

From Economic Anthropology to Business Anthropology: The Development in China*

Chunxia Ma¹, Qingqing Zhu² and Hexian Wu³

¹*Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology of Jishou University,
120 Renmin South Road, Jishou, Hunan, 416000, China
Telephone: 86-13407439418, E-mail: zcx79@163.com*

²*Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology of Jishou University
120 Renmin South Road, Jishou, Hunan, 416000, China
Office: 86-743-8565303, E-mail: Zhuqingqing@163.com*

³*Institute of Anthropology and Ethnology of Jishou University
120 Renmin South Road, Jishou, Hunan, 416000, China
Telephone: 86-13974348015, E-mail: wuhexian@gmail.com*

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ABSTRACT It has been only 70 years since economic anthropology was first introduced into China, and the study of rural socio-economic model was the major focus of the field in the early days. After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the government had organized a series of large-scale economic and social surveys in the minority regions to promote comprehensive social and economic development of ethnic minority regions, which also built a solid foundation for the development of economic anthropology in China. It was in the late 1970s that the scholars formally started to localize economic anthropology, marked by the research on the development of western regions in China and the recognition of minority economics as a formal subject in economics. During the process of localization, Chinese economic anthropologists made a rational rethinking on the modernization process and claimed that the economic interests of minorities are relatively independent. They further refined and developed their views into a theory called "inter-phase operation", which is a significant contribution to the localization of economic anthropology and its theoretical development in China.