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**The Function of the Hukou System in Post-Revolutionary China & its
Autonomous Regions**

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Cohort III - MIMS 2020

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Abstract

Over the course of more than two millennia the Hukou System has shifted in scope and purpose. In dynastic times it served as a mechanism of tax acquisition. In more recent years it has functioned as a method of census and land distribution. Today it holds a duplicitous function serving as both an economic and social control mechanism. The Hukou achieves this through controlling movement through a passport like system of internal registration. In simpler terms, think of the Hukou as an internal passport regulating movement while simultaneously holding all of your biometric data which is surveilled and controlled by a centralized government institution. This work explores the duality of this system and the effects that such a system have had on two sub-sects of people within the PRC. In the first case study I examine the economic side of the Hukou and the role it plays in the lives of Han economic migrants. In the second case I examine the social-control aspect and its implementation in the Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang. By engaging in this analysis, I show the possible outcomes of the continuance of such a system and how it could play a larger role in global migration governance in coming years.

Keywords: Hukou System; census; social control; governmental institution; global migration governance; People's Republic of China; Uyghur Autonomous Region

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The Function of the Hukou System in Post-Revolutionary China & its Autonomous Regions

Over the course of two millennia the “HS” (Hukou System) has shape-shifted in terms of scope and purpose as it has changed dynastic and imperial hands. In the past, it has functioned as a mechanism for tax acquisition, census development and more recently for land distribution. In its current state the HS has taken on a duplicitous nature in order to best serve the interests of the Chinese Communist Party, the governing body of the People’s Republic of China.

On the one hand, it is used as an economic control mechanism ensuring a clean circumvention of the much-dreaded Lewis Turning Point among other developmental goals. On the other, it has been used as a social control mechanism, limiting the power of citizens to organize economically, politically or even socially. This is achieved through the control of movement that the HS ensures through a passport-like system of governmental surveillance.

In this article, I evaluate the duplicity of this system, and the fallout of such governmental policy. In order to do this effectively I will trace the historical origins of the HS through the dynastic eras of China before linking those eras to the current PRC and CCP rule. In conjunction with this I will show how the system fits in with broader dynastic and imperial goals which requires such extensive historical context.

While the system and policies that have been born of the system have been both lauded and condemned by the international community as well as citizens within the PRC, my goal with this work is not so much to make a statement about the system in a positive or negative light but rather to show the system as it functions in this duplicitous role. By doing so I will show the

possible outcomes of a continuance of such a system and how it could play a larger role in global migration governance as we move deeper into the 21st century.

To evaluate such a complex system, I have employed both the post-colonial and bio-political theoretical frameworks in tandem with a historical institutionalist methodology to best understand its implications and development over time. By using case studies to show the uses of the HS through the lens of governmental control, the manifestations of the system as well as the longterm effects that such a system has on a population will help western researchers understand the potential of such a system in present and future contexts.

This analysis is crucial when looking at migration control in the coming decades as China becomes an ever greater world power, and as global migrant populations increase due to a myriad of phenomena. The likelihood that neighboring nations begin to take the lead from the PRC in terms of migration control is bound to increase and therefore understanding the potential of such a system in the global context becomes paramount to combating human rights violations and totalitarianism within the broader global migration regime.

Literature Review

My research on the HS requires many perspectives in order to be properly addressed. Due to the general lack of western attention to said system, outside the purview of the economic development world, there is a relatively limited body of work dedicated to studying the system from a human rights/global migration regime and governance perspective. The main themes of my research rely on answering a few fundamental questions:

1. *How does the Hukou System work?*
2. *Why does it function in this way?*

3. *Who is affected and how are they affected?*
4. *How does it retain its legitimacy?*

In order to address these questions, I first had to identify a theoretical foundation for analyzing my findings but more fundamentally for asking the right questions regarding my topic. After engaging with preliminary literature on the subject of the Hukou System (news reports and general encyclopedic information) I decided that the only theoretical framework that was suitable for analyzing such a system was the post-colonial framework made famous by scholars such as Homi K. Bhabha, Edward Said, and Gyatri Spivak.

Unfortunately, due to the relative lack of focus on China, or Chinese systems by these authors, it was necessary that I find a supplemental theory to help meld their foundational theories to the subjects that remain distant from their individual focuses. That supplementary theory happened to be Michel Foucault and his theory of bio-politics. While it was important to discuss the role of colonialism, and post-colonial processes, in shaping the governmental structure of the People's Republic of China, it is more important to understand how governance in China was expressed through its institutions and how that expression has affected vast swathes of the Chinese population.

Institution is a key word that comes up repeatedly in my work and in the work of the scholars I listed above. While the post-colonial thinkers, such as Said and Bhabha, focused predominantly on nation-states and their development in the post-colonial sense, they definitely honed in on the idea of colonialism as an institution; though perhaps they did not address it strictly as a governmental institution.

Said made a very prescient point in his assessment of colonial nations that ties very closely with the heart of my argument focused around the Hukou and the PRC in his book *Orientalism*. “Every single empire in its official discourse has said that it is not like all the others, that its circumstances are special, that it has a mission to enlighten, civilize, bring order and democracy, and that it uses force only as a last resort.” (Said 1978).

This strikes particularly true with my findings on nation-building and institutional legitimacy in China. The building of a national mythos is crucial to sustaining manufactured histories and institutions that are duplicitous in their nature. While on the outside one method of application fits into this sort of national mythos, the other works subterraneously to execute more dubious ambitions that the party or nation does not directly admit to or even address.

Bhabha and Spivak dive a little deeper into the nation-state as the seat of power—Bhabha with culture and the evolution of groups that do not necessarily fit within the mechanisms of a single nation-state, and Spivak with gender divides and more feminist-centered work. All three use culture, and even points of culture such as literature, to address the role of the nation-state in the coercion and exploitation of certain groups of people. Control is a major underlying theme, though I argue that their focus is much more on categorization and extrapolation of identity within the state apparatus.

This ultimately led me to the work of scholars such as Tom Cliff who have spent a lot of time on the underlying foundations of Chinese identity today. By tapping into the histories of Daoism and Confucianism, he has set a firm basis in his assertion that, though these philosophies are ancient and not necessarily tied to CCP leadership, the CCP leadership does indeed use these

modes of thinking to link much more directly to the basic Chinese identity. This then allowed them to build a mythos surrounding a central identity structure.

Knowing this, I was quite pleased to find the work of Foucault and Giorgio Agamben to fit in very nicely with this theme. Where they diverge, though, is in the exploration where each looks at the nation-state but even more so at the individual institutions that these nation-states use for legitimizing political efforts, excluding non-desirables and even controlling how their denizens, have sex, procreate, and organize economically and politically. Points of interest for these two researchers stretches from the education system, to hospitals, to religion and of course the political nature of all these institutions.

But where does China fit in? What kind of research has been done in the past on governance and control in China and where does the research come from theoretically? This was a much more difficult question to answer. Most of the research conducted by outside researchers is limited due to the insulated nature of China, especially when we are speaking of the early years of PRC rule between 1949 and the mid-1980's. As China opened up to the markets and the West in the years leading up to the fall of the Soviet Union, most research has focused on the economy, how it has reacted with the open market, and how China has become an economic powerhouse.

What is not addressed due to the secrecy that shrouds many of the PRC's institutions is how China has exercised its power over its citizens through its institutions such as the Hukou. The most research done in this light has been research covering the "One-child Policy" that is now no longer implemented. The repercussions are still felt and it is obvious that China has a vested interest in controlling the bodies of its citizens in order to achieve political and economic

agendas often left out of the propaganda fed to the masses. This is the point where I felt Foucault and Agamben could be of the most help to me.

Though there is little research done on the Hukou System as a whole there is one researcher in particular that I needed in order to broach this rather murky institution. The work of Fei-ling Wang was crucial to building the foundation of structural understanding that unmasked many of the questions I listed at the beginning of this section. Wang sees the HS as a mechanism of exclusion, one based on geographic location but also on ethnicity and socioeconomic status. In his work he cites western authors such as Foucault, Agamben and Saskia Sassen, all well known for their work surrounding state-sponsored exclusion. With this I knew I was on the right track.

Methodology

With these foundational texts listed above, I was able to extrapolate a plan, an overarching research path and structure that would allow me to answer my major theoretical questions surrounding the Hukou System. The only piece left to the puzzle before I could start on my research was establishing a method for collecting my data. For this I settled on the use of Historical Institutionalist methods that allowed me to work from the archive room due to the limits surrounding time and access to the populations that I would be studying.

These limits to first-hand fieldwork that I have previously mentioned are three-fold. Firstly, my ability to communicate effectively in Chinese is extremely limited. While I can perform basic research tasks in Chinese I would not be able to lend any nuance to translations nor complete the translations myself. I have run into this problem before when working as a journalist. Secondly, my access to regions of interest are also severely limited. While I could have possibly been granted research access to mainland China, I would have been closely

monitored and would have been absolutely restricted from traveling to Xinjiang, a major geographic focus of my research, nor would I have been allowed to conduct interviews with local Uyghur people. Thirdly, my ability to complete all of this in a year and a half with coursework and a job was financially and temporally impossible.

Therefore I decided to rely on the Historical Institutional method which utilizes case studies (from the archives) to explore governance through institutions in a chronological fashion. This was perfect due to my research limitations but also complementary to the Foucauldian method of looking at events and institutions as vestiges of history that allows us to tell the stories and analyze the “history of the present” as he called it.

Essentially, the steps that I took to collect my research centered around collecting the proper documents to highlight each of my sections before ultimately leading into my conclusion at the end which aims to answer the questions I listed at the beginning of this review. The first section of my thesis revolves around explaining what the Hukou System is, how it is constructed, and ultimately how it came to be in its present form.

To do this, I assembled the work of Fei-ling Wang (his works that have been translated) and later merged in some contextual history around the history of China, how the PRC gained power and ultimately how dynastic times flowed into the current expression of the Hukou System. This section did not require much engagement with theory apart from some work that focused on the use of Stalinist theory to develop the PRC after the Revolution of 1949.

In the following section I dove into the economics of the Hukou System and the first expression of a duality that the PRC uses to justify the continuance of the Hukou System in its entirety. To do this I collected work from the economist Arthur A. Lewis on the so aptly named

“Lewis Turning Point”. Combining this with data on the economic transition of the 1980’s during the Deng Xiaoping era, I was able to trace a line of economic development to the point where the LTP becomes a concern of the CCP leadership and consequently acts as the major propaganda driver of why the Hukou System is necessary. It is the first side of the duality that I mentioned earlier but it is not the complete picture.

In the second part of the thesis I dive into the more dubious side of the HS and how it is being utilized as a system of surveillance and repression for the ethnic minorities of Xinjiang but also on the “floating migrants” that make up a vital subsection of the present economy. Both are disenfranchised, but both are disenfranchised in different ways. To explore Xinjiang and the Uyghur people I engaged with news reports coming from the region revolving around the detention and re-education camps that the PRC has placed Uyghur muslims in over the past couple of years. Before doing that I needed to establish a historical context for relations between Xinjiang and Beijing.

Ildiko Beller-Hann and Jacob Jacobson served as two major resources for exploring this. By collecting testimonies from tribal leaders over the late 19th and 20th centuries Beller-Hann was able to show the types of correspondence between the two bodies and how these relations persist today even through governmental change and ultimately revolution. Jacobson on the other hand gives a more contemporary account of life in Xinjiang and the sort of colonial measures Beijing has taken to inject ethnic Han people into the region where they occupy a majority of high-level jobs both within the energy sector and government.

While much of the data I pulled comes from the Bureau of Statistics (not always trustworthy) I did my best to balance the data with other sources so as to give a fuller picture of the

sort of shifts that might not be acknowledged by the central government. All of this was done in order to reach my final conclusion where I really begin to employ the work of the theorists I mentioned in the beginning.

Post-colonial theory and the work of Said, is important for understanding the vestiges of colonial tactics in China. Bio-politics and the literature surrounding it is crucial to breaking down the institutional practice of controlling people's bodies and movements. While the historical institutionalist method might not be the absolute perfect methodology for exploring this particular subject, it is the only one that I could work out with my linguistic, temporal, and geographic limitations.

Part I: Origin & Development of the Hukou System

“Modern power is not only negative and repressive but also positive and productive, circulating widely in and through the state, the institution of modern society and society itself.” (Greenhalgh, Winckler 2000).

The role of exclusion in statecraft is prominent in one way or another throughout history. Each nation at some point in its history via their development of institutions, laws, and policies, systematically disenfranchise certain populations as a means to a political end. In the United States, the vestiges of racism still remain within the justice system and permeate throughout other facets of society as well. In China, one facet of governance that perpetuates this same sort of exclusion is the HS. Despite this, it is important to understand its historical origins, its original and more creative uses and how it morphed into the current system of exclusion that I discuss in the second section of this piece. What must be kept in mind is that while some forms of institutional exclusion are effective and lauded by some; they are resented and actively fought against by others. (Wang 2010).

The reason I bring this up is to keep in mind throughout this expository section that while some systems are devised for simple reasons, they can often be utilized in more complex and politically creative ways. This is why it is important to understand origins, image and the conjunctive fluidity of politics and society. The HS has proven throughout my research to have many names and faces with sometimes unified and divergent wills guiding its use and development. By understanding it along a historical timeline it becomes impossible to view state institutions as static and it forces readers to come to grips with the role narrative-building plays in the form and function of any government institution.

It is important to mention and understand the importance of time and tradition as catalysts that allow exclusive policies to be implemented and maintained over centuries. Given enough time these policies can begin to permeate culture and tradition and therefore gain nationwide acceptance by the majority who are favored by such policy.

While it may make sense to say that the opposite can be said for those that are disadvantaged by such policies, we must remember that time and repetition wears most objection or means of resistance down. Not to mention, the innate power dynamics that allow such policies to survive also greatly impact the populations of the disadvantaged and wear down their resistance too, oftentimes through the development of mere ambivalence. Time, therefore, is of the essence in the development and legitimization of behavior-shaping human institutions, including institutional exclusions.

One central difference we must consider as western researchers is the fact that this migration regulation differs greatly from our own in one major way. This regulation and restriction is internal. By regulating migration within the borders of China and breaking down

the population based on geographic location (often tied to ethnicity and social status) the HS has ingrained institutional exclusion that can not be readily interfered with by outside observers. It is generally within the rights of each state to do as they please with regard to policy and even when there are mass violations of human rights as there are in the PRC there is little that the outside world can do to change the way things are. This is especially true within the current supranational governmental structures that exist today.

Rural and small-town residents are the ones that suffer most within the present Hukou regime, not to mention those in the borderlands or what are paradoxically named the autonomous regions of China. In the same way that gerrymandering disaffects many voters in key pockets of the country within the US context, the same can be said for those that find themselves excluded from the bounty that are the urban centers scattered throughout mainland China. Something to keep in mind though, despite the problems, discussed in this article, associated with the HS, the system itself still retains a remarkable amount of institutional legitimacy and administrative effectiveness, especially since its communist overhaul post-1949. (Wang 2010).

A central question that is present throughout much of my research revolves around what I refer to as national identity or “national psychology”. How has a system as potentially divisive as the HS survived the millennia? How has it maintained institutional legitimacy both within the CCP government as well as the broader non-political population. These sub-questions get at the main reason for my historical perspective when diving into this research and in the conclusion of this article I will grapple with these questions more directly.

The HS has been around in one form or another since the time of the Qin Dynasty (3rd century BCE) and this fact plays a large role in the legitimacy and acceptance of the HS in the

PRC today. Dynasties from the Qin on through the ROC period (Republic of China 1912-1949) all used the system to varying degrees. We will discuss this more when we move on to the second part and discuss the use of the Hukou in the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang.

When the CCP came to power in 1949 they had a long list of points to complete on their political agenda, from centralizing the economy to unifying the country under one banner. Consequently, they used the HS as the perfect means to regulate their economy and simultaneously monitor their citizens, keeping a special eye on those that might hold contrarian beliefs to the CCP's ideology. (Wang 2010).

The Hukou System in Dynastic Times

The HS had its beginnings in the Zhou Dynasty (11th-8th Centuries BCE) and like many other empires throughout history, the Zhou needed a system of organization in order to properly tax its denizens. (Su, L. Et. Al. 2018). In the beginning the Chinese needed a system of organization in order to properly tax its denizens but over the years it developed in order to continue its original tax purposes while simultaneously acting as a social control mechanism that operated much like common facets of government at the time. Ranked kinship and feudal classes served as the cornerstones that would later develop into more ethnic and classist exclusions.

With the cycles of dynasties over centuries, each new dynasty or center of power allowed the Hukou to go through adjustment and transition periods as well. This resulted in the system gaining new parameters in terms of purpose and scope from the original taxation and social control to things such as social and racial stratification and subsequently land redistribution in the time of the communist revolution. (Wang 2010).

The enforcement of the HS and its newly described uses ebbed and flowed from dynasty to dynasty. Much like the immigration policy within the United States, each new administration had its own set of ideals and priorities and the HS enforcement flowed within this political flux. There were yearly autumn counts that required each prefecture to report its peoples information to the imperial court. This is much like the census of today though there were many inaccuracies.

Discretion of enforcement was often left to local officials and gentry and there were often provincial policies that held sway over the national HS policy. This allowed local leaders to weigh their own cost of enforcing the Hukou strictly though officially anyone traveling was required by law to carry a “fu” or identification card. “Illegal migrants” were detained, and officials that did not do their due diligence were to be criminally charged and prosecuted. (Wang 2010).

The Hukou System in Transition (ROC Period)

During the last dynasties of the 19th century as China transitioned to a more “westernized” republican system of governance via the ROC government, the HS began to sink into relative political obscurity. The focus of the ROC government was on the economy but more specifically industrialization and economic diplomacy. This is very much due to the geopolitical climate preceding and following the First World War. With colonial powers influencing the ROC such as Russian and Japan, there was a shift in consciousness that pushed the ROC government to compete economically and negotiate with outside powers that saw the Chinese as a “sick” or backwards nation.

The market played a large role in this as lucrative trades began to shift away from agrarian to urban society. As push-pull mechanisms emerged at the turn of the 20th century

during the tumultuous ROC period, China saw internal and international migration rise, diminished political and financial will to enforce the Hukou laws, and subsequently a crippled governmental capacity to manage any such system.

Though efforts to revitalize the system came and went during these years, it wasn't until 1949 that China would again see such a galvanized Hukou system in place. While the ROC may not have lasted long they were largely responsible for maintaining the HS through its years on the political back-burner. This allowed the newly founded PRC with the CCP at the helm to fine-tune the HS in order to serve its political agenda in an authoritarian communist China.

The Hukou System & the PRC

The PRC utilization of the Hukou took the ancient blueprints and greatly intensified and enhanced its divisive and discriminatory mechanisms. This bolstering of the Hukou resulted in the perpetuation of a national exclusion that pulls from Leninist & Stalinist totalitarian Soviet-style ideology with an adapted Chinese historical precedent. (Wang 2010).

Under PRC control the HS lost its tax function for the most part but under CCP leadership morphed into what has been named the “baojia system” which is responsible for data-collection in order to maintain social control and enforce uniformity in the Chinese people of the revolutionary era. Despite this, the HS developed its more known and respected economic use at postponing what I mentioned earlier as the dreaded Lewis Turn that was plaguing other Asian nations that were beginning to rapidly industrialize and join the international free market.

Only the PRC after 1949, in a central-planning economy, managed to nationally restore and greatly enhance the economic function of the HS, while turning it into a full-blown institutional exclusion. Although the PRC does not have poll or household taxes, hukou-based

institutional exclusion nonetheless allows the government to extract enormous value (information) from the excluded majority of the Chinese people. (Wang 2010).

The CCP used the ROC blueprint and implemented many of the laws that would comprise the CCP's version of the HS. The CCP began its implementation of the HS well before their revolution in 1949. According to the work of Fei-Ling Wang, they were using it for mass mobilization and organization efforts during the guerrilla days of the 1930's when much of the revolution was limited to Jiangxi Province and Shanxi Province. The use of the HS in organizing areas of control in 1939 via the "lian-bao" (connected assurance) system provided the final foundational layer to the social control and migration control mechanisms that are seen in the PRC throughout the rest of the 20th century.

One crucial change to the HS that came with the regimentation of the PRC era and the structure through which the HS was enforced. In villages across the country during the early days of the Mao era, administrations were set up within every village comprised of party officials from the larger cities. These officials were appointed directly by the CCP which assured compliance with party politics. Every five families were put into lian-bao groups which assured that no one was engaging in activities that would be considered against the interest of the CCP. This established a system of reporting rule-breakers and set the tone for policy adherence nationwide.

While I contend that there are two proclaimed uses for the PRC's version of the Hukou, it is obvious that the most integral and chief reason for its implementation is its historical use as a social control tool. This works by breaking people into small enough groups to monitor while incorporating them into a centralized hierarchy that feeds into the CCP.

The PRC's relationship to the Soviet Union in the early days saw some serious carry-over from Leninist and Stalinist thinkers. Particularly, Stalin and his views on the urban industrial worker and their relationship with agrarian peasants set the tone for much of the thinking when comparing the Hukou to the Soviet Propiska (residence permit). This fusion of ideology and policy ended with a new political rationale and application for the HS within PRC China. (Wang 2010).

At the 91st meeting of the Standing Committee of the First National People's Congress on January 9, 1958, the Regulations on Household Registration passed with Mao's signature and turned what was an active policy into law nationwide.

"Life chances, resources, political power, and social status were all directly affected and even determined by one's Hukou categorization and location. The urban and rural Hukou records and household Hukou booklets, required for all PRC citizens, were all clearly marked either "nonagricultural" or "agricultural"; they were even printed in different colors (urban in black ink, rural in red or green). This intrusive and symbolic use of ink, reflecting the deeply discriminatory nature of the HS, was not eliminated until nearly twenty years later, in 2000." (Wang 2010).

Though social control laid at the center of thinking of the HS and its implementation, it also played a large role in food rationing and resource allocation. This is the main catalyst behind differential treatment by location, an underpinning of the system that would allow for exclusion based on geographic location and hukou designation.

By attaching the necessity for survival to the HS in conjunction with the more divisive purposes the PRC effectively made its citizens both accept and depend upon a system that

ultimately divided, disenfranchised and ultimately killed millions of ordinary citizens that might have otherwise rose up against the implementation of such a social control institution.

“The significance of hukou-based institutional exclusion of the rural population became crystal-clear to everyone after the disastrous Great Leap Forward (1958–61), which made state food rations a lifesaver in a time of national famine. Twenty to thirty million people, almost all from the rural areas, are estimated to have perished.” (Wang 2010).

Late 20th Century China & the Lewis Turning Point

The late 20th century was a time of major reformation within the PRC. With the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, the world saw China open up to the West after decades of seclusion from the world stage. In an effort to inject some lifeblood into a the rigid planned economy of Mao’s era, Xiaoping opened China up to the market system that was commonplace for the rest of the world. This required a fine-tuned balance between a still communist planned economy and a liberal market system which inevitably led to the boom China saw at the turn of the 21st century. In order to pull this off the HS had to be reformed too (though not enough to pull away from the overall CCP agenda set forth by the PRC in 1949).

In this section I will be discussing the main driver behind this reform and the role that it played in a new national agenda that brought China into an era of unforeseen growth. With growth came a new set of worries for the CCP leadership even with double digit GDP growth throughout the last two decades of the 20th century. After taking in a general history of the HS and its political/functional evolution, it is now important to trace it through its modern transformation. This period that I will refer to as the “Deng Era” serves as the junction between the old and the new China. This era focuses mostly on economics and the main agenda that drove

reform both for the HS and the country at large. This central economic theory that governed CCP decision-making through these years is called the Lewis Turning Point.

Named after the developmental economist from the West Indies W. Arthur Lewis, the LTP is a situation that arises in developing countries where surplus rural labor reaches a “financial zero”. Now sparing the gritty economic details of what can transpire after hitting this point, it is more important to understand why the CCP leadership is wary of such a point and what measures the CCP has gone through to avoid hitting this equilibrium of labor surplus and wages.

The LTP, if hit, has caused labor shortages throughout the country as in the late 19th century and early 20th century in Japan. This causes agricultural and unskilled industrial wages to rise which inevitably causes an imbalance between the rural and urban economic sectors. This normally is not a bad situation to hit for a free market society, but since China worked its way into a hybrid economy there was one major concern that sat on the heads of CCP leadership. If there was to be an imbalance in wages, that would then drive agricultural or unskilled laborers into the urban areas in search of increased gains. In the case of India where this point was hit roughly in the 1970's, major cities such as Mumbai and Delhi saw the development of slums in order to accommodate these new arrivals into the urban economy. The PRC wished to avoid these developments and keep a balance between the rural and urban economies. In order to do this they employed the HS as a mechanism to prohibit unfiltered movement into the urban areas.

All in all, the strategy to use the HS as a buffer against hitting this point worked and pushed the timeline further down the road. It was predicted by the International Monetary Fund that China would have hit this point somewhere in the early 2000's but due to the effort this

likelihood has been pushed down the line to the mid to late 2020's. (National Bureau of Statistics).

Recently, theorists have asserted that China is already passing the LTP. Das, M., & N'Diaye, M. P. M. (2013) claim that China's reliance on cheap agricultural workers to fill lapses in the labor market is at an end. Others such as Wang (2010) state that the indication of rising labor costs is the tell-tale sign that the point has been passed. Other researchers have contested the aforementioned studies stating that there remains a large reserve of rural labor to be utilized in order to fill the economic slowdown. Their main objection is that institutional barriers such as the HS have crippled the ability of the government to utilize these reserves in light of a slowed economy since the mid-2000's. (Meng 2011).

So like most policies there are researchers that have sided on one side of the issue or the other. The reason I discuss these dissenting views on the LTP and whether it has been passed or not is to highlight why there are calls to reform the HS and why the CCP leadership has been unwilling to do so. Whether or not the point has been passed is not of concern to me due to the fact that this is not a piece on economics. It highlights a question that I have with regard to the CCP leadership and the true uses of the HS. I am going to highlight these reasons in the next section where I will discuss the more nefarious use of the HS as a social control mechanism and why this is important to the CCP.

There are other older and more cultural reasons as to why the CCP is reluctant to change the system which I will mention in the conclusion once I have explored more thoroughly the cases on abuse in the borderland Autonomous Region of Xinjiang. Though it is apparent that the HS is in need of reform to fit the modern era that is not the central focus of my study. What I am

wanting to hit on is the exclusion that came as a result of such policy implementation. It is apparent that controlling mobility in any form or facet is dangerous to individual freedoms, but that is not a topic generally discussed in the era that this policy was implemented. National unity and the development of a national psychology/agenda or consciousness is what was really important to the CCP during its 20th century transitions. This is evident in the use of Confucianism, Daoism and other ancient philosophies to tie together the Chinese people. This has become equally apparent in the CCP's recent attempts to Sinosize Islam in order to incorporate the Muslim-Chinese populations that comprise much of the Autonomous Regions that I will mention in the second part of this article.

Building a Nation: Mythos vs. Reality

The state-coordinated control over the life and death of its denizens is nothing particularly new. Throughout history control has been present in the carrying out of legal justice through imprisonment, exile, and execution. Foucault spent much of his life working on these issues and draws focus to a change in approach during the 19th and 20th centuries where nations began to shift from necro-politics (controlling death) to bio-politics (controlling life) through the healthcare and justice systems. (Foucault, M. 2016).

In the Chinese context bio-politics is at play most starkly in the “One Child Policy” that was enacted during the mid to late 20th century. But these are both positive and negative, there have been increased global health initiatives and public health measures and a broader effort to maintain symbiosis between man and environment. On the other hand there has been genocide, violence, and general conflict surrounding national determination and socialist collectivization. (Greenhalgh, S. & Winckler, E, A. 2005).

Now comes the central question that many have asked me about my research: Why study China and CCP government within this context? Simply, the management of a population of this size (now past 1.3 billion) and the ever expanding efforts that the CCP has made to control such a massive and diverse population merits study. Especially when we take into account just how poorly western researchers have addressed the basic drivers of these interventions in the past.

While most westerners have heard of the CCP's intervention into birth and population control, very little time has been spent studying institutions such as the HS and why it operates as such a vital instrument of sociopolitical intervention. "Since the founding of the PRC in 1949, population has become a central object of power in China. Concern about governing population processes originated in the PRC regime but soon spread throughout Chinese society." (Greenhalgh, S. & Winckler, E, A. 2005).

Though this focus has stayed mostly on the location of populations and growth, more recently the PRC has been focused on creating national identity and suturing any rifts that appear due to ethnic or socioeconomic divide. This focus of concern was initially on the location of the population. This refers to keeping rural citizens rural and out of the urban areas. Despite this, focus slowly shifted to embrace its "quantity" by slowing growth and limiting size. Simultaneously it shifted focus to its population "quality" by enhancing not only health and education but also social morality and political commitment." (Greenhalgh, S. & Winckler, E, A. 2005).

This in the 21st century remains an overwhelming and ever-expanding area of interest for the CCP and its leadership. Since Chairman Mao's death there have been a number of demographic discourses that have manifested into institutions and policies that are now

embedded throughout the government. This is apparent in the transformation of the HS and its use as a social and economic control mechanism.

There remains a major gap in western study of the HS which revolves around the political realities and agendas that have brought it to life. There is an interest in the role of population control as a long-term strategy for the growth and strengthening of the PRC as a nation. While my research wont be filling in all of these voids surrounding the political effects of such intervention in population control, it will contribute to the field by priming questions that future research will be more likely to complete, This research includes understanding the long-term effects of the CCP's Hukou initiatives on each population of interest: Han mainlanders, those ethnic minorities that comprise the AR's and surrounding nations in the geopolitical arena. All of this circles back to my primary focus on China and its place on the world stage and what it is willing to do to boost its current status, legitimacy, and control.

To get at these primer questions, I have employed the use of Michel Foucault's methodology of identifying important realties of the present and working our way backwards through history in order to understand their development and origin. This results in what Foucault called a "history of the present". But before we really mine into the case studies that will comprise the second section of this research, we have to understand the ideological origins of this brand of control and intervention in the PRC. According to the work of Greenhalgh and Winckler, the CCP's and subsequently the PRC's approach has always been "Leninist in the broad sense of relying on strong leadership by an organized party which claims that its "scientific" ideology "democratically" represents the most progressive forces in society and

shows in what direction the country should go. However, the CCP has experimented with a spectrum of variants within Leninism, ranging from left through center to right”.

On one end of the spectrum we see the largely organic approach to governance often categorized as “Maoism” and on the other end we see revolutionary Leninism that was critical to the style of ascension for the CCP. This style hinged on ideological agreement and minimal to no bureaucracy. (Greenhalgh, S. & Winckler, E, A. 2005).

This style then shifts after the revolution in 1949 and takes on the more sinister and “newly” effective Stalinist system of governance. This understanding allows us to get a better feel for the ideological foundations and progress from the HS of 1949 to its modern application in Xi Jinping’s PRC of today. Institutionalized population discourse which relies on the framings, narratives, and representations produced by, and central to, the regime’s population program is the foundation that set policy agendas and propaganda throughout the history of the PRC. These framings reflect a changing mix of party-state, scientific, and ‘Chinese cultural’ logics. (Greenhalgh, S. & Winckler, E, A. 2005).

Despite the length and history of China, after the 1949 revolution there was a need for the PRC led by the CCP to construct a new Chinese national identity. The identity has two foundational pillars that are important to understand in conjunction with the function of the Hukou System in mainland China but especially its function in the Autonomous Regions. The first pillar focuses on the development of a creation mythos backed by history and shared cultural heritage. The second focuses on legitimizing CCP rule and building a pathway to the future. This is evident when looking at the PRC in the 20th century and increasingly in the 21st as China has gone from a primarily fractured and “sick” nation driven by agrarian economics to a

world leading economy that is a result of rapid industrialization and recently an opening to world markets.

With these two foundations in mind, the CCP made great efforts to legitimize their rule and mythos from an ideological perspective by borrowing heavily from Marxist and Leninist ideology in conjunction with past Confucian identity. Though this might seem to be the end of the road on that front there is a secondary influence that comes in the form of geographic regimentation that comes through institutions. These result in land claims stemming from historical ties. We see this most aggressively used in the annexation of Tibet as well as the efforts to absorb Xinjiang (Eastern Turkestan) with consequently increased efforts to “sinocize” islam in order to legitimize and control non-Han populations in Xinjiang by making them historically recognized vassals of the empire.

We will explore this theme more closely in the next section that focuses on the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang that has served as a testing ground for CCP political practice as well as the legitimization of the PRC and subsequently the CCP’s leadership of the PRC. This is where the HS becomes of increasing importance. While we have already discussed the economic aspects of the HS, it is the social-control aspects that carry out its “true” or most propagandized purpose.

Part II: Case Studies from Xinjiang

The Socio-Political Control of Xinjiang (Eastern Turkestan)

In this next section I evaluate two case studies in order to highlight the latent duality of the HS. The first of these case studies focuses on the Uyghur Autonomous Region of Xinjiang and the way the HS has systematically divided the population and controlled movement in order

to pacify and manipulate the Uyghur peoples' ability to organize politically, socially, and economically. With a population of nearly 1.4 billion, the PRC is a multi-ethnic nation comprised of 56 official ethnic groups stretching from the Han heartland centered in cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Chengdu to the western periphery regions such as Tibet and Xinjiang. The Uyghur people of Xinjiang have a rough population of 10 million and make up one of the largest ethnic minorities within the PRC. (National Bureau of Statistics 2010).

As a predominantly muslim population of Turkic origin, the Uyghur have recently made international headlines due to maltreatment by the PRC government and CCP policy in the region of Xinjiang. Much of this focus has been on the status of this ethnic group and their disadvantaged status that has been likened to the plight that Tibetans have faced under the heel of the PRC since its annexation in 1950. There has been much analysis directed at Uyghur political and social repression under the CCP but keep in mind that this disadvantaged status has been a reality for the Uyghur people since before the revolution in 1949. According to the work of Ildiko Beller-Hann, Xinjiang and its Uyghur population has always played a role in Chinese political decision-making since dynastic times.

This relationship persists into the present for a multitude of reasons but one predominant driver of Han interest in the region has to do with its key strategic geographic position. Xinjiang borders strategic points both within the PRC (resource regions with oil) while simultaneously playing a role in regional geopolitics. It borders Tibet, Russia, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India. Not to mention it borders other Turkic countries such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. In terms of size it covers nearly one sixth of the PRC's total landmass and acts as a buffer between other eastern powers and the Han heartland. This was especially important during

the colonial and Soviet era when Russia extended through many of these border countries. Not to mention it acts as the single largest administrative unit under PRC control. (Beller-Hann 2008).

Xinjiang & Shifting Empires

As I have already mentioned, Xinjiang has had a tumultuous history but in order to understand it in a broader historical context there is a line to follow geographically and politically through the centuries. Xinjiang within itself contains two geographically, historically and ethnically distinct regions: Dzungaria which is the region north of the Tianshan Mountains and the more densely populated region called the Tarim Basin on the southern side of the mountains. Xinjiang was not called Xinjiang until the late 19th Century after it came under the protection of the Qing Dynasty following the Dungan Revolt (1862-1877). (Chiao-Min, H., & Falkenheim, V. C. 2018).

The Tarim Basin was first referred to as Xiyu by the Chinese under the Han Dynasty in 60 BCE with the emergence of the Silk Road. The Han maintained a military presence in the region until the beginning of the 3rd century. For a time after the region was controlled by local ruler until the 6th century when the Turkic Khanagata was established. For the next two hundred years there were wars waged between the Tang Dynasty, Turks and Tibetans until the Tang finally came out on top establishing the Anxi Protectorate of Xinjiang and Central Asia. (Chiao-Min, H., & Falkenheim, V. C. 2018).

After the fall of the Tang Dynasty history shows the rise of the Uyghur Khaganate, the first real consolidated leadership by the ethnic majority in the region throughout the 8th and 9th centuries. As Uyghur power declined three main powers rose to fill the vacuum. The Buddhist Uyghur Kara-Khoja, the Turkic Muslim Kara-Khanid and the Iranian Buddhist Khotan. The

Turkic Muslims prevailed and Islamized the region giving it much of its ethnographic pallor that carries on today. In the 13th century the Mongol Empire swept in, briefly taking power before the Turkic people once again resumed leadership of the region. This all changed in the 18th century when the Qing Dynasty conquered the area. (Chiao-Min, H., & Falkenheim, V. C. 2018).

The reason I have tapped into this little history/geography exposition is to stress an importance on the impermanence of governance in the region. This will become important in the final section when I discuss separatist movements and protests in Xinjiang today. Understanding the origins and the general composition of the political landscape before firm Chinese rule does give us some necessary context as to why these movements exist (and their validity) but also why the PRC is so aggressive in its current policies regarding the absorption of Xinjiang into China permanently.

Governance Tactics & Strategy in Xinjiang (ROC Period)

To say the least, the relationship has been one that has stretched across the centuries but it really was not until the ROC period that we see the rise of strict ethnopolism, an era of policy that saw the Uyghur in the same way the British saw their subjects in India. This relationship and dynamic set down during the period was tenuous and illustrates that the mission of legitimacy and cohesion was and still is of paramount importance to the central government during both the ROC and PRC eras. I would not go so far as to call the relationship paternalistic, nor would I label it strict manifest destiny but there are familiar rhetorics within this relationship. The ROC government was very straightforward in its view of the Uyghur as a backwards and different peoples that needed Han governance as illustrated in the following excerpts from cables between Han officials in the region.

ROC officials were always careful of the powder-keg that was their relationship with Xinjiang during their tumultuous years in power. In a series of cables between Han officials from this era we get a thorough look at the mood and concerns rippling from Nanjing to Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang. "...Xinjiang is a muslim territory. If we suppress popular uprisings with force, it will be sure to create hatred and enmity with the Han..." (Jacobs 2010 page 106).

The ROC government pursued a multitude of strategies in the region in order to bring Xinjiang into the fold but only ethnopopulism and policies that emanated from such an ideology were found to be moderately successful in terms of the ROC agenda. The nationalists decided that the time had come in 1933 to make their presence in the region felt. In order to do this they sent a "pacification commissioner" to the region in order to exert dominance and establish political strength in the region as it was beginning to ebb in the other periphery states.

Despite this aggressive tactic the ROC officials that made the call stressed their need to send someone who is unbiased toward the muslim populace. But like anyone would guess this worry was more about self preservation than actual desire for equality and benevolent leadership in the region as shown in the following excerpt: "...send a prestigious, high-ranking official who holds no prejudice against the muslims. But above all else, you cannot allow any muslim figure to obtain a position of real authority in Xinjiang." (Jacobs 2010 page 107). Subsequently this method of governance in the region was adopted by the PRC and the legacy of this method is still prevalent in headlines coming from Xinjiang today.

The Xinjiang-PRC Relationship

There are a number of economic and social precedents that set the stage in the late 19th century that led to the current socioeconomic stratification and composition of modern-day

Xinjiang. Inequalities that have their roots in many pre-industrial societies are still preserved today. With the rise of the ROC at the end of the Qing Dynasty, which would give way to the PRC and CCP rule after 1949, the colonial legacy introduced to the region through many social, economic and political frameworks has engendered ethnic divides that persist today. Conflict lays at the heart of this issue and is not limited to just ruling and subordinate classes. Tensions overflowed into ethnic, religious and linguistic divisions that have been a major part of the fabric of Xinjiang since the beginning. (Beller-Hann 2008).

In the modern context this conflict largely played out through policies bent on social control for a variety of reasons. Understanding these social control mechanisms will give further insight into the mind of PRC officials and what both sides generally desire as political outcomes. By illustrating this, why the tenuous relationship has persisted and why it will continue to linger unless there is major policy reform will be addressed. In particular I relate my findings to the presence of the HS and the broader social aims the PRC hopes to achieve via this particular institution.

In order to first acquaint ourselves within the drivers of these divides we must dive into the legacy of socialism in Xinjiang and what has been referred to by Beller-Hann as the “civilizing project” initiated in the region after the 1949 revolution. In the early years of PRC rule, the CCP labeled the Uyghur as an ethnic minority and incorporated the region into the classification of an autonomous region. This gave legal precedent to their territorial foundations and lent a collective identity that was not so cut and dry. With the massive project of unifying the Chinese state and building State-Owned Enterprises (SOE’s) we see how measures that were

implemented nation-wide had deleterious effects upon Uyghur communities, rendering Uyghur groups, whether they come in the form of families or markets, generally insecure.

While it is important to discuss the macro policy machinations of the PRC in conjunction with the effect this has had on the Uyghur people, we must also understand the role of the Han migrant in Xinjiang and the role they play as colonial or imperial extensions of the CCP government. Migrants in this regions are broken down into different categories, each with distinct ambitions and missions.

There are the economic migrants that come in the form of “Bingtuaners”, and profit-driven migrants, there are the official personnel sent by the CCP government, as well as students and young professionals. Each has a distinct role to fill within the region while simultaneously fitting into a more macro discussion as well. It has been theorized by many that these migrants (majority of which are Han Chinese) are extensions of the government with the purpose of colonizing the region in the hopes of bringing the region deeper into the fold of PRC control. All efforts by the PRC to incorporate Xinjiang relate back to the mission of nation-building by using historical precedent, and economic propaganda in order to further legitimize PRC rule.

In terms of flow, these migrants often move in a circular pattern akin to much global migration, but the extent to which history plays a role is really where my focus is on this particular section. The longevity of state-sponsored migration programs for Han Chinese leaves a mark and subsequently this mark comes in the form of a sustained Han presence in the region. While they do not comprise the majority of the region, their role and dispersal throughout the social strata of the region suggests that the power within the region is dispersed amongst these

Han migrants, leaving Uyghur people on the periphery. This is where exclusion and social control become vital tools of governance in the region.

The first large-scale migration of Han into the region came in 1954 during the reconstruction period in China. It is estimated that there were more than 100,000 soldiers from various regiments that were moved into the region during this time. Most of these soldiers took up plots of land and participated in a multitude of farm jobs. While this played well into the designs of the central government in Beijing, it was difficult to maintain this sort of momentum. The uneven distribution of the sexes led to a sort of circular pattern being maintained. Soldiers and professionals would come to the region for a few years before returning home to find wives and start families.

This is the main reason that the PRC has had to use an amalgamation of tactics (incentives) to keep the region dominated politically and economically by ethnic Han. “Though none of them expected to stay in Xinjiang for a lifetime, cases of resistance were rare. This was likely due to the desolate situation of the Chinese countryside in general, and also to government propaganda that celebrated the settlers as “masters” (*zhuren*) of Xinjiang.” (Jacobs 2010).

This recruitment and settlement effort during the first decades of PRC rule eventually created an influx of Han migrants to the point where by 1966 the number of Bingtuan settlers reached an estimated 1.48 million. (Jacobs 2010). This has continued into the 21st century where the number has nearly doubled. While there is some outflow that has become a trend in recent years the number has remained mostly fixed by incorporating students into the mission of settlement via work-study programs.

“Educated Youth (Zhishi qingnian, briefly Zhiqing), or Shanghai Educated Youth (Shanghai zhiqing) as they are sometimes referred to, is a broad category that nominally includes all high school and university graduates who arrived in Xinjiang in the early decades of Communist rule. However, in popular Han discourse, the signifier “Educated Youth” is typically used to denote one particular group of educated youth, namely the rusticated urban youth of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76).” (Jacobs 2010).

In conjunction with this, we saw in the Deng era a relaxation of the registration system that would eventually lead to more flexible migration flows that was more geared toward the modern Chinese youth. The generally elastic nature of Han migration in recent years has kept Uyghur and Han populations sequestered in their political and social spheres with little overlap in the economic realm.

All of this is part and parcel to the colonial effort that is still being carried out today. When evaluating institutions that are strung together throughout different dynasties, there has to be some common denominator that has allowed it to persist through regime change. In the case of the Hukou System, imperial motivation is that common denominator.

For the last 200 years each regime has been an empire, in function, whether or not it has been officially labeled as such. China has been a multi-ethnic/national nation governed by the Han majority. The significance of this is the stark contrast, linguistically, religiously and politically that the Han people have from those peoples in the borderlands that fall under their governance.

Approaching this apparent disparity has been a major political problem dating back well before the formation of the PRC. Each comes with its own challenges, and as such there are few

institutions that permeate each region. The HS is one of these systems. Jacobs refers to this governance as “strategic manipulation” which hinges upon the use of cultural elitism, physical inclusion and exclusion, as well as widespread propaganda. (Agnieszka 2013).

Human Rights Violations in Xinjiang

The situation in Xinjiang is one that is difficult to discuss within the human rights arena. This is not because there are not human rights violations in the region, or that these violations are minor in some form or fashion so as to not warrant concern, but rather because we are not discussing a liberal western democracy but rather an authoritarian regime backed by 2,500 years of history.

This is not to say that human rights violations do not occur in western liberal democracies but rather that the role of politics and political pressure when working to cease the perpetuation of violations is much more difficult. Within the global context, human rights and the enforcement of human rights hinges upon pressure from other nations, often members, or signees of some treaty, agreement, or protocol. While China has signed a number of these types of agreements what I would like to take a moment to focus on is enforcement. The idealism that is behind human rights in the geopolitical arena is one that is both inspiring and toothless in many ways.

This is all due to the fact that national autonomy and the protections that come with it from international law greatly overpower the political will it takes to push nations to intervene in one another’s internal affairs. In the past this has started wars, ended wars and ultimately set the stage for the world as we know it today. Despite this, most of the time power is exerted in much softer ways but that soft power is reliant upon a natural imbalance of power between the nation holding account and the nation being held to account.

China is more or less impervious to this soft-power dynamic especially in the era of Xi Jinping who has been a strongman for China for the last seven years with not much of an end in sight. Why is this? Well, not only is China one of the great military superpowers on earth, with the largest standing army and a rapidly expanding navy and air-force, but it is also responsible for economic development projects all over the world — from Africa and Southeast Asia, to places like Europe. With this combined military and economic power, the political will to force China into a position where they would need to cease all human rights violations in Xinjiang is little though there is major media outcry the world over. Despite this, it is mostly used for politics that falls short of the adequate amount of pressure to pursue comprehensive change in Xinjiang.

The main metric for looking at human rights globally is the document that started it all back in 1948. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was a product of post-WWII negotiations that hoped to guide the world into a new era of peace and prosperity after millions died and most of Europe lay in ruin. The UDHR and its 30 articles laid the foundation for what would become the International Bill of Human Rights which got its stripes in 1976. Needless to say, these documents have shaped much of the international world in both politics and economics over the course of the late 20th and early 21st century.

For the rest of this section I am going to give a bit of context as to what is going on in Xinjiang today. Reports have been coming out of the region for the better part of a decade regarding human rights violations but it was only very recently that headlines started reaching western papers about the troubles in Xinjiang.

Articles 1-3, 5-7, 9-15, 17-20, and 26-30 are all under threat or outright violated by the PRC's actions. The CCP is systematically bioengineering everyday life in Xinjiang. The biopolitics in the region take the shape of the holocaust but without the mass murder. Rather, there is the campaign to erase the religion and ethnic practices of the Uyghur people. Uyghurs, as I have stated above can not travel freely, worship their faith, speak to their relatives, name their children or gather socially. These efforts are being exercised through surveillance and community segregation. By segregating groups of Uyghurs from ethnic Han by neighborhood, then further isolating them through detention, they are able to effectively disassemble identity and the very way of life of every Uyghur man, woman, and child. (Richardson, S. 2019).

In a report put out by Human Rights Watch, nearly 1 million Uyghurs are detained in what the CCP is calling "re-education camps". This report went on to say, "...the human engineering experiment the Chinese government is undertaking resembles the policies of the most repressive colonial regimes and is as Orwellian as China's Cultural Revolution..." and that Beijing is using all of its political and economic leverage to deter other nations from stepping in. (Fuchs, M. H., et al, 2018).

There is one important component of this surveillance practice that has potential global repercussions. The tactics used in places like Tibet and Xinjiang are not complete. They are functioning as testing sites for a new brand of authoritarian governance. By using what HRW has labeled "high-tech totalitarianism" the methods of surveillance become available for export and this is already being felt in countries from Asia to Africa and even South America. (Human Rights Watch 2020).

I mentioned before that the efforts in Xinjiang are not new, but rather the way that the PRC is exercising its power is new. I discussed in previous sections how the colonial lessons of the 19th and 20th centuries greatly influenced the beginnings of the PRC and its relationship with Xinjiang. In this next bit I want to focus on exactly how the PRC's tactics in the 21st century are being executed and ultimately felt by the Uyghur population.

In order to do this we have traced our way back to the year 2001 and the Global War on Terror initiated by then US president George W. Bush. This effectively set the precedent for a world power such as the US or China to use the threat of "terrorism" and "islamic extremism" as a *carte blanche* to circumvent safeguards that would normally prevent such egregious violations. There are many similarities between what we see in Xinjiang and what the US has done overseas and on its borders in recent years. Using fear to manipulate the masses into allowing overextension of governmental and military powers.

In the case of Xinjiang, the PRC has created the most advanced surveillance system in the world. They use this system to target the muslim-majority minority Uyghur people. As part of an anti-terrorism campaign, the PRC has made mandatory facial-recognition scans a common feature of day to day life. According to a report from *Foreign Policy* they have "Wi-Fi Sniffers" that collect data from devices hooked up to the networks. All of this has been in an effort to locate, round up, and detain Uyghurs in black-sites called "re-education centers". (Rollet C. 2018).

This detention is largely arbitrary, and leads to forced political, religious and social indoctrination. The PRC's "Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Terrorism" is the main organ to pushes out this propaganda. The main body apart from the Hukou System that has allowed

violations to persist is the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP). (Ramzy, A., & Buckley, C. 2019).

The first reports trickled out into bigger media circles from HRW back in February of 2018. A major effort of understanding the system came through the reverse engineering of the app used by the IJOP. There were patterns that arose from further study and it was determined that the app performs three functions. One is the collection of personal data, two reporting on the activities of potential dissidents, and three initiating investigations and probes into persons of interest.

While it may be difficult to understand just how easy it is to end up on this list for us the HRW reporters that Uyghurs can become people of interest through the simplest of actions. “Xinjiang authorities consider many forms of lawful, everyday, non-violent behavior—such as ‘not socializing with neighbors, often avoiding using the front door’—as suspicious. The app also labels the use of 51 network tools as suspicious, including many Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) and encrypted communication tools, such as WhatsApp and Viber.” (Human Rights Watch 2020).

There are reports that have come out in recent months of parents and children being separated for upward of three or four years. Children as young as three and four are separated from their parents and even upon release, the parents are not given contact information or access to their children. (Human Rights Watch 2019). Here is an excerpt from the HRW report highlighting these separations:

Abdurahman Tohti, a Uyghur living in Turkey, has been unable to contact his son, now 4, and daughter, 3, since authorities detained his wife in August 2016. In January, he

spotted his son in a video posted online that showed him in a school answering questions in Chinese. "I miss my children, my wife," said Tohti. "I want them back very much. I fear if I ever meet my children again in my lifetime, they wouldn't know who I am, and they would've been assimilated as Chinese and think that I'm their enemy."

It is apparent that there are discrepancies between the proposed reason behind the detentions that the PRC gives and the real motives that have spurred policy change in the past few years. While 2001 was a definite turning point in terms of strategy the real change came closer to the end of the decade. In 2009 there were surges of anti-government protests that occurred throughout Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang. These were coupled with separatist protests in 2014 that led to 39 deaths when a market was attacked. This final disturbance in the status quo forced Xi Jinping to set a new policy course in the region which resulted in the camps discussed above. (Foreign Policy 2018).

In an effort to "sinocize" Uyghurs they have been detained. Because of terrorism surveillance and segregation are necessary. These are the logics of the PRC rhetoric but at the heart of the matter is a separatist movement and the threat of Xinjiang becoming its own nation which would have major repercussions for the military and economic strategy of China and its neighbors.

Part III: Han Rural-Urban Migration

Introduction (An Overview of Current Affairs)

As I mentioned in the first section of this article, migrants are naturally drawn from the countryside to the cities in search of economic gain. The CCP employed the HS in order to mitigate the effects of a quickly approaching LTP which the CCP so desperately has tried to avoid. By limiting migrants' mobility there have been effects both short term and long term that

have precipitated this control. In this section I will bring up a couple case studies that fall into each category in an attempt to illustrate HS effects on ethnic Han populations that comprise the heartland. This will serve in my effort to compare and contrast the effects on my case populations.

As we shift our focus geographically to another section of the Chinese population it is important to also shift our focus temporally. While the previous sections have focused on the historical factors that have led us to the current situation in the borderlands, when we shift to focus on rural to urban migrants within the PRC we should also begin to incorporate the idea of China's rapid industrialization and its opening to global markets, which happened in a much tighter time frame.

Throughout the 20th century we saw rapid industrialization globally. In China, when the CCP took control after the revolution, we saw a sort of stagnation, with heavy reliance on and control of the agricultural sectors of the economy. As time progressed further into the 20th century toward the turn of the 21st, the Hukou System became integral to the socio-economic distribution of benefits and the relationship these benefits have to citizens' geographic location.

Although internal migration in response to this rapid urbanization has been occurring since the CCP's birth it has picked up drastically over the last 30 years or so. In response to this, the central government has gone to great lengths to control who can call the urban centers home. This has had some pretty astounding effects upon rural migrants that are faced with giving up their rural status and become what has been termed "floating migrants".

These migrants have no right to benefits and often become social pariah within society; while being exploited by businesses and resented by officials and citizens in every province. This

migration phenomena has forced the government to become increasingly reliant upon the idea of “*de jure* urbanization” in order to secure continued growth without over-saturation of the urban centers. The reason for this is due to the nature of migrant flows and how, like many flows globally, have taken on a circular pattern which makes it very difficult for the government to properly track *de facto* urbanization.

There are rural and urban Hukou placements as I have stated above and these determine the benefits and opportunities migrants can receive. More importantly, this categorization forces citizens to be dependent in many ways to their Hukou status. Urban holders are tied to their places of work and rural holders are tied to their land. Though, currently, the system is at its most relaxed, in the past this control has made the rural-urban migration patterns barely a blip on the radar of the CCP government. But now, with a loosening of the rules, the countryside are emptying in favor of urban areas due to perceived economic benefits. While the system is still in place, those that choose to leave their land are at risk of losing both their land and any hope of attaining an urban designation.

In a study by Meng (2010), there is some consensus within the Chinese government to increase the benefits of rural migrants to urban areas but Meng states that “granting urban social benefits to rural migrants and reforming rural land use rights by themselves might not be sufficient to attract a large proportion of rural individuals to settle permanently in urban areas.” (Meng 2010).

While this migration trend has fluctuated over the years, migration has not slowed. Traditionally, when times are hard in the city migrants will return home to their rural villages so as to reap the benefits of farming. Despite this trend though, it is obvious that the allure of the

cities is not lost on young rural Hukou holders. Since the turn of the 21st century, urbanization levels in China have profoundly changed in urban areas. Levels of in-migration to the urban areas is projected to rise continually into the mid 21st century. The level of urbanization is expected to reach 75% by the 2050s (Cheng and Masser, 2003). Currently, the number of large cities (with a population of over 1 million) has increased from 13 to 56 (Wu, Zhang and Shen 2011). This is all driven by the new emphasis on private enterprise within the Chinese economy and the role of competition, and foreign investment coming in over the last 10 years or so.

Parallel to sentiments here in the United States, rural migrants that have come to work in the urban areas are seen as a problem by not only the government but the urban residents themselves. (Wing Chan 2010).

Despite this sentiment, it is obvious the impact that these migrants have made on the economy. They have contributed greatly to the grand agenda of industrialization that China has been seeking since the 1980's. It is important though to recognize that these migrants are particularly vulnerable when the economy turns and support for these migrants takes a dive. Since 2012 there have been official attempts to reform the system to benefit and protect these migrants though there is not much hope of progress being fully realized due to the duplicitous nature of the HS and its role in the borderlands.

Rural holders have been encouraged in recent years to start applying for smaller urban Hukou centers, not as large as Beijing or Shanghai but areas that would be a step up from their rural origins. Migrants remain reluctant to this idea due to the fact that they would be forced to give up their landholdings. Being able to have the best of both worlds is what drives many

migrants to become floating migrants factoring greatly into the cost-risk evaluations and so this initiative has largely failed. (Mohabir 2017).

Nearly 13 million Chinese citizens lack official HS registration. Naturally, this presents a set of hurdles for their ability to claim a number of benefits including welfare, obtaining identity documents, employment or even citizenship in a broader sense. One can trace back this massive population of unregistered people to the days of the one-child policy. While this may be an integral piece to the puzzle one must also understand the role of internal migration and the HS due to fact that citizenship rights are locally determined.

The HS is locally managed and this means that the ability for citizens to register their kids is extremely difficult. In a study put out by Vrotherms (2019) it was established that children born in violation of the one-child policy had lower rates of registration and that children born to migrants mothers were four times more likely to be unregistered. All of this can be traced back to the one-child policy, but the role of the HS and its structures that act as barriers plays a much more integral role in the continued struggle floating migrants face even after the end of the policy.

Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Floating Migrant

When discussing what factors come into the decision to migrate, an image of scales always comes to mind. Decision-making is a natural dialectic that relies on the weighing of positives and negatives of the move. Naturally, in most cases of migration there are linguistic, legal and economic incentives and disincentives that drive decision-making. In this particular instance it is a little different due to the internal nature of this migration. In the following

sections I will be discussing these pros and cons and the shape that migrant migration takes within the Chinese heartland. (Li, L. & Liu, Y. 2019)

In 2014 the Chinese Labor-force Dynamics Survey (CLDS) was conducted in order to measure migrants' settlement intentions and the different factors that came into play in forming these intentions. A big part of the puzzle was determining whether or not an official Hukou transfer was a positive or negative part of the decision-making. In total, the survey covered a multitude of factors such as: individual demographic characteristics, urban working and living conditions, rural resources and attachment and even geographic characteristics. In an interesting turn of events, the study found that rural migrants' transfer intentions were much weaker than originally surmised. The rural migrants preferred small and medium cities for urban settlement but larger and megacities for urban hukou conversion. Obviously, the latter is more difficult to attain therefore desire is low in terms of risk-taking by rural migrants. (State Council 2014).

The HS does not only restrict migration in a broad sense but also prohibits natural integration of internal migrants by systematically excluding those people that are not locally registered. This affects migrants' access to all of a locality's public services from healthcare to pension and subsidized housing but most importantly education. This institutionalized exclusion has left an entire subsection of the population as second-class citizens. (Solinger 1999).

It was further determined that a set of complex determinants surrounding settlement intention was at play. Factors such as age, education, marital status and spouse living situations, as well as working conditions played the greatest role in making a decision on resettlement. Transfer on the other hand had much more to do with age, income and the rural landholdings the prospective migrant had. In short, it is apparent that the will to go through legal avenues of

transfer or full-relocation are not particularly desired by migrants but rather the maintenance of benefits from both categories though it is fundamentally riskier to maintain. This plays a large role in the circular pattern of floating migrants and as we will explore in the next sections plays a fundamental role in the next generation in both positive and negative ways.

A Generational Push & Pull

Much of the discussion of integration is rooted in rural hukou-holders' land rights. Those with rural hukou designations but weaker ties to land ownership tend to form their decision-making dialectic much differently than those with strong land ties or ownership. While they both struggle to integrate on a political or economic level the likelihood of integrating socially goes up with ones ability to not worry about losing their rural benefits (aka land holdings). This lack of worry allows migrants to merge their lives more effectively to the urban work environment and therefore gives them an edge in an economy that is likely to become more reliant on skilled labor that must be attained over time.

One important thing to keep in mind when discussing floating migrants is the role that the economy plays in the pattern of migration. Circular migration is common and so in times of economic hardship many migrants return to their rural villages to reap the benefits of agricultural work. This has engendered animosity between floating migrants and properly documented migrants that do not have the luxury of playing both sides. During times of stricter control via the HS, floating migrants tend to be subject to negative stereotypes and prejudice. (Chen & Hamori 2009).

In recent years the CCP leadership has labeled these migrants as an "urban disease" much like they worried about hitting the LTP. This line of rhetoric has drastically affected how migrants are seen by business owners and local residents. This further plays into the decision-

making dynamic these migrants face and has led to a pressure to follow “legal” avenues of migration. Why a migrant would choose to go or stay has a lot to do with level of income. (Yue, Li, Feldman, & Du, 2010).

Economic incentives are important when making any family or individual decisions that incorporates risk. The generally unstable nature of being a floating migrant means that they move around for a multitude of reasons associated with their individual level of risk. What is not generally discussed is the generational aspect of this risk.

What kind of opportunity does a child have when their parent leaves, or if they risk losing their right to benefits? This is where the risk drastically increases for families. This is where we see the greatest divergence in push-pull factors in decision-making and it will be the topic of the next section on floating migrants.

Education Opportunity for a New Generation

As we have already discussed, the HS is unpopular due to its restriction of free movement of labor and by proxy, limiting access to benefits for this migrant population. Floating migrants don't have access to benefits themselves but this also applies to their children. This has become a pressing concern for many researchers and is a central issue when we begin to examine the outcomes of benefit restriction to migrant families but especially the children of these families. The cognitive and non-cognitive developmental issues that come along with this are significant. (Guo Yu, Zhao Liqiu 2019).

Cognitive developmental outcomes are significant predictors of a child's overall development. There have been a number of studies conducted in recent years that have examined the possible outcomes of a number of factors on a child's development. Familial life and

education are two major facets of a child's life that affect their development. On the other hand there has been focus on the term "non-cognitive outcomes" which incorporate personal traits such as optimism, resilience, adaptability, motivations, and conscientiousness, that have been shown to be associated with individuals' success. (Guo Yu, Zhao Liqiu 2019).

This focus on cognitive and non-cognitive development really is an extension of the sort of political attention that is paid to migrant communities, especially children of migrants. The rights and well-being of migrant children or children from migrant homes has tipped a number of discussions about fair educational opportunities for migrant children. The well-being of these families is firmly shaped by policies directed at immigrant communities. (Johnson 2007).

It is well known that a significant number of children from migrant families in China are not able to attend public schools. This is due to the fact that they lack local Hukou registration and therefore can not take advantage of the benefits afforded through the public school system. This then, forces these children to turn to privately-operated schools or they are left behind entirely. (Cheng & Feng 2013).

A number of studies have asserted that the HS is an institutional form of discrimination against rural-urban migrants. It has also been revealed that there are considerable socioeconomic and social disadvantages to being institutionally excluded by the HS. One of the main disadvantages for the children include poor academic performance which impacts their prospects later in life. In a report put out by (Zhou & Yang 1999) it was found that migrant status has a dramatic effect upon the academic results of children when you compare them to those "left-behind". Despite this, it is common knowledge that migrant children perform significantly worse than local urban children and that the achievement gaps widen when we start to look at the level of segregation based on Hukou status. This segregation is perpetuated by studies that have found

that the mixing of school populations has a negative effect on the local kids more than the migrant children. (Xu & Wu 2016).

Similar to the United States, the public education system is delegated at the elementary level to local government at the county/district level. Funding for these institutions is distributed in reference to the number of children officially registered with proper Hukou. Consequently, the authorities do not have the resources to accommodate the additional needs of non-registered migrant children. Though the central government has made reforms and pushed for inclusion in the public education system, there are a number of problems that prohibit such a clean transition. This results in social exclusion of migrant children, discrimination, loneliness and more institutionally, segregation. All of these factors hinder the ability for the school to properly take care of the children while hindering the ability of the children to function properly within the school day. (Guo Yu, Zhao Liqiu 2019).

These children when compared to local children have a much higher risk of externalizing problems, having self-injurious thoughts and behaviors that are otherwise detrimental to their mental and physical well-being. (Lu et al., 2018). Additionally, migrant children have poorer developmental, emotional and psychological health based on a report conducted by Li and Jiang in 2018. (Li & Jiang, 2018; Ni, Chui, Ji, Jordan, & Chan, 2016).

Post-compulsory education is often ignored when discussing migrant children but due to the fact that many of them fall behind in elementary school they are less likely to pursue secondary education. They also tend to fall beneath the benchmark exam requirements. Not to mention, even if they excelled at the previously mentioned, they would still lack a Hukou designation that would allow them to enter a secondary institution. Similar to the U.S. there have been studies that show the effect of desegregation for black students and in China the story is

much the same. While the situation is not necessarily race-based the social segregation or even economic segregation has the same deleterious effects. Efforts have been made to use the data found in these studies, but there is worry that bringing in migrant students could have a negative impact on the local students that are properly documented.

It seems that the data is there in terms of the cost-benefit analysis of desegregating Chinese schools but the meritocracy that often dictates this discourse amongst administrators and local parents seems to make it rather difficult to see a future where there is a clean reform. While there have been reforms in favor of the migrant student, they have come too few and far between. This has implications for yet another generation of migrant children who will no doubt grow up in an education system hostile to their growth and achievements.

With regard to the rural-urban migrant that I have reviewed in this section there is one point that I would like to clarify. The market is not necessarily to blame for the treatment of migrants and their necessary shedding of rights and privileges. The market acts as any other driver of migration. It is explained easily through push-pull theory. Migrants are attracted to the urban areas for their economic opportunity, but they shed their rights out of necessity due to the rules that the HS has in place to guard against rural-urban migration.

In short, the only way to avoid surveillance and detection is to become a ghost. "Ghost" in this context merely means that they are now people without rights and protections and that in a world governed through courts and institutions, to have no rights or protections is to be dead in the eyes of the state.

It is true that rural-urban migration did not necessarily start with Deng Xiaoping's opening up to the markets of the west. But it is impossible to ignore the role that rapid industrialization has had on wages. Better wages is attractive in and of itself. Keep in mind that

as an economy grows its urban centers grow and become prosperous. Prosperity in this sense entails a lot. Better policing, healthcare, access to jobs and education, freedoms to pursue creative and individualistic endeavors that would otherwise be stifled in the agrarian communities that comprised so much of China since 1949. All of this pulls the migrant in and all of this legitimizes their decision to shed their rights and protections by becoming “floating migrants”. Though the decision is not necessarily easily made or happy in its outcome.

A Quick Comparison of Case Studies I & II

Looking back on the two cases examined in the second and third part of this article, there are a number of inferences one can draw about the HS and its application to these two subsections of the Chinese population. Firstly, in the case of the Uyghur people of Xinjiang, the HS is indeed used as a social control mechanism but more so as an extension or vestige of the colonial/imperial era of China. The historical context is really what allows the CCP to continue hostile policies against the Uyghur people. The policies left over by dynastic China and the ROC have maintained a status of disadvantage for the Uyghur people that CCP leadership has exploited for a number of reasons ranging from geopolitical strategy to national identity and propaganda. This is likely to remain unchanged due to the fact that there is very little the international community can do in order intervene in Xinjiang.

In the case of the floating migrants of mainland China, we see a number of systematic exclusions perpetrated against migrants via the HS. What is unique about this context is that while the CCP has maintained its stance on the HS being used as a tool to mitigate the effects of hitting the LTP, in reality it has had the duplicitous effect of leaving a vast swath of the population underserved and trapped in a cycle of disenfranchisement that is bound to last

generations barring any comprehensive reform of the HS. Due to the necessity for the CCP to keep a hold on Xinjiang in the wake of unrest, there is little chance that there will be the necessary reform in the mainland as well as Xinjiang.

Final Conclusion

The PRC has always acted with imperialist/colonial intent; this is why the Hukou System is used the way it is and the case studies highlighting its effects on the Uyghur people of Xinjiang as well as Han peoples in the mainland testify to this. While the first two uses I propose in the first part of my thesis are both projected by the PRC while simultaneously being plausible or even true, the underlying currents and uses of the program support my assertion of its colonial and bio-political nature.

The effect this system has had on the Uyghur people of Xinjiang is both detrimental to the Uyghur people on a Human Rights level as well as a greater societal level threatening not only the way of life but the very existence of the Uyghur within the PRC. This is unlikely to change since the greater international community holds very little geopolitical leverage against the PRC to force a change in policy practice. With regard to the Han economic migrants, the effects of the system are less dire but nonetheless force migrants to strip themselves of their protections as citizens to a great extent.

This is problematic and once again is unlikely to change unless there is comprehensive reform of the Hukou System. While the opening of the PRC to global markets was seen as a great leap forward for the PRC it has had the duplicitous effect of incentivizing this shedding of rights by becoming a “floating migrant” in search of economic opportunity in the urban areas of the PRC. The case studies and archival data support both realities for the people themselves but

also of the duplicitous nature of the Hukou. It also helps to support the assertion with the help of the post-colonial theoretical framework I use that the PRC's aim and policy practice are designed with colonial or imperialist agendas. These realities have profound consequences for human rights and migrant protections not only in China but other developing nations that wish to possibly implement the Chinese model of migration governance or governance in general.

In a world where mass migration is becoming more commonplace, researchers have to begin to look down the barrel at the longterm. China is a world leader and has great influence on many of its neighbors. As we see factors such as war and climate change drive migrants across international borders, we will see a great rush to close up or seal those borders. Much in the way that the United States militarized their borders we will see countries around the world mimic this strategy.

What worries me, and what should worry other migration scholars is who the role models are. In regions stretching from the east coast of Africa to the frigid waters of New Zealand, there are hundreds of millions of people that are at risk of displacement. If China, the role model for much of this region, sets the tone with policies that mirror Uyghur imprisonment and undocumented disenfranchisement then there is reason to believe that some countries would follow suit. If the world follows in the footsteps of Fortress Europe, the U.S. Southern Border and of Authoritarian China, then there is much to worry about when we discuss the future of global migration governance.

The last point I would like to address, and one that fundamentally ties into the entire mission of the paper explores how it is that a system such as this is able to persist within a global human rights based governance regime. While it is obvious that the People's Republic of China

does not fall under the category of a liberal democracy as we understand it here in the United States or even across the Atlantic in a number of countries, there is more to it than authoritarian leadership versus democratic leadership. A system such as the HS fundamentally is not so different from global migration regimes across the planet, the main difference being its scope. As an internal system, it does not get netted into the “national security” narrative that nations such as the United States use to justify its militarization of the border and its use of exclusionist policies for outsiders.

The reason I bring this up is to highlight the role that human rights and international governing bodies play in enforcing human rights standards especially within a migration context. Due to the fact that the PRC is an autonomous country, and due to the fact that the laws and policies it chooses to enact do not cross international boundaries, there is very little international governing bodies can do to stop the human rights abuses that are occurring within Xinjiang. There is also little it can do to address the plight of the migrant worker within the PRC even if their individual rights (international human rights standards) are being trampled upon. Autonomy trumps international intervention or standards so this is a conundrum that does not seem to have an end at hand.

Another point I would like to stress on this issue comes with addressing the internal factors that allow such a system to persist. This ties back to the nation-building and national myths that I discussed at the beginning of this article. It is apparent that the PRC, led by the CCP, has gone through very extensive and elaborate efforts to fuse together a narrative that justifies its behavior and treatment of Uyghurs and “floating migrants” around the country.

By merging together Confucian ideology, imperialist nationalism, ethnopopulism, and selecting geography and histories that support claims to lands such as Tibet and Xinjiang, the CCP has effectively cushioned any ideological process to change from happening. When compounding this with extensive internal surveillance, policies and laws that make it very difficult to assemble politically or even in some cases socially, there is little that the average Chinese citizen can do to petition change or reform of a system so pervasive in the day to day life in China.

This is not by accident, and there are consequences that many researchers in the West do not completely understand. When a government infuses meritocracy, one-party rule, and social structures that restrict deviancy in the political sense, there are vast implications for human rights, not only within China but also in the surrounding region. This is what researchers and policymakers must keep their eye on when addressing China and it is something that migration researchers must investigate, because throughout the course of this research it has become apparent that the right to movement, regardless of distance, is something that is very closely tied to freedom, progression and ultimately, justice.

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