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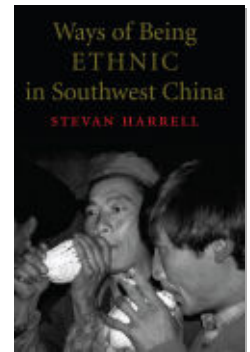
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Ways of Being Ethnic in Southwest China

STEVAN HARRELL

Drawing on extensive fieldwork conducted in the 1980s and 1990s in southern Sichuan, this pathbreaking study examines the nature of ethnic consciousness and ethnic relations among local communities, focusing on the Nuosu (classified as Yi by the Chinese government), Prmi, Naze, and Han. It argues that even within the same regional social system, ethnic identity is formulated, perceived, and promoted differently by different communities at different times.

The heart of the book consists of detailed case studies of three Nuosu village communities, along with studies of Prmi and Naze communities, smaller groups such as the Yala and Nasu, and Han Chinese who live in minority areas. These are followed by a synthesis that compares different configurations of ethnic identity in different communities and discusses the implications of these examples for our understanding of ethnicity and for the near future of China. This lively description and analysis of the region's complex ethnic identities and relationships constitutes an original and important contribution to the study of ethnic identity.

"This comparative ethnography is a breakthrough study of the complexity and dynamics of multi-ethnic relationships in southwest China. It is an inspiring resource for both scholars and students interested in China and ethnicity issues."

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—Colin Mackerras, Griffith University, Queensland, Australia

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