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# 中国少数民族之白族与纳西族

## China's Ethnic Minorities: The Bai and the Naxi People

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中国一共有56个民族，除汉族以外的其余55个法定民族都是少数民族。55个少数民族中，除回族已全部使用汉语外，其他54个民族都有自己的语言。随着中国现代化进程的加快，一些少数民族语言正在慢慢消亡。尽管中国在少数民族语言保护方面已经取得一定的成绩，但仍然还有很长的路要走。

云南是中国少数民族最多的省，56个民族中，云南就有52个，其中人口在5000人以上的民族有26个，除汉族外，少数民族有25个。这其中最值得了解的民族就是白族与纳西族。

白语是白族的民族共同语。白族的服饰有一个漫长的历史发展过程，并形成了自己的民族特色。白族人喜爱白色，尽管各地服饰稍有不同，但是都以白色衣服为贵。白族以雕刻艺术著名，尤其是石雕与木雕。北京人民大会堂云南厅也使用了白族的木雕。

纳西族主要居住在云南丽江市，是一个古老的民族，以纳西语为民族语言。他们的文字是云南最古老的少数民族象形文字，也就是东巴文，已有上千年历史，是世界上仅存的象形文字。因此，引起了世界各国学者的极大关注与重视。

纳西族除了春节以外，最重要的节日就是火把节。每年农历六月二十四日起，到农历六月二十七日结束。期间家家户户点火把，由年轻人拿着火把在田边、山路上边走边唱，一直到深夜，表示对火神的尊敬，并希望过上美好的生活。

## 生词 Vocabulary

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### Proper Nouns

白族	Báizú	the Bai ethnic group
纳西族	Nàxīzú	the Naxi ethnic group
东巴文	Dōngbāwén	Dongba writing (the picto-ideographic writing used by the Naxi ethnic group)
火把节	Huǒbǎjié	Torchlight Festival (celebrated by several Chinese ethnic groups)
火神	Huǒshén	God of Fire
人民大会堂	Rénmín Dàhuìtáng	The Great Hall of the People in Beijing

### Nouns

过程	guòchéng	process
特色	tèsè	characteristic
进程	jìnchéng	progress
服饰	fúshì	clothing
雕刻	diāokè	carving
象形文字	xiàngxíng wénzì	pictograph
农历	nónglì	traditional Chinese calendar

### Verbs

确认	quèrèn	to confirm
取得	qǔdé	to obtain
值得	zhíde	to be worth it; to be worth doing something
尊重	zūnzhòng	to respect
使用	shǐyòng	to use
引起	yǐnqǐ	to cause; to lead to
关注	guānzhù	pay attention to
重视	zhòngshì	place importance on
表示	biǎoshì	to show; to demonstrate
现代化	xiàndàihuà	to modernize
消亡	xiāowáng	to die out
存	cún	to exist; to deposit (money or an item)
尊敬	zūnjìng	to respect

## Adjectives

共同	gòngtóng	common
著名	zhùmíng	famous
漫长	màncháng	endless

## Adverbs

共同	gòngtóng	common
仍然	réngrán	still, yet
稍微	shāowēi	a little
尤其	yóuqí	especially
仅	jǐn	only

## Prepositions

与	yǔ	with
各	gè	every
由	yóu	by

## Conjunctions

并	bìng	and
因此	yīncǐ	so; therefore

## 语法点 Grammar Points

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### 1. 随着 suízhe

*prep.* along with; following; in the wake of; as

随着 (suízhe) is a preposition used to show that one thing is happening alongside or as a result of something else. This passage contains an example of its use as part of the following two-part structure:

随着中国现代化进程的加快，一些少数民族语言正在慢慢消亡。

Suízhe Zhōngguó xiàndàihuà jìnchéng de jiākuài, yīxiē shǎoshù mínzú yǔyán zhèngzài mànman xiāowáng.

In the wake of China's increasingly fast-paced modernization, some minority languages are gradually disappearing.

In the above example, 随着 (suízhe) follows this structure:

随着 + general trend + subject + predicate

(A 'predicate' is the part of a sentence that contains a verb and tells us something about the subject.)

In our example, we have:

随着 (suízhe) + 中国现代进程的加快 (general trend) + 一些少数民族语言 (subject) + 正在慢慢消亡 (predicate)

When used as part of this structure, 随着 (suízhe) helps to indicate that the change mentioned in the introductory clause causes the change mentioned in the main clause.

随着中国现代化进程的加快 (introductory clause), 一些少数民族语言正在慢慢消亡 (main clause)。

In this two-part structure, the “general trend” that comes immediately after 随着 often has to do with social or economic trends, like economic development or a social phenomenon. Let’s look at our example again:

随着中国现代化进程的加快，一些少数民族语言正在慢慢消亡。

In our example, 随着 (suízhe) opens the sentence, which is usually—but not always—the case. Then, the general trend of China’s rapid modernization is introduced (现代化进程的加快). Next we have a main clause with the subject, “some minority languages” (一些少数民族语言) and predicate, “gradually disappearing” (正在慢慢消亡) that describe the result of this trend.

By using 随着 (suízhe) in this sentence, the author is indicating that the general trend of China’s modernization and the disappearance of minority languages are connected, and that modernization is causing languages to gradually disappear.

Here’s another example:

随着年龄的增长，人们会越来越重视健康。

Suízhe niánlíng de zēngzhǎng, rénmen huì yuèláiyuè zhòngshì jiànkāng.

As they age, people pay more and more attention to their health.

Here, 随着 (suízhe) comes first again, followed by a general trend, which in this case is aging. After the introductory clause comes the subject, “people” (人们 rénmen), followed by the predicate, “pay more and more attention to their health” (会越来越重视健康 huì yuèláiyuè zhòngshì jiànkāng).

The use of 随着 (suízhe) in this sentence indicates that the author believes that the general trend of aging causes people to pay more attention to their health.

Can you come up with two example sentences using 随着?

## 2. 尽管...但是... (jǐnguǎn...dànshì...)

*conj. although; even though; despite*

Like 随着, 尽管...但是 (jǐnguǎn...dànshì) tends to occur in sentences containing both an introductory and a main clause.

尽管 (jǐnguǎn) is usually (but not always) placed at the beginning of the introductory clause. It introduces some sort of background information that sets the scene for whatever assertion the author makes in the main clause.

Then, 但是 (dànshì) begins the main clause by introducing a fact or assertion that usually contrasts with the background information in the introductory clause.

尽管...但是 (jǐnguǎn...dànshì) appears in the following sentence:

白族人喜爱白色，**尽管**各地服饰稍有不同，**但是**都以白色衣服为贵。

Báizúrén xǐ'ài báisè, jǐnguǎn gèdì fúshì shāo yǒu bùtóng, dànshì dōu yǐ báisè yīfú wéi guì.

Bai people like the color white, and even though there are some regional variations among Bai clothing styles, white is highly prized by them all.

Here, **尽管** (jǐnguǎn) introduces some background information (the fact that there is some regional variation among Bai clothing styles). Then, the main clause starting with **但** (dàn) sets up a contrast, explaining that despite the fact that regional variations exist, all Bai groups favor the color white.

Note that although the English word “but” is not included at the beginning of the main clause when the introductory clause contains “even though,” **但** (dàn) or **但是** (dànshì) is often included as part of this construction in Chinese. Adding **但是** (dànshì) may seem odd if you’re a native English speaker, but you’ll soon get used to it.

Let’s look at another example:

我姐姐很爱工作，**尽管**腿受伤了，**但**她还是坚持去上班了。

Wǒ jiějie hěn ài gōngzuò, jǐnguǎn tuǐ shòushāngle, dàn tā háishì jiānchí qù shàngbānle.

My sister really loves her job; even though she hurt her leg, she still insists on going to work.

In this sentence, 尽管 (jǐnguǎn) appears in the introductory clause to introduce some background information (the fact that the speaker's sister hurt her leg).

Then comes the main clause, starting with 但 (dàn), the shortened form of 但是 (dànshì). In the main clause, the author introduces a fact that contrasts with the background already introduced regarding the sister's injury. Even though the sister is hurt, she continues to work.

### 3. 以...为... (yǐ...wéi...)

*prep.* to take (something)...as...; to regard (something)...as...

以...为... (yǐ...wéi...) is a relatively formal grammatical construction that has its roots in classical Chinese. It follows the pattern 以 + A + 为 + B and is used to express “to take A as B,” “to regard A as B” or “to consider A as B.”

Although sometimes heard in spoken Chinese, it is more common to see this structure being used in things like official government reports.

Unsurprisingly, since this structure comes from classical Chinese, it can also be found in many four character Chinese idioms such as 以人为本 (yǐrénwéiběn, to put people first; people-oriented).

The construction appears in the following sentence:

白族人喜爱白色，尽管各地服饰稍有不同，但都以白色衣服为贵。

Báizúrén xǐ'ài báisè, jǐnguǎn gèdì fúshì shāo yǒu bùtóng, dàn dōu yǐ báisè yīfú wéi guì.

Bai people like the color white, and even though there are some regional variations among Bai clothing styles, white is highly prized by them all.



If we consider the phrase 以白色衣服为贵 (yǐ báisè yīfú wéi guì) from the vantage point of the 以 + A + 为 + B structure discussed above, then 白色的衣服 (báisè yīfú, white clothing) is A, while 贵 (guì, valuable; prized) is B. Thus, we could translate this phrase literally as “to regard white clothing as valuable.”

Let’s look at another example:

大部分中国人都以米饭为主食。

Dà bùfèn Zhōngguó rén dōu yǐ mǐfàn wéi zhǔshí.

Most Chinese people regard rice as their staple food.

If we analyze the phrase 以米饭为主食 (yǐ mǐfàn wéi zhǔshí) according to the 以 + A + 为 + B structure, 米饭 (mǐfàn, rice) is A and 主食 (zhǔshí, staple food) is B. Therefore, this phrase can be literally translated as “to regard rice as a staple food.”

## 测试 Quiz

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1. 纳西族的民族共同语是什么?
  - a. 白语
  - b. 东巴文
  - c. 纳西语
  - d. 中文
2. 中国有多少个少数民族?
  - a. 56个
  - b. 55个
  - c. 54个
  - d. 52个
3. 火把节有哪些活动?
  - a. 唱歌, 点火把, 刻木雕
  - b. 点火把, 穿白色的衣服, 刻木雕
  - c. 唱歌, 说民族共同语, 穿白色的衣服
  - d. 唱歌, 在山上走路, 点火把
4. 云南有多少个民族?
  - a. 56个
  - b. 52个
  - c. 26个
  - d. 25个
5. 下面四句话中哪一句是正确的?
  - a. 中国所有的少数民族都有自己的语言。
  - b. 中国少数民族语言已经不需要保护了。
  - c. 中国不保护少数民族语言。
  - d. 中国少数民族语言的保护还可以做得更好。

*Answer key on final page of PDF.*

## 拼音 Pinyin

### 中国 少数民族之白族与纳西族

Zhōngguó shǎoshù mínzú zhī Báizú yǔ Nàxīzú

中国 一共有 56个民族，除 汉族 以外的 其余55个法定民族 都是 少数民族。  
Zhōngguó yīgòng yǒu 56 gè mínzú, chú Hànzú yǐwài de qíyú 55 gè fǎdìng mínzú dōu shì shǎoshù mínzú.

55个少数民族中，除 回族 已全部使用 汉语 外，其他 54个民族 都有自己  
55 gè shǎoshù mínzú zhōng, chú Huízú yǐ quánbù shǐyòng Hànyǔ wài, qítā 54 gè mínzú dōu yǒu zìjǐ

的语言。随着 中国 现代化 进程的加快，一些 少数民族语言 正在 慢慢  
de yǔyán. Suízhe Zhōngguó xiàndàihuà jìnchéng de jiākuài, yīxiē shǎoshù mínzú yǔyán zhèngzài mànman

消亡。尽管 中国 在 少数民族语言保护 方面 已经取得一定的成绩，但  
xiāowáng. Jǐnguǎn Zhōngguó zài shǎoshù mínzú yǔyán bǎohù fāngmiàn yǐjīng qǔdé yīdìng de chéngjì, dàn

仍然 还有 很长 的路要走。  
réngrán hái yǒu hěncháng de lù yào zǒu.

云南 是中国 少数民族最多的省，56个民族中，云南 就有 52个，  
Yúnnán shì Zhōngguó shǎoshù mínzú zuìduō de shěng, 56 gè mínzú zhōng, Yúnnán jiù yǒu 52 gè,

其中 人口 在 5000人以上 的民族有 26个，除 汉族 外，少数民族 有 25个。这  
qízhōng rénkǒu zài 5000 rén yǐshàng de mínzú yǒu 26 gè, chú Hànzú wài, shǎoshù mínzú yǒu 25 gè. Zhè

其中 最值得了解的民族 就是 白族与纳西族。  
qízhōng zuì zhíde liǎojiě de mínzú jiùshì Báizú yǔ Nàxīzú.

白语 是白族的民族共同语。白族的服饰有一个漫长的历史发展过程，  
Báiyǔ shì Báizú de mínzú gòngtóngyǔ. Báizú de fúshì yǒu yīgè màncháng de lìshǐ fāzhǎn guòchéng,

并形成了自己的民族特色。白族人喜爱白色，尽管各地服饰稍有不同，  
bìng xíngchéng le zìjǐ de mínzú tèshè. Báizúrén xǐài báisè, jǐnguǎn gèdì fúshì shāo yǒu bùtóng,

但是都以白色衣服为贵。白族以雕刻艺术著名，尤其是石雕与木雕。北京  
dànshì dōu yǐ báisè yīfú wéi guì. Báizú yǐ diāokè yìshù zhùmíng, yóuqí shì shídīāo yǔ mùdiāo. Běijīng

人民大会堂云南厅也使用了白族的木雕。  
Rénmín Dàhuìtáng Yúnnántīng yě shǐyòng le Báizú de mùdiāo.

纳西族主要居住在云南丽江市，是一个古老的民族，以纳西语为民族语言。他们  
Nàxīzú zhǔyào jūzhù zài Yúnnán lìjiāngshì, shì yīgè gǔlǎo de mínzú, yǐ Nàxīyǔ wéi mínzúyǔyán. Tāmén

的文字是云南最古老的少数民族象形文字，也就是东巴文，已有  
de wénzì shì Yúnnán zuì gǔlǎo de shǎoshù mínzú xiàngxíngwénzì, yě jiùshì Dōngbāwén, yǐ yǒu

上千年历史，是世界上仅存的象形文字。因此，引起了世界各国学者的  
shàngqiānnián lìshǐ, shì shìjiè shàng jǐn cún de xiàngxíngwénzì. Yīncǐ, yīnqǐ le shìjiè gèguó xuézhě de

极大关注与重视。  
jídà guānzhù yǔ zhòngshì.

纳西族除了春节以外，最重要的节日就是火把节。每年农历六月二十四日起，  
Nàxīzú chúle chūnjié yǐwài, zuì zhòngyào de jiérì jiùshì Huǒbǎjié. Měinián nónglì liùyuè èrshísì rì qǐ,

到农历六月二十七日结束。期间家家户户点火把，由年轻人拿着火把在田边、  
dào nónglì liùyuè èrshíqī rì jiéshù. Qījiān jiājiāhùhù diǎn huǒbǎ, yóu niánqīngrén nǎzhe huǒbǎ zài tiánbiān  
山路上边走边唱，一直到深夜，表示对火神的尊敬，并希望过上  
shānlùshàng biānzǒubiānchàng, yīzhí dào shēnyè, biǎoshì duì huǒshén de zūnjìng, bìng xīwàng guòshàng

美好的生活。  
měihǎo de shēnghuó.

### **China's Ethnic Minorities: The Bai and the Naxi People**

There are 56 ethnic groups in China. Aside from the Han, all of the other 55 officially recognized groups are considered ethnic minority groups. With the exception of the Hui, who all speak Mandarin, the members of the other 54 groups all have their own languages. In the wake of China's increasingly fast-paced modernization, some minority languages are gradually disappearing. Even though China's efforts to protect minority languages have achieved some success, more still needs to be done.

Yunnan is the province where most of China's ethnic minorities are located. Out of a total of 56 ethnic groups, 52 of them have members living in Yunnan. Of these, 26 groups have a total population of over 5,000. Aside from the Han, these include 25 minority groups. Of these, the Bai and the Naxi are some of the most interesting.

The Bai language is the common language of the Bai people. Traditional Bai clothing has a long history and has slowly developed its own special stylistic attributes. Bai people like the color white, and even though there are some regional variations among Bai clothing styles, white is highly prized by them all. The Bai are famous for their carving skills and are especially well-known for their skill at stone and wood carving. Bai wood carving art is featured in the Yunnan Hall of the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

The Naxi mostly live in Lijiang City, Yunnan. The members of this ancient ethnic group speak the Naxi language. Their script, called Dongba, is Yunnan's oldest picto-ideographic ethnic minority language. Dongba has a history of over a thousand years and is the only hieroglyphic language still in use in the world today. As such, Dongba has attracted the attention of scholars from around the globe.

Aside from Spring Festival, the most important Naxi holiday is the Torchlight Festival. This annual holiday starts on the 24th day of the sixth month of the Chinese lunisolar calendar and ends on the 27th day of the same month. During the festival, every family lights torches. Young people sing and carry

these torches as they walk along the edges of fields and along mountain roads. This traditional activity, which continues late into the night, expresses the people's respect for the God of Fire as well as their desire for a happy life.

Quiz Answer Key:

1. c 2. b 3. d 4. b 5. d



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