

An Analysis of School Education Development of the Qiang Nationality in Recent One Hundred Years

UNE ANALYSE DU DÉVELOPPEMENT DE L'ÉDUCATION SCOLAIRE DE LA NATIONALITÉ QIANG PENDANT CENT ANS RÉCENTS

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Abstract: After May 12 Wenchuan massive earthquake, Qiang nationality was severely destroyed. China is all set to move in to save the quake-threatened culture of the Qiang people in Sichuan Province. Pay attention to the school education is an important aspect. It is significant to know the development of school education in recent one hundred years. During the period of the Republic of China, modern school education for the Qiang nationality developed. But the number of children of the Qiang nationality entering school was small and the education quality was low. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, a school education system serving the Qiang nationality has been gradually set up and education quality has been greatly improved. After 1992, the popularization of nine-year compulsory education has been realized, the scale of high school education has rapidly expanded, the structure readjustment of middle vocational and technical education has been accelerated and higher education has been developed stably.

Key words: the Qiang nationality; school education; development; analysis

Résumé: Après l'énorme tremblement de terre à Wenchuan le 12 mai, la nationalité Qiang a été sévèrement détruite. La Chine s'épuise le corps à sauver la culture menacée par le séisme du peuple Qiang dans la province de Sichuan. Faire attention à l'éducation scolaire est un aspect important. Il est significatif de comprendre le développement de l'éducation scolaire dans le cent ans récent. Pendant la période de la République de Chine, l'éducation moderne scolaire pour la nationalité Qiang a développé. Mais le nombre de la scolarisation des enfants de la nationalité Qiang était petit et la qualité d'éducation était basse. Après la fondation de la République populaire de Chine, un système d'éducation scolaire servant la nationalité Qiang a été progressivement fondé et la qualité d'éducation a été beaucoup améliorée. Après

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1992, la popularisation de l'éducation obligatoire pour neuf ans a été réalisée, l'ampleur de l'éducation de lycée a été rapidement développée, le réajustement de la structure de l'éducation moyenne professionnelle et technique a été accélérée et l'éducation plus élevée a été stablement développée.

Mots-Clés: la nationalité Qiang; éducation scolaire; développement; analyse

The Qiang nationality is one of the ancient nationalities in China. It has a long history. According to the china's fifth population census in 2000, Qiang nationality has more than 306,000 people, of which 301,000 people accounting for 98.3 percent residing in Sichuan province are distributed mainly over Maoxian, Wenchuan, Lixian, Songpan in Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, and Beichuan, Pingwu in Mianyang region. The overwhelming majority live in Miaoxian and Beichuan (To facilitate narrative, we call the main living area of Qiang Nationality as "Qiang areas" in this article). All the areas are the most severely affected areas in the deadly May 12 earthquake. The unique culture of the Qiang Nationality is now under threatened following the earthquake including school education. It is significant to know the development of school education in recent one hundred years. In recent one hundred years, with a tremendous change of china, the school education of Qiang nationality has experienced a corresponding development.

1. SCHOOL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT OF THE QIANG NATIONALITY DURING THE PERIOD OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

During the period of the Republic of China, modern school education for the Qiang nationality developed. This change mainly manifested in establishment of a new group of elementary and secondary schools, and some vocational education, normal education institutions, which adopted a new organizational form of teaching and created a number of new courses in Qiang areas.

During this period, primary school education in Qiang areas had a vary development speed. Each county established a provincial primary school and one or more county whole primary schools which complete with six grades and has set up the women primary schools gradually, such as the founding of Maoxian county woman primary school in 1926 and Lixian county woman primary school in 1927. Both of them were the first batch institutions of women primary education in Qiang areas. In addition, many primary schools were set up one after another in Qiang stockade village and township---Diexi, Taiping in Maoxian, Zhicheng, Qingpian in Beichuan, Xuecheng, Taoping in Lixian, Yanmen, Weizhou in Wenchuan and Zhenping in Songpan etc. It was said that the Shababianmin primary school in Maoxian which was founded in 1932 was "the beginning of the implementation of elementary education" (Miaoxian Culture and Education Bureau, 1991) in Qiang areas. In 1940, the government made national compulsory education universal so that every county in Qiang areas set up centre national school at townships and Bao national school at Bao (A unit of civil administration in the old days). Despite different areas had different implementation results of national compulsory education and different school quality, generally to say, the implementation of national compulsory education had promoted the development of primary education in Qiang areas.

In comparison with primary school education middle school education in Qiang areas started later and developed slower. At the autumn in 1931, "Song, Li, Mao, Mao, Wen Middle School" established (Later renamed "Song, Li, Mao, Mao, Wen Joint Junior Middle School", "Joint Middle School" for short). This school had only one class with more than 50 students, but soon shut down due to political instability; In 1941, "Mao, Song, Li, Wen County Junior Middle School" which was founded in Maoxian with the first 26 students lifted the curtain on the history that the youth in

Maoxian, Songpan, Lixian, Wenchuan could receive middle school education in Qiang areas (Later, because of the financial problem Maoxian took charge of the school separately and renamed it as "Miaoxian County Junior Middle School"); In 1944, Beichuan County Junior Middle School was established with the first 41 students ; In 1948, Lixian County Junior Middle School was established with the first 42 students. There were only above-mentioned three junior middle schools in Qiang areas during the period of the Republic of China. At autumn in 1949, Maoxian County Junior Middle School recruiting over 10 senior high school students created a precedent for senior middle school education in Qiang areas.

The development of middle vocational education in Qiang areas was lagging. In 1930, the government of Qiang areas expanded the people's livelihood factory, "In terms of the spinning, weaving cotton, weaving yarn, cutting woolen and color staining courses order people to sent their children into the plant to study.....when the children gain achievements and back home is easy to manage"(Editor Group of Sichuan Province, 1986). This could be seen as the precursor of vocational education. In the late 1930s, "National Songpan Junior Practical Vocational School" was set up with three subjects which are animal husbandry and veterinary, public health and animal products manufacturing healers. The school system was three years. The school's site has been changed several times, and the equipment was very simple even had no microscope, but still cultivated a number of technical personnel for Qiang nationality. According to statistics, from 1938 to 1949, Qiang areas had a total of 12 classes and 480 graduates. (An Ben-qin etc)

In Qiang areas teacher education started very early, but the development was tortuous and slow. In 1930, five counties including Songpan, Lixian, Maoxian, Maoxian, Wenchuan established a teacher school with one year's school system together and admitting 40 people who graduated from primary school through examination and the equivalent. This is the beginning of the independent opening of Qiang areas teacher education, but the school was closed at autumn next year. In 1940, under the influence of Huang Yan-pei's mind of "exploitation of border area" and "education to save the nation", the "Provincial Weizhou Village Normal School" was established which was the earliest middle normal school not only in Qiang areas but also in Aba Prefecture. Although the school had small scale and great mobility of students, it was still the main source of qualified primary school teachers in Qiang areas. For example, during the republic of china, there were a total of 14 graduates in Maoxian, 12 of them coming from this teacher school, accounting for about 86 percent. (Miaoxian Culture and Education Bureau, 1991)

During the period, the modern schools of Qiang areas had been basically established, but the number of children of the Qiang nationality entering school was small and the education quality was low. There were several reasons. Firstly, the Qiang people couldn't afford expensive tuition fees. Because of the production of Qiang areas like cultivated land was monopolized by the landlord class, such as nearly 8.85 percent landlord and the rich in Wenchuan, Lixian and Maoxian but took up 42.52 percent land, while 43.06 percent farmers just possessed 16.45 percent land. The estates of other public schools, temples were also controlled by the landlord class. The majority Qiang children could not afford to pay so expensive tuition fees that had no channel and chance to go to school. For example the enrolment rate of Maoxian minority children was just 4 percent before the founding of New China. Secondly, the teacher in Qiang areas was lack and had low quality. At that time most of the primary school teachers were local people and certain middle school teachers were the Han nationality visiting teacher. With the number of schools increased, the number of teachers had a disproportionate and slow enhancement. Take Maoxian for example, in 1937, there were 23 primary schools and a total of 27 staff, that is to say there was an average of less than 1.2 persons per school ; in 1948, there were 58 public schools and 100 staff, the average was about 1.7 persons per school. If we just consider the number of teachers, the average is even less. Teachers who had qualifications and knew educational theory, new teaching methods were even rare. There were 64 staffs in Wenchuan in 1948, 28.1 percent of them that was 18 graduates coming from teacher schools, the rest of the people just had qualifications of middle school or even under. Thirdly, the development of school education was uneven and had low effectiveness. For example the connecting points between the county town and Han region in Maoxian "There are many knowledge persons in

southeast but rare in northwest". Because of the lack of good teachers, good teaching methods, enough funds, the equipments and the children who lived in straitened circumstances discontinuing their studies, school education had low effectiveness. What's more, the modern social education was "lagging behind the school education", until the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 when 95 percent of Qiang nationality population was still illiterate, the enrollment rate of school-age children around this areas was only 2 to 4 percent.

2. SCHOOL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT OF THE QIANG NATIONALITY FORM 1949 TO 1991

The school education development of the Qiang nationality has undergone an earth-shaking change from 1949 to 1991. In Qiang areas established the basic education serving for the development of this region and nation, set up vocational and technical education, teacher education and higher education institutions, and formed a basically education system with rural primary schools at villages, centre primary schools at some townships, junior middle schools in districts or at other townships, national school and whole middle school (A middle school has both junior schools and senior schools) in country. Compared to the Republic of China the quality of education had significantly improved.

The number of primary school education was steady increasing. The focus was to improve the quality. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Qiang areas developed primary school education vigorously, particularly emphasized to set up national primary schools and Semi-boarding and boarding schools or classes at Qiang villages. The schools used Qiang language as auxiliary teaching tool and focused on moral, intellectual, physical development of students in an all-round way. The Qiang nationality had their owned primary school education just serving for their nation. Take Maoxian for example, there were only 42 primary schools with 1,071 students and 95 teachers in 1950; then the number of schools and students increased rapidly, until 1975 there were 233 primary schools with about 13,000 students; after that time the number of schools and students have been reducing to 118 primary schools with 11,912 students and 693 teacher.

The middle school education of Qiang areas had a remarkable development. The middle school education of Qiang areas got an extremely significant development on the basis of the three junior middle schools of the period of the Republic of China. Until the 1980s each county had equipped with a whole middle school and several junior middle schools (including the national middle schools). The number of teachers and students had substantial growth. Lixian developed from having only a junior middle school, more than 40 students and less than 10 staff in 1950 to having four junior middle schools (including a whole middle school) in 1987, nearly 500 staff and 1,218 students including 1,000 minority students accounting for 82 percent of the total number (Guo Xue-ming, 1998). Maoxian middle school education in 1990 compared with that of in 1950, the in-school students showed a net increasing of 44 times, and minority students had greater increasing rate especial the Qiang nationality. Until 1980 there were about 2600 minority students in middle school accounting for about 78.8 percent, it was over 500 times than that of before the founding of the People's Republic of China when Maoxian just had 5 minority students in the middle school accounting for about 7.7 percent. From 1986 to 1990, the proportion of minority primary and middle schools students increased year after year, and had been remaining over 90 percent. In Beichuan, from 1979 to 1991 there were more than 13,700 junior middle school graduates and more than 3,700 senior middle school graduates compared with 1949 when there were only 127 middle school students (Journalist, 1991). The pace of development was very rapidly.

The forms of middle vocational education were various. Until 1985 there were four middle vocational education schools in Qiang areas: Sichuan Provincial Weizhou Village Normal School which was established in 1940 (renamed as Weizhou Normal School of West of Sichuan in 1950 and Sichuan Weizhou Normal School in 1953); Aba Farmers and Herdsmen School which was established in 1960 (At that time the site of the school was not in Qiang areas, until 1981 the Aba Agricultural School

was established on the basis of Maoxian teaching point of the school) ; Aba Agricultural Machinery School and Aba Finance and Trade School both located in Wenchuan. Furthermore, in the 1960s and 1970s, Qiang areas ever set up some technical secondary schools such as Lixian "May 7 cadre school" (named after chairman Mao's May 7 Directive of 1966) and Maoxian Agricultural Middle School (renamed as Agricultural University during the "Cultural Revolution"). In the 1980s, the Aba Hydropower Mechanics School and Industrial Technical School were established in Wenchuan, and a few counties set up all kinds of vocational education forms like vocational middle schools or vocational classes belonged to the Ordinary middle schools.

Higher education developed gradually and began to take shape. Before the founding of the People's Republic of China, there was no higher education in Qiang areas, even no higher education graduates. In Maoxian during the Republic of China there were only 8 junior college graduates, comprised 1 or 2 students of Qiang nationality. In 1951, Southwest University for Nationalities was established in Chengdu with the first 500 students, including 24 minorities. Qiang nationality had the first batch of college students. In 1978, as to speed up the development of Aba minority education, approved by the State Council Aba Normal Specialized Academy was established in Wenchuan which was the first university in Qiang areas.

After 40 years development, school education of Qiang nationality has made great achievements. Until 1991, in Maoxian there were 197 middle and primary schools, more than 16000 students and 92.4 percent minority students were comprised in the total. In Beichuan there were 304 middle and primary schools, more than 19000 students and 51.3 percent minority students are comprised in the total. According to the statistics of Department of Education, from 1977 to 1991, 1717 people were admitted to technical secondary schools and junior colleges, including minority students 1334, accounted for 77.7 percent. Due to focus on the development of education, the standard of culture of Qiang people has been significantly improved. Compared the third census data in 1982 to the second census data in 1964, but the proportion of people in Maoxian who had university education qualification had no change, that was 0.23 percent for all, but the proportion of senior middle school graduates increased from 1.4 percent to 3.55 percent, the proportion of junior middle school graduates increased from 2.86 percent to 10.24 percent and the proportion of primary school graduates increased from 17.89 to 27.46 percent, on the other hand the proportion of illiteracy, semi-literate sharply fell from 49.22 percent to 4.4 percent. According to the nationwide census, the populations of Qiang nationality people who were over 6-year-old and received education in 1982 were 43,432, account for 42.26 percent and in 1990 had 112331 people, account for 56.66 percent. Only 8 years, the Qiang nationality people who over the age of 6 and received education grew by 68,899 people, nearly 1.6 times and the proportion at that time increased 14.4 percentage points.

The above data showed that the first 40 years after the founding of the People's Republic of China, school education of Qiang nationality had experienced an unprecedented development. However, because of the broad territory of Qiang area, the Qiang people living scattered, not having convenient traffic and economic development of localities and villages being uneven, and because the qualifications of some teacher did not meet national standards, cultural and educational foundation was weak and Chinese basis of school-age children was generally poor, until the early 1990s the development of education of Qiang nationality was still backward relatively.

3. SCHOOL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT OF THE QIANG NATIONALITY AFTER 1992

After 1992, China has proposed the goal that established the socialist market economic system. As the cause of socialist construction entering a new stage, the school education of Qiang nationality also entered an accelerating period. Nine-year compulsory education universal was realized, the scale of high school education was rapidly expanded, the structure readjustment of middle vocational and technical education was accelerated and higher education was developed stably.

The nine-year compulsory education universal has made outstanding achievements. Firstly, the percentage of children who enter school continues to increase. The primary school enrolment rate for children of school age in Maoxian grew from 96.80 percent in 1992 to 99.94 percent in 2003 which was higher than an average of 99.22 percent in Sichuan Province this year (Cao Feng, 2004). After 1992, the enrolment rate for children of school age in Beichuan remained at more than 99 percent and until 2006 reached 100 percent. Secondly, the drop-out rate continued to bring down and the 17-year-old accomplishment ratio continued to increase. Such as in Beichuan the 15-year-old accomplishment ratio grew from 98.43 percent in 1992 to 99.71 percent in 2003 and in Maoxian the primary student's drop-out rate was only 0.05 percent. Round about 1995 the popularization of primary education jobs were basically completed in Qiang areas and the focus changed from universal primary education to the universal junior middle school education. The number of junior middle school students increased rapidly. In 1992, there were only 2,251 junior middle school students in Maoxian, until 2006 there were 5,523 students. In 1992, there were 4841 junior middle students in Beichuan and the population of students up to the 7,833 people in 2001 and keep about 7,000 people from 2003 to 2006. The net enrolment rate, consolidate rate, graduation rate of children at 13 to 15 year-old and the 17-year-old accomplishment ratio increased substantially. Take Beichuan for example in 1993 the net enrolment rate of students who aged from 13 to 15 was 54.21 percent which maintained at above 94 percent after 2003 and increased more than 40 percentage points. The consolidate rate, graduation rate, 17-year-old completion rate individually increased by about 10, 4 and 39 percent in the same period. With efforts, until 2000 the nine-year compulsory education was realized at the major inhabited counties of Qiang nationality: Pingwu, Beichuan, Wenchuan had completed "two basics" works and passed the conformity assessment of the government of provincial or city (state) respectively in 1998, 1999 and 1999. Lixian, Maoxian, Songpanxian also had completed "two basics" works and passed the conformity assessment of the government of provincial or city (state) respectively in 2001, 2003 and 2005.

The scale of senior middle school education has been expanding substantial. After 1992, the amount of Qiang nationality senior middle school students showed a trend that inching down at the outset then gradually upward. Before the mid-1990s, because the regular institutions of higher learning admitted small number students and developed districts had more employment and financial demands many students in Qiang areas chose to become migrant workers after graduating from junior middle schools, resulting the number of senior middle school students slowly reduced year by year. After the mid-1990s, because the Qiang areas more emphasized on the popularization of nine-year compulsory education, junior middle school graduates increased significantly. Meanwhile, working somewhere away from home as migrant workers have become more difficult, many junior middle school graduates chose to continue their schooling career. In addition, after 1998, State College expanding enrollment every year attracted many students going to senior middle schools, so the number of senior middle school students of Qiang areas increased year by year. The high school students' number in Maoxian increased from 388 in 1997 to 1241 in 2006. For example the senior middle school students' number in Beichuan increased from 555 in 2001 to 1,795 in 2006 and the number of minority students increased from 474 to 1,436, both increased by more than 2 times.

With the substantial adjustment, the middle vocational education had a tremendous development. Before 1998, many students in Qiang areas wished to enter middle vocational schools. Aba Agricultural School in Maoxian trained over 1,000 students' form 1990 to 1998. After 1998, China gradually putting the expansion of college enrollment policy into practice, so accepting high school education becomes more peoples' choices, plus the abolition of distribution system of middle vocational schools resulted that the number of middle vocational schools students dropped sharply. Aba Agricultural School only admitted 10 full-time students but had 98 teachers both in 2000 and in 2001 (Dong Chun, 2003). Facing this situation, the government of Aba has been adjusting the structure of state middle vocational and technical education: Aba Agricultural School combined with Agricultural Machinery School and changed its name as Aba Agriculture and Stock Raising Economic School in 1999. In 2003, Aba Industrial School, Aba Finance and Trade School and Aba Agriculture and Stock Raising Economic School merged together to form a Aba Middle Vocational Technical School (the main site was in Maoxian). As for middle normal schools, the Weizhou Normal School renamed as Weizhou National

Normal School. During the structure adjustment it was the only one Normal School which was retained as "focal point" project of state. As for vocational high schools, the number of minority full-time graduates of Beichuan Vocational High School which established in 1984 experienced a up and down process from 1992 to 2004 and reached the highest number of 131 in 1993 and met the minimum number of 19 in 2001, after that time the number started to have a steady growth. Maoxian National Middle School and Maoxian Shenzhen Futian Hope Middle School ever set up vocational high school classes in ordinary middle schools at the end of the 20th century, but it was closed because of the instability enrolment number of students.

The higher education has been developed stably. After 1992, with the development of economy, the demand for high-level personnel has been increasing and the opportunity to receive higher education of Qiang students has also greatly increased. Besides China's specialized national institutions like the Central University of Nationalities and Southwest University for Nationalities recruited more minority students, other Universities also recruited a few minority students. According to enrollment policy the minority students could be admitted with lower scores, this created more opportunities for minority students to go to colleges. After 1992 Aba Normal Specialized Academy has experienced great development. In 1993 the academy had more than 1,000 students. At the end of 2007 the academy had more than 20 professional and over 4,000 students. Majority Qiang nationality college students chose to serve for Qiang areas after graduation and to promote the development of local economic and society.

Overall, after 1992 the education of Qiang nationality has undergone greatly development. Only take Maoxian for example which was the highest concentration reside district of Qiang areas, we could see that this period education of Qiang nationality had a remarkable achievements. According to statistics, there were 5,422 students studying in colleges, 96.6 percent of them that was 5,183 people were minority. The minority in Maoxian almost all were Qiang nationality, so the above data also basically reflected the situation of Qiang students entering schools of a higher grade.

Because more than 98 percent Qiang people live in Sichua Province, by comparison Qiang people's education level with Sichuan and the whole country educated people, we could see from a side the development situation of school education in Qiang areas since the early 1990s. According to the fourth and fifth national census data, compared 2000 to 1990 the growth rate of the student's population in a primary, junior and senior middle schools, technical secondary schools and colleges every 10,000 people respectively reached 55%, 52%, 52%, 181%. This ratio was higher than Sichuan Province (-2%, 36%, 41%, 157%) and the national level (-4%, 46%, 39%, 154%) at the same period which reflected the development of education in Qiang areas in this 10 years was faster than Sichuan Province and the whole country. Despite rapid progress of Qiang nationality educated population compared to Sichuan Province especially to the whole country there was still a big gap. According to the china's fifth population census showed that there were 4,912 people having primary qualifications every 10,000 higher than the level of Sichuan (4,296) and the whole country (3,570). There were 3,046 people possessing Junior middle school education level or above lower every 10,000 lower than the level of Sichuan (3,932) and the whole country (4,872). It showed that the future school education development of the Qiang nationality was still an arduous task.

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