grain from it.

In his article titled “role of Minorities in Western Yunnan Anti-Japanese War”, Mr. Zhang Zhubang claims there are three reasons why the minorities actively participated in the war: firstly fighting against the invaders and defending the motherland territory is an act of justice, which accords with the desire of the people; secondly our authority had organized and mobilized people of all nationalities in earnest; thirdly it is partly because the authorities of different times had always maintained a good relationship with local chieftains.¹⁷ During our investigation, we find that the minorities were fighting against the Japanese invaders with the motivation of guarding their own country, as well as revenging those evil deeds to them of the invaders. In order to defend the country and the sacred territory, ethnic minorities in border areas had made an outstanding contribution to this end.

17 Zhang Zhubang, “Role of Minorities in Western Yunnan Anti-Japanese War”, compiled by Publicity Department of Tengchong County Committee of the CPC, and Tengyue Culture Research Association, “Tengyue Culture Study”, volume 2, China Federation of Literary and Art Circles Publishing Corporation, 2004.