

# *The Indication of Ethnic Blending During the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279)*

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**Abstract:** During the Southern Song Dynasty, a number of regimes established by minor ethnicities developed and emerged. Politics, economy, literature, and other aspects of coexistence showed interactions between diverse nations. For example, the ethnicities accepted Chinese characters despite their own language and produced beautiful literary works. The Legal Trade Market and Tea Horse Trade were also active forms of economic exchange. By revealing the phenomena of these interactions, this essay casts a glimpse into the ethnic blending back to the Southern Song Dynasty.

**Keywords:** southern song dynasty, literature, economy

## 1. Introduction

It is commonly acknowledged that the conflicts between southern Song Dynasty and other regimes occurred now and then. The wars, to some extent, provided some opportunities for interactions between different ethnicities. For example in need of diplomacy, the Chinese characters, combined with the customs related to it, like the practice of placing a taboo on certain words [1]. The economic exchange also developed as people from different regimes became increasingly familiar with others. Under the circumstance, honest communication and intercourse arouse. Ethnic integration is the entire set of social processes by which individuals of different ethnic collectivities continually interact. This changes participants' culture context, structural form and ethnic identity [2].

This essay aims to demonstrate the signs of ethnic integration during the Southern Song Dynasty through the development of Chinese literary works, compositions by minor ethnic poets, and economic exchange between different nations. Several poems are analyzed and compared to demonstrate the development of minor ethnic poets. It also provides a description of the Legal trade Market and the Tea Horse Trade according to the information recorded by ancient books.

## 2. Research Question

Many scholars have done plenty of research on the history of the Southern Song Dynasty. There is research about the wars that happened during the Song Dynasty, and essays are researching the poet of the Southern Song Dynasty linking the social background of that period. Some researchers also analyzed the translation of literary works and the phenomenon

of wrong translation. Some scholars studied the history of border trade, which illustrates the background of the Legal Trade during the Southern Song Dynasty. This essay focuses on the ethnic blending in the culture and economy field.

### 3. Literature Review

Many minor nations established regimes simultaneously during the Southern Song Dynasty. Dangxiang people set the Western Xia Regime (1038—1227), the Jin Dynasty was established by Jurchen, the Kingdom of Dali was set by the Bai nationality, Yao nationality and many other minor nations living in the Southwest of China. War broke out, and conflicts were inevitable, for example, King Hailing of the Jin Dynasty conquered the Song Dynasty in 1161, Jin Dynasty attacked the Southern Song Dynasty and occupied Chu Zhou in 1164, the war between Song and Meng broke out in 1227 AD [3,4]. However, despite the conflicts, communication between different nations never stopped. The conflicts promoted diplomatic intercourse. By avoiding directly using the names of both the past emperor (Miao hui) and the living emperor (Yu ming), strengthening taboo management in diplomatic exchanges and records, and specifying the foreign concerning place names, posthumous titles, and reign titles, the taboo has evolved to be not only a diplomatic protocol in Song dynasty but also established as a political system[1]. With the increasing number of communications, the economic interaction between different regimes remained prosperous. The Legal Field appeared in the Song, Liao and Jin Dynasties [5]. Southern Song Dynasty also inherited the Tea Horse Trade from the Northern Song Dynasty (960-1127), which enhanced the economic exchange between middle China and the southwest region. While minor nations interacted politically and economically, they gradually adopted Chinese and produced literary works based on it. Most surviving Xixia literature works were translated versions, and Xixia people created few. These Xixia translations mainly come from Chinese and Tibetan sources [6].

### 4. Literature

The culture exchange can be seen in the Chinese poems written by the contemporary minority nationalities. These nations accepted and emulated the forms of literature and ways of expressing affection that was popular among the Han nationality, despite the conflicts.

Interflow between different nations has been active since the Earlier Song Dynasty (960-1127). According to 《Song Shi》, a book that officially records the history of Song dynasty (960-1279), many contemporary famous scholars like Su Shi, Su Zhe, Shen Kuo, to name but a few, all once sent on a mission to the nations set by minority nationalities. The interactions between different nations promoted the development of the literature of the ethnic minorities.

The 《Hai Shang Shi》, written by Yelubei (899—937AD), king of Dongdan, was Khitan's first complete Chinese poem. It wrote: The hill presses the mountain and the mountain is powerless. I am ashamed to see my hometown people so I will go abroad from now on. The first two sentences used metaphor and pun to describe how his brother pressured him to stabilize his throne. The next two sentences narrated his plan of fleeing abroad in order to escape his brother's wrath. Though the poem applied the form of jueju, *its artistic methods was still a bit rigid, tough and plain, with traces of immaturity on poem composing* [7].

The poem represents the status of literature at that time.

During the Southern Song Dynasty, the poets of minorities created much more delicate and mature compositions than centuries ago. The poem 《Chu Du》 is created by Yuan Haowen (1190-1257), a people of Tuoba. The general meaning of the poem was: the titled moon was

hanging over the spring boudoir, and the warble sang at the daybreak. Riding with loose reins, I arrived at the capital city's gate, half drunk, half awake. Do not turn round to see the cyan willows. The high and low pavilions are the sights that can make me heartbroken. In the first sentence, the writer presented a spring evening with several traditional images: the boudoir, the tilted moon and the warbler. The moon and the dawn hint at the passing of time. The bird's sound also triggers readers's multiple senses, making the image more real.

Additionally, linking the gist of the poem is to express the sadness of leaving the capital city, the beautiful scenery this sentence describes also contrasts the sorrow Yuan reveals in the last two sentences of the poem. The poem's second sentence shows the author's state: half drunk, half awake, riding a horse aimlessly with nothing to do. This condition suggests that the writer was not in a good mood. The following two sentences then confirm the assumptions the readers may make while reading the second sentence by revealing the fact that he is departing from the city he loved but still in a relatively implicit way. The willow trees and the pavilions are typical images that symbolize departure. The last sentence, which describes the pavilions of different heights, suggests the distance between the city and the author by representing a distant view, indicating the situation that the author was leaving the capital step by step. Though this poem uses the same form as 《Hai Shang Shi》, the artistic skills are much more mature, possessing almost the same refinement as the poems written by poets from central China.

Despite Yuan Haowen, many other famous ethnic minority poets produced delicate literal works by using complicated skills and mature Chinese words. For example, the poem 《Chao Zhong Cuo》 written by Wan Yanshou contains skills like allusion, movable use, and so on. The increasing maturity of the literature works written in Chinese composed by minority ethnics indicates the growing identification those writers hold towards the Chinese characters and culture.

## 5. Economy

Economic interchange during the Southern Song Dynasty shows how different ethnicities blended. The Legal Trade Market run by the government of different regimes, was a traditional form of the fair with a long-lasting history and stayed prosperous during the Southern Song Dynasty. The Legal Trade Market was a market that especially set for business between different regimes and first appeared during the Northern Song Dynasty [8]. During the Southern Song Dynasty, both Song and other regimes showed a strong will to continue the tradition of setting the Legal trade Market at the boundary of different dynasties. The western Xia regime not only established the Legal Trade Market with Southern Song Dynasty but also designed a three-level management model, suggesting that the existence of economic exchange between the two regimes was stable and profound [9,10]. Song and Jin Dynasties also established an official system in order to guarantee the smooth running of the Legal Trade Market [10]. Here is a picture of the places and the time the market opened between the Southern Song and Jin regime [11]:

	location	Opening time
Song Dynasty	Xuyi Market	1142-1161AD 1164-1206AD
	Kwangchow Guangshan County Zhongdu Market	1151-1159AD 1165-1206AD 1208-1234AD
	Anfengjun Market	1151-1159AD 1165-1206AD 1208-1234AD
	Suizhou Zaoyang County Market	1142-1159AD
	Xiangyang Deng Town Market	1165-1203AD 1208-1234AD
	Tianshuijun Market	1142-1159AD 1164(or 1165)-1206AD 1208-1234AD
Jim Regime	Sizhou Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1206AD 1208-1234AD
	Shouzhou Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1206AD 1208-1234AD
	Yinzhou Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1206AD 1208-1234AD
	Xizhou Market	1208-1234AD
	Caizhou Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1206AD
	Tangzhou Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1206AD 1208-1234AD
	Dengzhou Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1206AD 1208-1234AD
	Fengxiang Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1177AD 1208-1234AD
	Winzhou Xizi City Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1206AD 1208-1234AD
	Gongzhou Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1177AD
	Taozhou Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1177AD
	Mizhou Jiaoxi Couty Market	1142-1159AD 1164-1206AD

Figure 1: the places and the time the market opened between the Southern Song and Jin regime.

The Tea-horse Trade was another form of economic exchange during that time. Named by two of the most common goods during the exchange, this form of trade is typically between the Han ethnic and Southwest Ethnic Minorities. Tea, the plant that typically grows in the southeast of China, is a necessity for nomads, while the Song Dynasty had a severe shortage of war horses and had to buy a significant amount of it from the southwest. The Tea Horse Trade developed due to this relationship between supply and demand [12].

The emperor Gaozong of Southern Song especially gave orders about the management of the trade in order to maintain the order of it [10]. The trade strengthened the ties between the mainland and the border areas and promoted economic and cultural exchanges between different nations. This is also a significant proof of the ethnic blending during the period.

## 6. Conclusion

During that turbulent period, the communication between different regimes around the Central Plain of China continued to evolve, which significantly changed the face of minor ethnic literature and deepened the understanding between different nations. The blending between these ethnics also promoted the emergence and development of minor nations' national identities, which offered a condition for the constructing the Chinese nation. As time went by, the identification of the culture and economy of the central plain emerged among the minor ethnics. By analyzing the literature of minor nations and the economic exchange between different nations, we can see the apparent trend of ethnic blending between different ethnicities. Through conflicts and communications, minor ethnics gradually accepted parts of the culture originating from the central plains. The blending of diverse nations was undoubtedly an important characteristic of the Southern Song Dynasty.

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