EDUCATION ON THE EDGE OF EMPIRE: CHINESE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION IN XINJIANG, CHINA

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Proponents of both capitalist and socialist ideologies have historically vied to define and implement the development processes that best mitigate disparities between the “rich” and “poor”, both between and within countries (Payne, 2005). Acknowledging burgeoning rich-poor inequalities within its own borders, largely between the coastal and western regions and among the dominant Han Chinese and the country’s ethnic minorities, China established the Western Development Strategy in 2001 to combat these disparities (Zhao Y., 2001; Lai, 2002). One of its key areas of concern is the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, an “underdeveloped” province in northwest China fraught with ethnic tensions between the Han and Turkic Uyghur populations. Schooling is an integral component of the strategy as China seeks to educate students in ways that quell these tensions and favor its development goals (Benson, 2004). However, to date there are no studies which explore the ways in which teachers, the primary purveyors of the state-generated curriculum, perceive and communicate their perceptions of development in the region. Utilizing qualitative methods of inquiry (including interviews, observations, and document analysis) and building upon literature concerning theories of development, education in China, the Western Development Strategy, and Han-Uyghur relations, this study explored four Han Chinese Xinjiang Senior School (a pseudonym) teachers’ perceptions of the role of education in the Western Development Strategy. It concluded that teachers at the Xinjiang Senior School overwhelmingly support the strategy and its development goals. Additionally, the study supported previous studies which suggest that the strategy serves as a conduit for colonization and marginalization (Gladney, 1999).
Dedicated to

Jennifer L. Pippin

my best friend and partner

and

Salam

who first introduced me to the Uyghur world
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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Within the contemporary world order, many development scholars agree that the most important division is that which separates the “rich” from the “poor” (Payne, 2005). Proponents of both capitalist and socialist ideologies have historically vied to define and implement development strategies to mitigate this disparity, both between and within countries. Advocates for capitalist development strategies have generally demanded less state intervention in economic activities while socialist proponents have proposed more. However, Payne (2005) argues that the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union largely ended this debate and cemented Western neoliberalism as the “quintessential” world development ideology.

Proponents of neoliberalism claim that development is possible everywhere in the world provided the market is permitted to work largely unhindered by the state (Payne, 2005). They are generally supportive of and are pleased to work within the globalization paradigm, which entails the increased economic integration of countries and people as a result of the free flow of goods, services capital, and labor, as well as the sharing of ideas, knowledge, and culture (Stiglitz, 2007). Often, these “hyperglobalizers” (Cohn, 2008) point to countries like China for models of the ways in which liberal economic reforms can lead to economic growth and development.

That China has orchestrated one of the most successful cases of economic development in history is without question (Schmitz, 2007). Beginning with Deng Xiaoping’s “Four Modernizations” and “open and reform” policies of economic liberalization in 1978, China’s economy has grown roughly 10 percent annually (Becker, 2000; Potts, 2003). In the last 30 years the size of the economy has grown by a factor of 10, living standards have improved for hundreds of millions of people, and citizens arguably enjoy expanded personal freedoms.
(Dahlman, Zeng & Wang, 2007). Even facing the severe challenges of the current world
economic climate, the Chinese government holds more than $1 trillion worth of U.S. currency
reserves and anticipates Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of nearly eight percent in 2008
(Stiglitz, 2007).

Yet often ignored is the fact that China achieved this economic “miracle” by largely
resisting elements of the Western neoliberal world order and insisting on its own development
path of “socialism with Chinese characteristics”. China’s development success also belies its
own internal rich-poor disparities, most notably between the coastal and western regions and
among the dominant Han Chinese and the country’s ethnic minorities. These regional and social
inequalities now pose one of the most pressing challenges to sustaining the country’s long-term
growth and stability (Becker, 2000).

Deng Xiaoping, when implementing his “opening and reform” agenda in 1978, foresaw
this problem (Dillon, 2006). His policy called for increased economic liberalization reforms that
would begin on the east coast, but move west over time. The vehicle for this belated second
phase of development is the Western Development Strategy (WDS). Initiated in 2001, the WDS
seeks to funnel some of the east coast wealth to development projects in the west. Involving 12
provinces, 71 percent of China’s total land area, and 28 percent of the population, it is a massive
undertaking focusing on improvement in five key areas: infrastructure, ecology, economic
restructuring, science and education, and social reform (Lai, 2002; Tian, 2003). While the
strategy is a long term project, many economists estimate that the Chinese government must
work quickly to maintain a critical average annual economic growth rate of at least eight percent
in order to bolster western development and avert widespread social, and potentially political,
unrest arising from growing inequalities (Stiglitz, 2007).
The strategy faces significant challenges, though, as some scholars and ethnic minorities perceive its policies to be blatant and accelerated attempts to colonize the region and forcefully assimilate minorities into the Chinese state (Gladney, 1999). Kohn (2008) outlines the fundamentals of colonizing activities as including the transfer of a population to a new territory in order to capitalize on natural resources and subjugate an existing population through a “civilizing” mission that involves their military, political, economic, religious, and sociolinguistic domination. Hechter (1975), as well as Altbach and Kelly (1978), further identify internal colonialism as distinctly different from these classical forms of domination. They argue that while classical and internal colonialism share common roots, internal colonialism is different in that it involves the absorption of the colonized into a larger nation-state controlled by the colonizer. In many ways the policies of the Western Development Strategy, which are largely preexisting plans that have been extended and reinforced, do resemble these strategies of assimilation and control. For example, government-sponsored in-migration of Han Chinese and the establishment of settlements, the domination of labor markets and extraction of natural resources, the imposition of cultural and linguistic structures of the dominant Han Chinese, the obstruction of Buddhist and Muslim religious practices, and the perpetuation of ethnocentric beliefs of superiority are, to a greater or lesser degree, occurring in western China (Bovingdon, 2002, 2004; Gladney, 1999, 2000, 2004; Schluessel, 2007).

The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (hereafter Xinjiang), China’s northwestern province, is an emblematic site of these activities and tensions. In fact, the name Xinjiang itself, established by the Qing Empire and translated as “new frontier” or “new territory”, seems to suggest an impetus for these activities. For Xinjiang, the Western Development Strategy involves massive investment in transportation infrastructure, science and education, and the
extraction of oil and natural gas, considerable amounts of which are found in the region (Zhao Y., 2001). The promise of more government investment, while seemingly positive, is problematic for Xinjiang’s ethnic minorities. First, infrastructure developments like roads and railways facilitate increased in-migration. Currently, the Han Chinese, while 92 percent of China’s total population, make up less than half of Xinjiang’s population, while the Uyghurs, a Turkic Muslim people with roots in Central Asia, comprise the numerical majority (Toops, 2004a). Yet with each new infrastructure project comes the potential for more Han settlements, something many Uyghurs perceive as attempts to dilute their majority and their culture. Secondly, more development means more jobs in the resource extraction business and the potential for increased standards of living for many impoverished people in the region. However, these promises are often awarded to the Han Chinese population living in Xinjiang, not to the other 13 ethnic groups, or “nationalities” in the province (Bovingdon, 2004). Again, development will likely contribute to increasing numbers of Han Chinese flooding the region for work. Thirdly, in terms of education, increased development demands a trained workforce to sustain it. Yet through the promotion of increasingly monolingual education policies and Han-dominated industry, the government implies that the Uyghur population lacks the education and skills necessary to advance development efforts. Instead, it continues to promote the migration of more Han to the area to aid the development strategy and capitalize on resource extraction projects. As tensions rise, the government uses the Western Development Strategy to promote still more in-migration. Ironically, the same strategy employed to develop the region and curb unrest is, in many ways, contributing to growing dissatisfaction within the Uyghur population.

The Chinese government acknowledges this dissatisfaction and has often repeated its intent to facilitate a unified socialist state in which ethnic minorities and the majority Han
Chinese population work together for China’s development and the collective good. Hu Jintao, the current President of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), has refocused the Party’s efforts on this goal through his Scientific Development Concept (SDC), a policy which seeks to promote both economic and social stability in a “harmonious society” (Qi, 2007). Yet development plans for a “harmonious society” are problematic in that it is the government, predominantly Han Chinese, which exercises its authority to define what “development” and “harmony” mean and the strategies employed to attain them. Residents, especially ethnic minorities, are not afforded the agency to participate in or contribute to the development discussion.

To transmit cultural values and convey its development agenda China, like most countries, turns to its schools. Through both the overt or “official” curriculum and the hidden curriculum, or informal cultural practices, teachers and school administrators reproduce the knowledge, values, and hierarchies of the dominant culture (Pai, Adler & Shadiow, 2006). However, the dominant culture often fails to account for, or address the needs, concerns, and interests of groups of individuals who do not share the same values. According to Pai et al., this failure perpetually marginalizes ethnic minority students.

Yet teachers and administrators, the primary purveyors of cultural transmission in schools and those who have the most contact with students, are not without agency. While adhering to certain governmental policies and curricula, they do not necessarily “reproduce” the dominant culture, but rather convey it in ways that are unique to them. However, scholars who study development and schooling in Xinjiang tend to explore cultural transmission and issues of identity, language, and conflict through quantitative data collected from various governmental bureaucracies (Benson, 2004; Hannum, 2002; Schluessel, 2007) or qualitative data from
members of the Uyghur population (Beller-Hann, 2002; Bovingdon, 2002; Gladney, 2000; Smith, 2002; Taynen, 2006). None have specifically focused their research on Xinjiang’s Han Chinese teachers and their perceptions of development and the ways in which it influences schooling in the region. Determining these perceptions will contribute to the growing body of knowledge concerning development and education in Xinjiang and aid in the understanding of Han-Uyghur relations.

**Purpose and organization of the study**

The purpose of this study, then, was to explore Xinjiang Senior School (a pseudonym) teachers’ perceptions of development in terms of the Western Development Strategy and its influence on education in Xinjiang.

While I interviewed and observed Han Chinese teachers and administrators at the Xinjiang Senior School I sought to answer three main research questions. First, how do they perceive “development” in Xinjiang as it relates to the Western Development Strategy? Secondly, in what ways do they perceive the Western Development Strategy as influencing education in Xinjiang? Finally, how do they prepare students to contribute to the Western Development Strategy?

The remaining four chapters of this thesis present the context, method of inquiry, and results of the study. Chapter II provides a review of relevant literature which includes three major theories of development, the processes of development in the People’s Republic of China, and a detailed contextualization of Xinjiang. Chapter III outlines the qualitative research methods used to conduct the study, including limitations on the study, data collection procedures, and descriptions of the setting and the participants. Chapter IV presents the study findings and provides a model of the ways in which participants perceive development in western China.
Chapter V offers a discussion of these findings, summarizes the study, and provides suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a review of literature relevant to the research questions of the study. The first area of review presents the three major theories of development – modernization, dependency, and postcolonialism – which provide the conceptual base for the ways in which economic and social development take place. I additionally present the role of education in each. The second area specifically presents the development of China and the Western Development Strategy. The third area provides a detailed context of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and how it is influenced by the Western Development Strategy.

Mercantilism, colonialism, the major theories of development

While the debate over the definition of “development” endures, scholars generally recognize that it is not only an economic process, but also a political one (Payne, 2004). In order to succeed, Seavoy (2000) writes, economic policies must be enforced by political power. According to Cohn (2008) the origins of current conceptions of development and the intersection of economics and politics are related to the advent of the European state system. Mercantilism, a capitalist economic system built on the premise of an inextricable relationship between power and wealth, aided these early states in their efforts to establish sovereignty vis-à-vis other states by legitimizing the pursuit of wealth as a means of building and maintaining armed forces. Mercantilist states accomplished this by increasing the export of their high-value goods and minimizing imports to only the raw materials essential to fuel their own production. In this way they could accumulate massive gold and silver reserves, which they used to bolster their armies and strategically influence other states.

Colonialism was a key component of the mercantilist economic system. Early in the 20th Century, John Hobson and Vladimir Lenin argued that capitalism had reached a critical stage
characterized by an overproduction of goods and an abundance of capital; colonies, then, offered new markets, investment opportunities, and raw materials for the metropole (Cohn, 2008; MacQueen, 2007). In this way capitalist countries were economically driven to colonize in order to sustain their economic growth. Perceptions of Western cultural superiority also contributed to colonial exploitation in that residents of colonizing countries viewed Indigenous populations as “savages” who needed to be “civilized”. Whether religious or secular in their inspiration, they felt it was their duty to accomplish this task (MacQueen, 2007). While certainly not new phenomena in human history, colonial conquests in this period increased dramatically as a result of new technologies in industrialization and navigation, making it possible to transfer people and goods faster and more reliably than ever before (MacQueen, 2007). The end of the Second World War, however, arguably marked the end of the most “classical” colonial empires and ushered in a new capitalist global economic order.

Within this broad global economic framework, the theoretical underpinnings for guiding and explaining development and the ways in which it should proceed in the postwar era emerged in three broad categories: modernization theory and its critique, dependency theory, in the field of development studies and postcolonial theory. The following sections summarize these theories and briefly discuss the role of education in each.

*Modernization theory and the role of education.* Grasso, Corrin, and Kort (1997) acknowledge that modernization is a difficult concept to define, largely because of the myriad ways in which countries have experienced the process. However, they identified several processes common to most societies, including a move from rural, agrarian-based economic systems to more urban, industrialized ones via the application of science, technology, and rational thought. Elements of this process, they argue, include sustained economic growth,
specialized labor, improved public education, more broadly distributed income, increased life expectancy, and a reliance on bureaucracy and mass political involvement. Modernization theory posits that there are certain Western prerequisites to modernity, such as individualism and a strong work ethic, which facilitate societal advancement (Jaffee, 1998). By this logic residents of “traditional”, “backward”, or “stagnant” regions or countries lack these prerequisite behaviors and are thus ill-equipped for development. On the state level modernization situates developing and less developed countries opposite developed ones with the latter serving as a model for the former. Based on the assumption that development follows a linear progression, modernization theory asserts that, with the right behaviors, the less developed countries can also evolve into states of wealth and modernity. Rostow (1960) famously identified these behaviors as a series of stages beginning with “traditional society” and followed by “preconditions for take off”, “take off”, “drive to maturity”, and finally “the age of high mass consumption”. In this view advancing beyond the inefficient production methods of traditional society requires a leading sector in the economy to invest in the necessary infrastructure to help other industries grow, thereby building and sustaining ever-longer periods of economic expansion. Once a country reaches the final stage, it is assumed that all societal problems are solved (Jaffee, 1998).

While it is questionable whether any society is ever fully developed, a derivative of modernization theory, human capital theory, analyzes the ways in which investment in the skills, talent, and knowledge of individuals advances development efforts. Human capital theorists, then, argue that if people in developing countries were only educated and trained in the technological advancements of the modern economic system, they would be better situated to contribute to and benefit from resulting development processes. Jaffee (1998) illustrates the logic of human capital by stating that skilled labor is more productive and produces goods more
efficiently. This results in higher profits and wages, which increase demand and stimulate economic growth.

Education plays a vital role in modernization theory. Durkheim (1985) argues that societal survival depends on its members possessing common skills, knowledge, and values, and that schools bear the primary responsibility for perpetuating them. Through school socialization, then, children learn the skills and behaviors that help them function in and contribute to a modern society. Inkeles and Smith (1974) also stressed the role of formal schooling in the formation of modern values and attitudes and supported the logical progression of modern values leading to modern behavior, modern society, and economic development. Dreeben (1968), focusing on American society, claimed that schools are especially well suited to transmit the four norms of modern society: independence, achievement, universalism, and specificity. Schools, according to Parsons (1985), also act as the primary institution responsible for allocating roles in society. Because modern societies share a tacit consensus that, assuming equal opportunity and access, individuals are rewarded according to their merits, schools are sites of competition which prepare students for their future status in a hierarchical society.

Pai, Adler, and Shadiow (2006) illustrate that schools socialize students in two important ways. The official, or overt, curriculum contains the explicitly stated goals and objectives of the school related to the knowledge and skills that should be transmitted. However, another curriculum, the covert or hidden curriculum, imparts societal norms and values to students more indirectly. Teachers and school administrators employ this curriculum by modeling behaviors and arranging institutional activities which reinforce dominant cultural values and existing societal structures. For ethnic minorities this process of acculturation, or learning a different and dominant culture, is especially challenging in that the values and norms of the dominant culture
may directly contradict their own. If minority students resist these values, they are often viewed by teachers and administrators as problems to be fixed.

This view points to a larger problem of development within modernization theory. Because it seeks to avoid conflict and assumes a linear development progression based on societal consensus, modernization theory views segments of society that resist or seek to alter proposed development processes as potentially damaging disturbances needing correction. Often dissenting voices are silenced through policies of assimilation. Dependency theory offers a critique of modernization theory and the ways in which these assimilationist policies have historically taken place.

*Dependency theory and the role of education.* Dependency theory advocates the replacement of capitalism with socialism (Cohn, 2008). However, it rejects notions that the developed countries are performing a service to less developed countries by enforcing a transition from traditional society to a modern one. Instead, it argues that the developed countries attained their status by historically dominating and exploiting the “underdeveloped” countries, most notably during the colonial period (Kubow & Fossum, 2007). Understanding the current condition of the underdeveloped countries, therefore, requires an examination of their asymmetrical historical interactions with wealthy countries and their integration into the capitalist economic system (Jaffee, 1998).

One of the earliest and most important dependency theorists, Frank (1969) focused his critique on the “dual society” thesis which holds that modern regions or elements of society exist because of exposure to the capitalist world, whereas more traditional regions lack such exposure. He focused his analysis of international political economics on the countries of South America and argued that “satellite” nations could accumulate trade surpluses, but that these were
ultimately siphoned by “metropolis” countries that control production, trade, and exchange in the satellite countries. He further argued that satellite countries develop quickest when their ties to the metropolis are weakest. For example, during the interwar period, when leading capitalist countries were consumed with sustaining their own economic systems and largely ignored developing states, several countries in South America enjoyed rapid growth. Once the metropolis reengaged with the satellite countries, their growth slowed. According to Jaffee (1998), Frank’s third argument asserts that satellites which are the most underdeveloped today are the ones with the closest historical ties to the metropolis. In other words, after the metropolis exploited most of the available natural resources in the satellite country and desire for its products waned, the metropolis exited and left the satellite in destitution. Cardoso and Faletto (1979) diverge from Frank by arguing that there are varying degrees of dependency, that dependent relations are more complex than what Frank suggests, and that they can generate some growth without necessarily resulting in the underdevelopment of the dependent country. They do, however, support Frank’s notion that the dependent ties should be broken by a movement towards socialism.

Using slightly different language and asserting that there is only one interdependent world capitalist system with which all nations must interact, Wallerstein (1974, 1976) categorized countries into three groups: core, periphery, and semi-periphery. Comparable to social class categorizations of capitalist, middle, and working classes, world systems theory identifies the core as the politically and militarily powerful advanced capitalist countries of North America and Western Europe, the periphery as those militarily weak countries with relatively low per capita GDP, and the semi-periphery countries as those that have relatively strong governments and are increasing in industrial production. In this view the semi-periphery,
while unnecessary, acts as an exploited-exploiter buffer zone that protects the core from socio-political challenges rising from the periphery (Jaffee, 1998).

As useful as these two theories have been in the analysis of international development, Payne (2004, 2005), citing Hettne (1995), argues that a theoretical vacuum now exists between modernization and dependency with the former insisting on an obsolete state analysis and the latter on a premature global approach. This impasse, he concludes, necessitates a movement towards a critical political economy theory of development which is included here:

Development can be redefined for the contemporary era as the collective building by the constituent social and political actors of a country (or at least in the first instance of a country) of a viable, functioning political economy, grounded in at least a measure of congruence between its core domestic characteristics and attributes and its location within a globalizing world order and capable on that basis of advancing the well-being of those living within its confines (p. 23).

By this definition development is the challenge of all countries, a global problem in which nations develop as they each solve their own problems. Because this view argues that development is not an ultimate achievable condition and that cultural issues and conflicts will therefore always be debated, Payne does not focus on issues of freedom, identity, morals, or ethics in development. It is precisely this insistence on a political and economic analysis of development and the absence of, or refusal to acknowledge, culture as a key component of developmental processes which gives rise to the postmodern and postcolonial critiques of development.

Even in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when dependency theorists first mounted their critique of modernization and human capital theories, education emerged as a focus of analysis.
Little (2000), citing Carnoy (1974), explains that, according to dependency theory, dependent economic relations created a cultural alienation in which values, norms, and concepts of the Western countries were imposed, in part, through formal schooling. Because Western-styled schooling came to dependent countries in the form of imperialist domination, it sought to train the colonized in the values, norms, and behaviors of the colonizer. Drawing upon Marxism, this form of schooling successfully replicates existing social classes by shepherding students into their “appropriate” status groups and teaching the corresponding attitudes (Pai et al., 2006). In this way, the children of the powerful are taught to lead and control, and the children of the working class, or dependent countries, are taught to conform to the demands and rules of the workplace as dictated by the dominant group or country. Despite the fact that the dependent countries had already shed colonial rule and gained political independence, dependency theorists identified this persistent role that education played in the domination rather than the development of the dependent countries.

*Postcolonial theory and the role of education.* Kapoor (2002) helpfully identifies and distinguishes dependency theory, a critical developmental studies concept, as focusing on state and class control of capitalist development and postcolonial theory as one which favors a cultural perspective, linking Western imperialism to discourse and the politics of representation. Postcolonial theory, and its critique of what it deems a Western ethnocentric view of development history, rises largely from literary studies and the work of Said (1978), Bhabha (1994), and Spivak (1988). Drawing on Foucault’s theory of discourse, Said (1978) develops what he terms “orientalism”, or the ways in which the Western body of theories and practices define and represent Eastern (specifically Arab Islamic) culture and perpetuate subtle prejudices and stereotypes of it. Said identifies “theory” as Western intellectual production, including
research, writing, ideas, arguments, and images, and “practice” as the accompanying sociocultural structures, such as colonial administrations, universities, museums, and the media, which allow the Western definition, management, and control of the “Orient”. Bhabha (1994) analyzes colonial stereotypes and identifies a certain “hybridity” in the colonizing depictions of the subaltern. The “savage”, for example, can be a ruthless cannibal but also a dignified servant, the epitome of rampant sexuality, yet as innocent as a child. This speaks to the complexity of the ways in which the privilege to define the colonized is the privilege to exact authority and control over them. The goal of postcolonial theory, then, is to explore the space between the binary categories of colonizer and colonized, white and black, civilized and uncivilized, give voice to the subaltern, and criticize imperial discourse (Spivak, 1988).

Several scholars (McClintock, 1992; Dirlik, 1994; Shohat, 1992) while agreeing to use the term “postcolonialism”, find it problematic in that it seems to gloss over current global power relations and the prevailing capitalist hegemony and suggests that the era of colonization has passed. On the contrary, Xie (1997), like others, argues that Western imperialism has never been so successful at constructing the Euro-American version of history and exporting its values and the non-Western world has never been so accepting of Western superiority in technology and economics than it is today.

Historically, under colonial rule, schools imposed a Western identity upon the colonized “Other” with the assumption that only under the tutelage of teachers and administrators of the “advanced” culture could the Other be “civilized”. Yet as mentioned above, the “post” in postcolonial theory does not imply the absence or end of colonialism. In fact, scholars like Hardt and Negri (2000), neo-Marxist theorists, argue that colonial activities are alive and well today, only part and parcel of the more palatable “globalization” debate. The power dynamics which
characterize the relationship between the dominant and subjugated cultures or classes is, like the postcolonialists, the interest of postmodern theorists. Pai et al. (2006) explain that based on the writings of Foucault (1972) and Derrida (1972), postmodernists challenge the idea that meanings are fixed and are concerned with the ways in which social and political institutions produce ideas about the nature of “truth” and “knowledge”.

According to this view, “legitimate” knowledge is that which is produced and reproduced by those in power while the knowledge of the less powerful is marginalized. Language, then, is not only a medium of communication, meaning, or instruction, but also a reflection of existing power structures. Therefore, education, in the postmodern view, should seek to transform society and empower marginalized populations by illuminating the dynamics of power and discourse in society and allowing students to develop their own identities. Giroux (1983) stresses that the values and norms of the dominant culture and social class in society, which have been historically handed down, are embedded in the school curricula and argues that teachers and students need to challenge the practices that perpetuate a dominant educative order. Freire (1993) also advocates a critical pedagogy, an educational model in which teachers and students reject the mere absorption of information and instead embark on a mission of self-emancipation from institutional policies which dominate and oppress them.

A question of the degree to which this type of rejection is possible or permitted, either in the classroom or in society, is at the center of this thesis. As previously mentioned, China is intent on integrating into the Western neoliberal world order, but insists on maintaining control over the terms of this integration and of its own modernizing development strategies. Yet those in China who resist these strategies are denied the same agency and perceive its development efforts as blatant colonization. The three theories of development summarized above provide a
foundation for exploring China’s Western Development Strategy and the influences which guide both its advocates and assailants.

_Devolution in the People’s Republic of China_

It is difficult to understand or frame development and education in Xinjiang without first providing a foundation of knowledge about these processes in China as a whole. Having presented the three major theories of postwar development, I now turn to a brief historical overview of China’s development and education since its establishment before providing a more detailed discussion of social and economic development in Xinjiang.

_Devolution and education under the leadership of Mao Zedong._ On October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong, in front of an enormous crowd gathered in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square, declared the establishment of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) (See Figure 1). He and his fellow comrades inherited a devastated economy, battered by more than three decades of bitter warfare (Grasso, Corrin & Kort, 1997). During the First Five Year Plan, drafted in 1953, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) implemented socialist transformation policies that bolstered heavy industry and established state ownership and control of land. For farmers, many of these policies engendered resistance, which Mao attempted to quell with more incremental transitional stages. However, when these were unsuccessful, he strategically employed the raw power of the state. According to Grasso et al., estimates of the number of deaths linked to these policies vary from one to three million. In spite of these dismal statistics, industrialization and agrarian collectivization efforts achieved noteworthy economic success in China during this early period.

As successful as industrialization efforts were in their early stages, societal discontent, largely among the intelligentsia, grew as they were pressured into supporting the new social order. When Mao, confident in the soundness and stability of the socialist revolution, launched
the Hundred Flowers movement in which he invited public criticism of the Party and its reform policies, he was ill-prepared for the outpouring of public frustration. The resulting repression and reeducation of non-supportive “rightists” was swift. The experience convinced Mao that the future of the revolution rested upon the participation and power of the masses.

Radically shifting from Marxist-Leninism, Mao focused less on economic development than political movements, believing that human will alone could overcome the most adverse material conditions (Grasso et al., 1997). He implemented massive propaganda campaigns demanding that the population share resources and work harder to reach, even surpass, the production levels of Western countries. Under the Great Leap Forward (1958-1962), communes were created as the basic social unit in which agriculture and industry would flourish. In a rejection of Western modernization, which resulted in increased urbanization, bureaucracies, large-scale production, social stratification, specialization of labor, and the domination by the elite, Mao planned to bring industry to the countryside (Grasso et al., 1997). During this period education expanded rapidly, following the Soviet model. Numerous communes even opened their own schools, though they were of poor quality (Zhao Z., 2007). The quality of the schools was of little concern, however, as political education and production were the dominant educational themes of the movement. The movement towards politically-dominated education effectively dismissed China’s feudalistic and exam-centered system based on the moral teachings of Confucius, while retaining a traditional respect for the role of education in cultural transmission. At this time China also strengthened its efforts to educate women and ethnic minorities, groups largely ignored under the feudal system (Zhao Z., 2007).

Mao’s collectivization efforts failed miserably as farmers focused on steel production and teachers on crop increases and all reporting increasingly unbelievable claims of production
achievement. Soon even Mao himself recognized that success of the Great Leap was illusory at best. The grim reality was that this inefficient use of labor, and the resulting decline in agricultural and industrial output, precipitated a famine in which 25 to perhaps 50 million people starved to death in what was likely the worst famine in world history (Becker, 2000).

The Great Leap Forward emboldened criticism of Mao within the Chinese Communist Party. In order to reestablish Party control, Mao introduced plans for a Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) that would become what some scholars refer to as the darkest period of China’s modern history. In order to transition from socialism to communism, Mao believed that he must orchestrate the revamping of the entire Chinese culture. These policies extended not only to education, art, and music, but also to how people interrelated and how they thought. Building a culture of the proletariat required the eradication of bourgeois tradition, materialism, and capitalism and the restructuring of institutions like schools, which Mao considered remnants of the past (Grasso et al., 1997). Because Mao viewed schools as class-based and populated by children of educated parents and those from the urban middle and upper classes, he sought to repopulate them with peasants’ children and ethnic minorities. When schools reopened only those students with the “correct” backgrounds were admitted. Standards of admission were significantly lowered to accommodate these students and classes consisted mainly of political activities, physical labor, and military projects (Zhao Z., 2007). Teachers and professors “contaminated” by foreign travel or study were banned, as were the humanities, classics, and even some scientific subjects. At this time nearly all education was political. As a result Mao’s strongest supporters were promoted to positions of leadership for which they were hardly qualified. Those deemed less supportive were rusticated to be educated by the celebrated
peasantry. During this highly politicized period, these types of state-assigned identities and examples of knowledge legitimization were more common than not.

The reform era: Development and education under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping.

After Mao’s death in 1976 his successor, Deng Xioping, implemented opening and reform policies that focused on economic and technological development and opened China to the West. His Four Modernizations – in agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense – were both liberal economic reforms and dramatic reversals of Mao’s ideology-driven policies (Zhao Y., 2001). In this way Deng continued to embrace communist ideology while adopting modernization theory as the main development strategy. He abolished the communal system and largely privatized agriculture, allowing families to cultivate in ways they deemed best and pass land on to their children. He reinstated the Soviet-style educational system and promoted science and technology as the keys to modernization (Zhao Z., 2007). Where Mao encouraged educators to select the most “red” students for promotion, Deng called for the rehabilitation of the “experts” selected through the resurrected examination system (Potts, 2003). Taking steps to decentralize the economy, he created Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in which foreign companies could establish industries or joint enterprises with Chinese companies. These partnerships introduced the Chinese to badly needed scientific and technological knowledge and expertise while providing foreign companies with tax incentives and cheap labor. The success of the SEZs contributed to the continuing period of record double-digit economic growth in China. Scholars have largely concluded that this growth is due to the existence of a strong development state with several key characteristics: it guides the market and promotes technological development while protecting infant industries; it identifies development as its premier objective and encourages citizen investment instead of consumption; it invests heavily in education to
build a globally competitive populace; and it depends on a technocratic bureaucracy devoted to implementing economic reforms (Cohn, 2008). Notably absent from the development state, however, are liberal political reforms (Zhao Y., 2001).

While China’s economy has developed rapidly as a result of Deng’s Opening and Reform policies – nearly 10 percent per year since 1978 – most of that development has taken place in the east and southeast coastal region. Tian (2003) explains that government policies encourage growth in regions with the most potential and the coastal region, with its access to shipping, basic infrastructure, human resources, and inflows of foreign capital, was China’s logical focus. However, this has resulted in massive disparities between the coastal and western regions. Predicated upon “trickle down” economics, a modernist idea which posits that as wealthy individuals accumulate more wealth they will indirectly benefit the broader population, these policies assumed that the coast would grow rapidly and development would reach the western region by diffusion (Zhao Y., 2001). This process, however, has been slow. Tian (2003) illustrates that the coastal region includes 14 percent of the country’s land area, 41 percent of its population, and generated nearly 67 percent of its industrial output in 2001. In contrast, the western region, including 12 provinces and all five minority autonomous regions, is comprised of roughly 71 percent of China’s land area, 28 percent of the population, and generated slightly more than 14 percent of industrial output in 2001 (See Figure 2).

Frustrations linked to these inequalities led to a renewed focus on developing the western provinces. First, many in the west felt that the government knowingly allowed its development to lag too long in order to develop the east first (Lai, 2002). Second, because of its vast natural resources (50 percent of China’s coal, 90 percent of its minerals, 51 percent of forestry, 72 percent of hydroelectric resources, and vast reserves of oil and natural gas) (See Figure 3) the
Figure 3. Map of Fuels, Power, Minerals, and Metals in the People’s Republic of China.

western region is a central component of China’s development plans for the 21st Century. However, there was a sense among some of the western Chinese Communist Party leadership that the coast was exploiting the west by extracting its natural resources without adequate payment and then selling them on the world market at inflated rates (Zhao Y., 2001). Security was a third concern. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the role of ethnic divisions in its breakup, as well as the establishment of the new and relatively weak Central Asian states on China’s border, influenced Party members’ discussion of the need to refocus efforts to develop the west (Becker, 2000). The 1990s also saw increases in “separatist” activities in Tibet and Xinjiang, tensions the government thought would ease as development increased (Lai, 2002).

The western development strategy. The Western Development Strategy, a formal continuation of policies established in the Ninth Five Year Plan (1996-2000), narrowed China’s development focus to the far western provinces and identified five priorities: construction of infrastructure projects, ecological improvement, economic restructuring, increased promotion of science and education, and further opening to foreign investment (Lai, 2002; Tian, 2003).

The infrastructure projects planned for the region are massive. Expansion of airports, telecommunication networks, and high voltage electric wires and pipelines to transfer electricity and natural gas to the eastern provinces are all under construction (Zhao Y., 2001). In fact, a natural gas pipeline extending from Xinjiang to Shanghai is currently the single largest infrastructure project in the country (Tian, 2003). Extensive highway and rail projects are also in planning stages, including an intercontinental railway to Europe and a pan-Asian line that will connect Kunming, the capital of Yunnan province, with Singapore.

Funding plans for regional education development is also impressive. In order to educate highly skilled workers to contribute to infrastructure projects and economic restructuring, the
central government plans to spend 100 million RMB per year to promote science and technology education and issue 600 million RMB in government bonds to support improvements to research universities (Tian, 2003). Also, the Ministry of Education plans to invest more than 800 million RMB to develop distance education that will link primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions throughout the region. The government has also asked more prosperous eastern provinces to help those in the west to improve their education (Lai, 2002).

However, the ways in which the government seeks to accomplish these tasks is problematic. Zhao (2001) argues that traditional development theories tend to assume ethnic homogeneity and ignore territorial identity in minority regions. Therefore, as the government encourages “talented” individuals to relocate to the western provinces and increasing numbers of Han Chinese flood the region to take advantage of employment opportunities, anger among ethnic minorities intensifies as they perceive their outright colonization and marginalization. A few minorities respond by promoting or engaging in what Beijing calls the “three evils”: separatism, extremism, and terrorism. In order to dilute hostilities and establish a stabilizing Han version of national identity in the region, the government encourages more Han Chinese to relocate and restricts religious freedoms, thereby exacerbating anti-Han sentiments. In this way, government policies contribute to the very tensions they ostensibly seek to quell. While these policies include several western provinces, Xinjiang is a site in which ethnic relations are especially tense.

**Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region**

Xinjiang is by far the largest administrative region in the People’s Republic of China; nearly three times the size of France, it comprises 18 percent of China’s land area (Fuller & Starr, 2003) (see Figure 4). It shares common borders with Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India
as well as three former Soviet states, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan (See Figure 5).

Yet, it remains strikingly remote with limited air and rail access to several regions. Toops (2004b) identifies three major geographical regions of Xinjiang, each having its own distinctive ecological character. The south is the region around the Tarim basin and it covers nearly half of Xinjiang’s total area. The uninhabitable Taklamakan desert lies in the middle of the basin and the Tianshan mountain range marks the northern boundary of this region. The southern
boundary of the region is marked by the Kunlun Shan, including the famous K-2, the second highest peak in the world. It is extremely dry in the south, but residents manage to grow fruits, vegetables, and cotton with the help of water from the mountains. Xinjiang’s central region lies
in the Turpan Depression, the second lowest point on earth, where temperatures commonly reach 40 degrees Celsius and residents depend on deep canals and wells for water. The northern region of Xinjiang includes the Zungurian basin and the Ili River valley. This area receives abundant of precipitation and is a prime location for agriculture and animal husbandry. It also contains considerable oil deposits.

Dillon (2004) writes that though many have historically described the region as a desolate and isolated wilderness, it is in fact a region of stunning beauty. Its beauty, however, belies an area that is rich in oil and other natural resources, but also fraught with climatic and geological danger. The effects of desert heat, water shortages, and high winds that can produce devastating sandstorms pale in comparison to the numerous earthquakes that have shaken the region. Despite these challenges people have lived in the region for centuries, creating elaborate subterranean aqueducts for the irrigation of surprisingly fertile ground. Many lived in six traditional oasis towns, Hotan, Yarkand, Kashgar, Turpan, Yangi Hassa, and Aksu, which form a crescent-shaped rim around the Taklamakan. These geographical characteristics not only shaped the lives of generations of Xinjiang’s past inhabitants, but also continue to challenge recent development efforts.

One of the central goals of the Western Development Strategy is to improve the ecological condition of the western provinces. Xinjiang’s fragile condition is challenging to these efforts in that plans to further industrialize the region will likely exacerbate existing desertification (Toops, 2004b). Increased development will also result in increased population settlement, further straining water resources. However fragile Xinjiang’s ecology may be, Toops doubts that China’s government will allow Xinjiang’s lack of water to hinder development projects and the extraction and capitalization of oil and gas resources.
Demographics of Xinjiang. Xinjiang’s population has long consisted of a complex mixture of peoples of various ethnicities, including Uyghurs, Han Chinese, Kazakhs, Hui, Kyrgyz, and others (see Figure 5). Today, while it still contains 13 of China’s 56 officially defined “nationalities”, it is primarily divided between the Turkic-speaking Muslim Uyghurs and Han Chinese immigrants (Dillon, 2004). In fact, 99.8 percent of all Uyghurs in the world still live in Xinjiang (Gladney, 2000). That majority, however, is shrinking quickly. In 1949, when the Chinese Communist Party officially assumed control of the region, the Uyghurs accounted for 80 percent of the population and five percent were Han Chinese; 60 years later, the Uyghurs and Han comprise nearly the same percentage of the population (Toops, 2004a; Dillon, 2006). Tellingly, the annual growth rate of the Han Chinese population is 8.1 percent compared to roughly two percent for the Uyghurs (Gladney, 2000). Since birthrates among Han Chinese are quite low as a result of the “one-child” policy, their increasing numbers can only be explained by waves of in-migration. This in-migration, a product of the Western Development Strategy and state-sponsored relocation incentives, angers the Uyghurs who see this as a blatant attempt by the government to dilute their culture, colonize them, and force them to assimilate. However, as developing infrastructure projects like railways and roads make Xinjiang increasingly accessible, this in-migration is unlikely to diminish (Toops, 2004a).

Uyghur perceptions of colonization and forced assimilation reinforce a deep mistrust between the Han Chinese and the Uyghur (Yee, 2003). Segregation of these two cultures is evident on several levels. Geographically, the Tianshan mountain range that splits the region into two distinct basins also separates it into two distinct ethnic population zones, with the Han Chinese largely in the industrialized north and the Uyghurs in the agricultural south (Starr, 2004). In almost any city in Xinjiang, urban Uyghurs and Han Chinese also segregate themselves
spatially into largely homogenous areas. For example, in the city in which I conducted this study, one could easily identify the Han Chinese sections and the Uyghur sections. Han Chinese sections had paved streets full of cars, “modern” buildings, and brand-name businesses. The Uyghur sections, on the other hand, were often lined with dirt roads, dilapidated structures, and fruit stands. Beller-Hann (2002) and Smith (2002) illustrate the ways in which Han Chinese and Uyghurs also segregate themselves by clothing styles, their food choices, and language. As complex and fervid as these tensions are, history indicates that they are quite old.

**Xinjiang’s historical context.** Complicating the current political, economic, and social context of Uyghur-Han relations is a complex, and highly contested history. In primordial fashion, Uyghurs claim, based on largely unverifiable evidence, that they are the descendents of a nomadic Turkic Eurasian people of light skin and hair which roamed what is now Central Asia and western China since the 7th century C.E. (Dillon, 2006). According to the Uyghurs, they are clearly the rightful masters of the region, a nationalistic belief often fueled to incite separatist activities. According to Dillon the Han Chinese, on equally questionable grounds, maintain that Xinjiang has always fallen under Chinese rule. The historical record suggests this rule was sporadic at best. During most Chinese dynastic periods, the western region was occupied by various warlords and tribes that sent periodic tributes to the Chinese capital in return for unrestrained autonomy (Dillon, 2006). The most notable expansion of direct Chinese rule occurred during the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), in which the military built a vast network of colonies in order to establish control of the region. To help secure the area and strengthen ties to the interior, Qing authorities encouraged migration to the region and effectively managed trade routes to diminish relations with all regions except the east. Qing control over the region slipped throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, resulting in Muslim uprisings and
subsequent intervention by Russian forces (Millward & Perdue, 2004). However, naming
Xinjiang a province in 1884 largely completed the formal occupation of the region. While some
in the Qing Empire saw the administration of Xinjiang as a colossal waste of money, its function
as a buffer against western enemies was undeniable and the emperor favored a fourfold policy in
the region: increased political integration, development of strictly Han officials, promotion of
Chinese immigration and land reclamation, and cultural assimilation through Confucian
education (Millward & Tursun, 2004).

Generally, these policies continued until the end of the Qing dynasty in 1911. However,
the ensuing civil war between the communists and nationalists diverted attention from Xinjiang.
The Chinese relinquished control, and in the 1930s and 1940s two different independent
governments were established by the Uyghurs in Kashgar and Yining (Dillon, 2006). These
temporary governments were weak at best and ultimately, after defeating the Nationalists, the
Chinese Communist Party established regional control in 1949.

The policies executed by the Party to maintain control in Xinjiang were both subtle and
effective. Through collective land reform it essentially undermined institutionalized Islam in the
region by eliminating the rent payments made to support local mosques and imams. The Party
then placed all religious personnel on its own payroll, effectively assuming control of Islam in
the region (Millward & Tursun, 2004). Another way in which the Party established control in
Xinjiang was through the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, a paramilitary farming
organization which followed earlier Qing colonization methods and acted as the conduit through
which millions of Han Chinese settled in Xinjiang and engaged in land reclamation (McMillan,
1981). Also, granting the region nominal autonomy allowed the Party to control Xinjiang while
avoiding the perception that it was colonizing the region. During Mao’s reign, however,
assimilationist policies of control were widely and overtly enforced and Han-Uyghur relations deteriorated.

There was a relative improvement in both Uyghur-Han relations and Uyghur status in society, as well as a general relaxation of the government’s hand in Uyghur affairs, following the aforementioned liberalization policies of Deng Xiaoping (Gladney, 2000). However, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, newly independent states appeared on China’s border. Seemingly overnight, the Central Asian population, culturally and ethnically related to the Uyghurs, received statehood, something Uyghurs coveted for generations (Dillon, 2004). Fearing a separatist uprising, China again began to heavily monitor Uyghur affairs.

This scrutiny contributed to growing Uyghur discontent which boiled over on several occasions in the 1990s. The largest protest occurred over a six-day period in February 1996 and led to 120 deaths and 2500 arrests (Gladney, 2000). This catastrophe preceded several other uprisings, and included bus bombings in Urumqi in February 1997 and in Beijing in March of the same year. When the central government conducted a massive roundup of accused Uyghurs, the Strike Hard campaign, it claimed that anyone who incited “ethnic disobedience” would be captured and jailed; many Uyghurs heard this announcement as euphemistic rhetoric for political prisoners (Gladney, 2000). Efforts by the government to stifle overt dissent have been largely successful. Instead, Uyghurs have employed more subtle methods of resistance in recent years.

The political economy of Xinjiang. The idea to create autonomous regions like Xinjiang came from Stalin’s Soviet model which viewed these areas as islands of ethnic groups that would one day be absorbed into the greater Communist state (Becker, 2000). Like Tibet and Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang is a province that has nominal autonomy, but the Chinese government controls all positions of power.
For the Chinese government, control of this region is essential in part for security reasons. In the early 1960s, after China and the Soviet Union experienced a divergence of communist strategy, China began to focus much of its security forces near the Xinjiang border with the Soviet Union (Becker, 2000). Part of the security force was the aforementioned Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) which, even today, manages select cities, farms, military operations, and prisons (Dillon, 2006). A virtual province within a province, the XPCC currently includes a staggering 2.5 million people (nearly 13 percent of Xinjiang’s total population) and is administered not by the provincial authorities, but by the State Council in Beijing (McMillan, 1981). Historically, it not only provided provincial security but also arranged the in-migration and settlement of millions of Han Chinese in Xinjiang. The size and scope of its operations leave little doubt as to the colonizing aspect of its operations. The fact that Beijing has such an instrumental role in the direction of the XPCC also indicates the importance of the organization to its security and development goals.

While the Soviet threat no longer exists and China currently enjoys warming relations with Russia, the XPCC and the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) focus security strategy on the newly independent Central Asian states. Since these countries have relatively weak governments and porous borders, China is concerned that increasing religious extremism in these countries will encourage the Uyghur population in Xinjiang to resist the state and embolden separatist activities (Gladney, 2000). In order to win the support of neighboring countries in this task, China recently orchestrated the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a regional political, economic, and social agreement with Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in which members all agreed to join together in the fight the “three evils” of terrorism, extremism, and separatism (Shanghai Cooperation Organization, 2008).
to the U.S. global War on Terror, Washington has also granted tacit approval of the SCO and its operations, even though they have led to questionable arrests and, arguably, suppression of the Uyghur in Xinjiang.

In line with Hu Jintao’s promotion of a “harmonious society”, pacifying regional dissent is seen by the government as not only a security issue but also an economic one. As the Western Development Strategy seeks to funnel east coast wealth to development projects in the western provinces, maintaining stability is essential to fostering an environment in which investments, both foreign and domestic, are reasonably secure. If these investments are unsuccessful, China’s regional inequalities could hinder its broader development goals. Yet, this development strategy is also a main issue of conflict between the Uyghurs and the Han Chinese as Uyghurs are largely excluded from participating in the employment created by domestic and foreign investment (Lai, 2002). Ironically, government strategies to pacify and develop Xinjiang are actually fueling Uyghur discontent. This paradox is also evident in the government’s education policies in Xinjiang.

**Education in Xinjiang.** Early in Xinjiang’s provincial history, the Han Chinese were already employing assimilationistic education policies which sought to change the “peculiar” customs of the Uyghur by having them study Mandarin and Confucian classics (Millward & Tursun, 2004). However, the use of a non-native language to instruct ethnic minorities was the central challenge for the Han Chinese, raising questions about the quality of the education that minorities received (Benson, 2004). Initially, the government supported a dual-language system in which minority students attended their own separate schools and received instruction in their own language. The government faced difficulty, though, in supplying adequate educational materials due to the numerous languages and four scripts (Arabic, Chinese, Mongolian, and
Cyrillic) used by minorities in Xinjiang (Beller-Hann, 2002). These scripts also tended to change as a result of China’s political relations with its neighbors. While it shared an amicable relationship with the Soviet Union, China adopted the Cyrillic script for the Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, and Tatar students (Benson, 2004). Yet when this relationship soured in the late 1950s, China first adopted a Latin script before settling, after Mao’s death, on an Arabic one.

In the midst of these changes, Xinjiang’s minorities struggled to maintain their identity as the government encouraged them to learn Mandarin at ever younger ages. Yet many Uyghurs recognized that Uyghur students who studied in Han Chinese schools rarely attained the same facility in their native language as Uyghur students who studied in minority schools. This lack of language ability had deleterious affects on students’ cultural identity. Complicating the decision to study at a minority school or a Han Chinese institution is the fact that to gain access to employment one needs to be familiar with Mandarin Chinese, the language of the dominant culture. The government seems intent on solving this dilemma itself by implementing incremental policies to limit the use of minority languages as the main language of instruction in Xinjiang’s schools (Schluessel, 2007). It is clear that the government’s plans to develop the western provinces include measures to finally bring about the long-sought “unity of the nationalities” within the “harmonious society” (Benson, 2004).

Summary

This section presented a review of literature of the three major theories of development and the role of education in each, the ways in which development processes have transpired in China, and an overview of the Western Development Strategy in Xinjiang. The literature suggests that China, while adopting Western development practices that further its integration into the global economy, demonstrates agency in its choice of practices and the ways in which it
implements them. In addition, while developing its western region is critical for China’s long-term economic growth, the region poses significant challenges to the government’s development efforts. Limited infrastructure and the lack of a highly trained workforce, for example, complicate plans to capitalize on natural resources and develop advanced science and technology industries. In Xinjiang, complex demographics and historic tensions among ethnic groups further challenge the government’s development plans. The literature also suggests that the Chinese government has responded to these challenges by initiating development methods that are emblematic of classical colonization. Schooling conducts an essential function within these methods in that it transmits and imposes the knowledge and skills of the dominant culture. This study, then, questions the ways in which teachers in this context perceive development, how they prepare students to participate and contribute to development, and the degree to which they facilitate student agency in these processes.

The following chapter presents a description of the study’s methodology, the procedures for data collection and analysis, and the study participants. It is followed by the findings of the study in Chapter IV and a discussion and conclusion in Chapter V.
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

This chapter reiterates the study’s research questions and includes an overview of the qualitative research methodology and design as well as the procedures employed in the data collection and analysis. It also describes the setting of the study, Xinjiang Senior School, and the participants.

Research questions

Guiding the study are three central research questions: How do Han Chinese teachers at Xinjiang Senior School understand “development” in Xinjiang as it relates to the Western Development Strategy? In what ways do they perceive the Western Development Strategy as influencing education in Xinjiang? Finally, how do they prepare students to contribute to or participate in the Western Development Strategy? Because these questions sought to explore the perceptions of the participants within a specific sociocultural context and the study spanned a period of nearly three months, the most appropriate research methods for conducting the study were qualitative.

Qualitative methodology

The aim of qualitative research is to make sense of, or interpret, the meanings people ascribe to events, or phenomena, in their lives and to connect these meanings to the social context of the world around them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Contrary to quantitative research, which emphasizes positivistic measurement of relationships between variables, qualitative research stresses the intimate relationship between the researcher and the researched and that reality is socially constructed and therefore subject to cultural and situational constraints (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This view asserts that there are no “objective” observations because they are continually “filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity”
Therefore, no single method of inquiry, only multiple and varied approaches, can begin to adequately ascertain the complexity of the human experience. Qualitative research methods, such as interviews, observations, and document analysis, are ideally suited to exploring and examining this reality in the cultural context in which it is constructed and producing a wealth of detailed information, or thick description, of the problem of study (Patton, 2002). Qualitative data are also typically collected over a sustained period of time, making them especially powerful tools in the process of examining complex problems (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) liken the qualitative research to a bricoleur, or one who fashions a bricolage, a “pieced together set of representations that is fitted to the specifics of a complex situation” (p. 4). Likening a bricoleur to a person who makes quilts or montages, Denzin and Lincoln illustrate that the qualitative researcher uses multiple strategies to gather data and weave together a complex representation connecting parts of “reality” to the whole. Building on the evolving definition of qualitative research in the *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), Creswell (2007) emphasizes the process of conducting qualitative research in his definition. I use the following as a model for presenting the methods of this study:

Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. To study this problem, qualitative researchers use an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes. The final written report or presentation includes the voices of participants, the reflexivity of the researcher, and a
complex description and interpretation of the problem, and it extends the literature or signals a call to action (p. 37).

*Researcher perspective*

The first key component of qualitative research according to Creswell (2007) is that qualitative researchers approach a problem of study with certain assumptions and perceptions about the phenomenon or the context in which it takes place. That is, the researcher cannot be “detached” from his or her own history and understanding of the world and the issue of study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Confronting these complexities is a necessary task for the researcher since “the age of value-free inquiry for the human disciplines is over” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This task is especially important when conducting research in cultures different than one’s own, so as to reduce the risk of imposing one’s own values and perceptions onto participants. Therefore, I acknowledge my own perceptions and assumptions of the problem of study here.

First, I approached this study as an interpretivist. That is, it was my goal to elicit and learn about the ways in which teachers at Xinjiang Senior School understand “development” in the context of Xinjiang and China’s Western Development Strategy and its influence on education at their school and in the broader region. To this end I seek to allow the participants’ voices to be heard through this document by quoting extensively from their interview responses.

Secondly, I must acknowledge my philosophical alignment with critical theorists who, according to Kincheloe and McLaren (2005), are “concerned in particular with issues of power and justice and the ways that the economy; matters of race, class, and gender; ideologies; discoveries; education; religion and other social institutions; and cultural dynamics interact to construct a social system” (p. 306). Critical theorists tend to write about the discursive practices
and the contested meanings that characterize the struggle for legitimizing knowledge in any society. They ask: Who in society has the power to declare which social constructions are valid and which are not, what can be said and what cannot, who can speak with authority and who cannot? They attempt to “expose the forces that prevent individuals and groups from shaping the decisions that crucially affect their lives” (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005, p. 308).

Limitations on the study

The limitations on this study are significant in that they not only establish the parameters of the study, but also provide further insight into the ways in which the context of Xinjiang impacted the process and findings of the study.

Researcher ethnicity. I should first acknowledge that the most obvious limitation on this study is the fact that I am a white, Christian male from the United States conducting interviews and observations in a Chinese city fraught with ethnic tensions. While my understanding of China and its various ethnic conflicts has benefited from both my studies and my previous experience living in Tianjin, China, I certainly cannot comprehend the full measure of what it means to be a Han Chinese or Uyghur individual living under these circumstances. At the same time I was aware of the fact that both Han Chinese and Uyghur individuals often were vying subtly for my allegiance in these tensions. It is possible that participants could have misunderstood my ultimate research intentions or assumed my ideological associations with one party or the other. Since three of the four participants in the study are female, my gender may have been an influence on participant data. It is possible that they did not feel as comfortable in the interviews as the male participant. Also, in many parts of China, Americans are also considered quite wealthy and powerful. These perceptions, too, may have altered the ways in which the participants interacted with me.
Language. Because I do not understand the Uyghur language, my Mandarin language skills are merely intermediate, and funding a translator was prohibitively expensive, I was forced to choose my participants from among the English-speaking teacher population at Xinjiang Senior School. The reduced population from which I could draw my sample certainly limited the scope of the study. In addition, the fact that the participants responded to interview questions in their second language likely limited the degree to which they could fully express themselves.

Internship. While I was conducting the study at Xinjiang Senior School, I was also engaged in teaching responsibilities at the same school. These responsibilities fulfilled an internship requirement for my Master’s degree program. Completing both tasks at once proved to be a delicate balance in that I knew that if I pursued a line of politically or socially sensitive questioning with my participants, successful completion of the internship would almost certainly be jeopardized. This outcome, in turn, would have hampered the efforts of my university to offer the internship site to future students.

Limits on contact with Uyghur individuals. Originally, my plan for this study included interviews with the Uyghur population either at my internship site or in the surrounding community. These interviews were to provide a balance to the data gleaned from conversations with Han Chinese participants. However, upon arrival at Xinjiang Senior School, a Han school official scheduled a meeting with me to inform me of policies regarding contact with Uyghur individuals. I was informed that I was to avoid developing relationships with any Uyghur individuals because they were “dangerous people” and that I “didn’t know them”. If I did happen to spend any significant amount of time with a Uyghur individual, I was required to inform authorities at the school as well as the police and identify the person. I was also required to record the location at which I met the person and how long we engaged in conversation. The
fact that I replaced a teacher who overtly studied the Uyghur language, established a romantic relationship with a Uyghur man, frequently traveled to predominantly Uyghur areas of Xinjiang and was summarily terminated and deported underscored the seriousness of these warnings. These policies effectively eliminated all opportunities for interviews with anyone from the Uyghur population. I had no intention of putting a participant’s personal safety or reputation in jeopardy in order to conduct interviews for this study. It is even questionable whether or not such an interview would have elicited usable data. Therefore, I rely on observational data and the work of other scholars to lend voice to the Uyghur position within the study.

Delimitations on the study

The study’s delimitations include the study parameters I set in order to glean the most valuable information.

Selection of participants. With the intent of selecting participants who would provide the widest range of perceptions about development and the Western Development Strategy, I set goals of interviewing four teachers and at least one administrator at the senior school. I also planned to interview at least one participant who was outside of the English department at Xinjiang Senior School. Based on the aforementioned limitations on contact with Uyghur individuals, I also chose only to conduct interviews of Han Chinese teachers and administrators. I also chose not to interview students at Xinjiang Senior School, in part because of the difficulty in securing approval to interview minors, but largely because of the language barrier. I did not feel confident that these students would be able to formulate responses and adequately express their thoughts in a second language.

Selection of research location. For this study I chose to conduct research at the Xinjiang Senior School in northern Xinjiang, a site at which I also completed an internship. While there
were other schools nearby, I felt that I had the time and opportunity to build rapport with the teachers and administrators at my internship sight and concluded that they would provide the best information for the purposes of this study.

*Setting of the study: Xinjiang Senior School*

This section presents a brief overview of the physical and social characteristics of the study setting, the Xinjiang Senior School.

*Physical characteristics of Xinjiang Senior School.* Xinjiang Senior School has the reputation for being the premier senior school in this typical Xinjiang city and one of the best in all of Xinjiang. Located roughly three miles outside the city, it was built in 2003 with the aid of funding from the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps and the local government. It is a walled campus with two guarded gates on opposing sides of the campus. Just inside the main gate is a huge open square with a large flagpole flying the Chinese banner. At the back of the square is the main, gray four-story classroom building has a modern design and contains the classrooms and labs for the senior one and senior two students while a somewhat smaller classroom building nearby is dedicated to senior three high school students. These students are separated in an effort to provide them with the best study environment as they prepare for the extremely important college entrance exams.

The campus has two four-story dormitories, one for male students and one for female students, as well as two similar buildings for faculty housing. While not all teachers and administrators live on campus, comfortable two-bedroom apartments are available for them if they choose. The campus also includes a two-story cafeteria, a convenience store, a small computer lab with roughly 30 desktop computers, a large gymnasium with stadium seating, an Olympic-sized track and field, and a lavish garden complete with pond and pavilion.
Groundskeepers were seen regularly maintaining the various flowers and plants which were watered by an extensive irrigation system. Overall, the campus bears little resemblance to the environment outside its gates. It is a plush oasis surrounded by dusty soil and dilapidated homes and businesses.

Here, it is helpful to further describe the main classroom building in an effort to illustrate the learning environment. The strikingly clean and orderly exterior of the building masks a less sophisticated interior. There are no elevators and no air conditioning. Heat is supplied via radiators in hallways and classrooms, but it is often irregular. Power, too, is sometimes lost during the school day. The school does have two science labs with updated equipment, but they are rarely used. While workers roam the halls and restrooms with cleaning supplies in hand, the bathrooms are rather unsightly and their odor is noticeable meters away. In addition to the classrooms, this building contains department offices, conference rooms, and a small library.

The average class at Xinjiang Senior School has between 55 and 65 students, so classrooms are quite spacious. Roughly 26 painted wooden tables (two students per table) are arranged in four rows facing forward and students sit on small stools. This arrangement is rarely, if ever, altered. Normally, students occupy the same room throughout the school day while the teachers move from room to room conducting lessons. There is a chalkboard at the front of the room and an elevated stage upon which sit the teacher’s desk and chair. A desktop computer, monitor, and document projector occupy half of this desk. The computer is connected to a large-screen TV sitting in the corner of the room to the students’ left which acts as the projector for multimedia presentations. Like other school amenities, this multimedia arrangement is rarely used. Large windows line the classroom’s outside wall and the three inside walls are often covered with various items such as class photographs, samples of exemplary student work,
American film posters, and traditional Mandarin quotations and idioms encouraging students to work hard. Tables are often covered in graffiti and garbage left on the floor. Students are generally responsible for the decoration and cleanliness of their own rooms, but conditions indicate that they are sometimes neglectful of their duties.

Teachers have no office of their own, but share a space with their department colleagues. These offices are typically arranged by lining the walls with cubicles and placing a larger workstation in the center of the room. It is in this room that teachers spend most of their time out of class, grading student work, developing lessons and exams, consulting students, and collaborating with colleagues. Weekly teaching meetings are generally held here as well. There are at least four of these offices on each floor of the classroom building. Each room is spacious and contains 16 cubicles, but few computers and limited shelving space. It seems a hurried and somewhat haphazard environment in which there are often whole reams of unused papers, exams, and books strewn around the room. However, conference rooms, sparsely decorated and containing traditional oval meeting tables, and the small school library are clean and organized.

**Social characteristics of Xinjiang Senior School.** There are approximately 3300 students (1600 female, 1700 male) between the ages of 15 and 18 attending Xinjiang Senior School and roughly 99 percent of them are Han Chinese. There are 20 classes of approximately 55 students in each grade (senior 1, 2, and 3) grouped by their scores on the entrance exam so that the highest performing students are in class one and the lowest in class 20. The students in any particular class live and work with these same classmates for all three years of senior school. Most of the students live on campus and spend the majority of their time in rigorous academic activities. The school day from Monday through Friday starts at 9:30am and ends at 7:05pm. It contains nine 40-minute periods, a two-hour lunch break, 15 minutes devoted to student eye
exercises, and ample time for daily physical activity. After dinner, which is served from 7:05pm to 9:00pm, students who live on campus are strongly advised to return to the classroom for self-study until 11:30pm. Students who do not wish to study at this time will often engage in various extra-curricular activities such as drama, dance, or sports. Whatever they choose to pursue, they are not permitted to return to their dorm room until 11:30pm. Students also attend class on Saturday, completing a similar but shorter class schedule which begins at 9:30am and lasts until 4:30pm. Students must adhere to strict uniform and appearance policies, which are enforced with the aid of members of the student union. These members, elected by their classmates, are responsible for checking other students’ adherence to all of the rules concerning school uniforms, appearance, hygiene, attendance, and discipline as well as the overall cleanliness and maintenance of the classroom.

Many teachers at Xinjiang Senior School live on campus in apartments furnished by the school. As previously mentioned teachers rotate among classrooms and share offices. Like their students they spend long days on campus, from 9:00am to 7:30pm Monday through Friday and 9:00am to 5:00pm on Saturdays. They also receive a two-hour lunch break and often engage in extra-curricular activities with students after classes are over. Generally, teachers at Xinjiang Senior School teach two to three, but no more than four, 40-minute classes per day. The remainder of their workday involves grading student work, planning lessons, collaborating with colleagues, attending daily department meetings and required professional development activities, and interacting with parents.

Like most public schools in China, Xinjiang Senior School has a dual administrative structure. That is to say, there is a corresponding Communist Party leader to every high level administrative position at the school. For example, the school has a President and a Party
Secretary who has slightly more authority than the President. The Party Secretary may have little influence on the daily activities of the school, but functions mainly as the arm of Party control in local education. Beneath the President and Party Secretary are numerous department heads, deans, and group leaders that make up the school leadership.

_Data collection procedures_

This section illustrates the process of obtaining permission to conduct the study, the selection of study participants, and descriptions of each.

_Obtaining permission to conduct the study._ I first obtained permission from the Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB) to conduct this study (see Appendix A). I also sought the approval of the Xinjiang Senior School leadership. In pre-travel email correspondence with the liaison for foreign teachers at the Xinjiang Senior School I indicated my desire to conduct a study of teachers at the school and even faxed a copy of the consent form approved by the HSRB. I was verbally assured that I would have no problems conducting the study. However, upon arrival school officials questioned me more intently about the nature and scope of the research and expressed concern about the implications of potential publication. They insisted that I type a signed statement declaring the intent of my research, its duration, and who accompanied me in my travels (see Appendix B). In this statement I attempted to be as general as possible while still meeting the officials’ expectations.

_Participant selection._ Originally, I planned to interview five participants for this study: four English-speaking teachers with a wide range of age, experience, and responsibility and one senior-level school administrator. This plan was an effort to achieve maximum variation, a purposeful sampling approach that “consists of determining in advance some criteria that differentiate the site or participants, and then selecting a site or participants that are quite
different on the criteria” which “increases the likelihood that the findings will reflect differences
or different perspectives” (Creswell, 2007). My efforts to select a sample of participants with the
maximum variation were challenged in two ways. First, my repeated attempts to arrange
interviews with several of the highest-ranking school officials proved unfruitful. These same
officials, however, were energetically committed to assisting me in the selection of other “more
suitable” participants of their choosing. With the benefit of living on campus for nearly three
months, I had enough time to largely avoid these suggestions and sought to build rapport with
potential participants before making any selections. Secondly, since my exposure to teachers at
Xinjiang Senior School was largely limited to the English department, it was difficult to develop
relationships with teachers of other subject areas. Despite these challenges I was successful in
selecting varied individuals who are significantly representative of the teacher population at
Xinjiang Senior School.

I chose five individuals to participate in the study. I first presented the consent letter
approved by the HSRB (see Appendix C) to each participant privately before confirming their
intentions to participate in the study. Due to the potentially sensitive political nature of some
topics, namely social relations between the majority Han Chinese and the Uyghur minority in
Xinjiang, I chose not to seek signed consent (see Appendix D for regulations regarding foreign
teachers). Through my advisor’s personal correspondence with Dr. Gardner Bovingdon, a
leading expert in the study of Xinjiang and Han-Uyghur relations at Indiana University, I learned
that seeking signed consent from participants in Xinjiang would likely exacerbate participants’
existing concerns of political retribution and yield inaccurate, or worse, false information.
Instead, the consent document clearly states that participation in the study would indicate consent,
the interviews would be private, and the data would be secured.
Ultimately, four of the five individuals agreed to participate. All of the participants are Han Chinese, as are all of the teachers at Xinjiang Senior School, and they all speak English, yet with varied proficiency levels. Three are female English teachers and one is a male History teacher, which represents the general gender ratio of female to male teachers at the school. The participants also represent a broad range of age and teaching experience. For example, one teacher falls into the 20-29 year age category, one in the 30-39 range, another in the 40-49 group, and the last in the 50-59 category. Their years of teaching experience are also diverse: one has been a teacher for two years, another for six, a third for nearly 20, and the fourth has been teaching for almost 30 years. In addition to their teaching schedule two veteran participants shoulder administrative responsibilities, serving as department heads and teaching group leaders, while the younger teachers are engaged in intense professional development activities.

*Description of participants.* Li You is in her late twenties and has been teaching English to senior two students at Xinjiang Senior School where she has carried the normal teaching load, two classes per day, for six years. She was raised in the northwestern corner of Xinjiang near Kazakhstan, an area infamous for Han-Uyghur tensions, but moved to Urumqi to attend university. She currently lives with her husband, father-in-law, and mother-in-law in the city center, a location which necessitates a 20 minute bus ride to Xinjiang Senior School. In halted English Li You speaks glowingly about her students and the profession of teaching in general. She is an energetic and smiling woman who seems to be sensitive to the needs of her students and often asserts that teachers should be more student-centered in their approach to education. Li You and I had lunch together in the early weeks of my internship and her husband joined us for dinner towards the end of my stay in Xinjiang.
Wang Peng, a veteran teacher of history at Xinjiang Senior School, has been instructing senior two students for nearly 20 years. He personally witnessed and participated in the evolution of the school from a small, poor city middle school of a few hundred students to a huge, wealthy suburban high school. Wang Peng lives in faculty housing on campus with his wife and son, a senior one student at Xinjiang Senior School and teaches three classes per day. He loves to write novels and education articles in his spare time and often publishes in local newspapers and magazines. He is a personable, loquacious man who prides himself on the fact that he makes friends with every foreign teacher who comes to Xinjiang Senior School so that he can introduce Chinese culture and history to them. On several occasions we talked at length in the classroom and we shared Xinjiang watermelon at his apartment one afternoon.

Zhang Wei started teaching English to senior one students at Xinjiang Senior School only two years ago. Because she is new she must take a test every two weeks to measure her instructional proficiency; as a result her schedule seems a little more hectic than the others’. She teaches the normal load of two to three classes per day. She is a single, fashionable woman who also lives in faculty housing on campus. Like Li You, she seems especially interested in addressing the needs of her students and often suggests that unlike veteran teachers, younger teachers are more inclined to meet these needs and treat students as equals.

Zhang Li is the most senior of the four participants. She has been teaching at Xinjiang Senior School for nearly 30 years and, like Wang Peng, has seen the school grow tremendously in recent years. As head of the English department she must organize all meetings and the day-to-day functions of the department as well as teach a full schedule of classes. She is a kind, serious, and somewhat stoic teacher intent on using the most current instructional methods in her department and classroom. In carefully worded conversations she often asked me about different
ways in which teachers in the U.S. might teach or engage her class. I took the opportunity to
observe some of her classes.

Data collection process

Each participant agreed to schedule time for three 60-minute interviews (see Appendices
E, F, and G for interview protocols). Generally the participants arranged to meet in a private
conference room adjacent to the English or History staff office during the two-hour lunch break
or at the end of the school day. With the teachers’ permission I took written notes during the
interviews and recorded them with a digital recorder. While we agreed upon 60-minute
interviews, at times the actual time frame was less due to interruptions and language difficulties.
For example, in the middle of one interview with Zhang Li, the English department head, a
colleague urgently interrupted and asked her to read and sign some documents in the office.
Also, at times Li You mentioned her difficulty in expressing herself adequately in English which
resulted in shorter responses.

Participants also welcomed me to observe their classes. This was rather difficult to
arrange because I was generally teaching my own classes during the same hours, but I did
manage to observe three teachers’ classes. During the observations I wrote extensive notes
describing the classroom environment and the nature and delivery of the lesson (see Table 1 for
an example). I did not use the digital recorder in the classroom. Although we never discussed
any arrangement in which they would observe my classes, the participants seemed to understand
these observations as reciprocal arrangements. On several occasions I arrived to teach my class
and found one of the participants sitting in the back of the classroom with a notebook in hand.

While I was not privy to many school documents I did have opportunity to obtain copies
of various rules and regulations concerning the behavior and responsibilities of Xinjiang Senior
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time/Location</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Initial Thoughts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 21</td>
<td>…So far, this class has been conducted entirely in English – different from the other classes. The lesson today includes an essay about archeology and the transfer of technology and knowledge through time. Zhang Li is now explaining that China is a developing country that can learn a lot from more developed countries such as Japan and the U.S. She then asks the students, “Do you think we can learn a lot from these countries?” Immediately, and in unison, the students shout “No!” Zhang Li’s tone becomes sharper and she scolds the students, accuses them of being just like the Qing dynasty “when we thought we always were the best.” She explains again that people need to learn from each other to make the world a better place…</td>
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<td>10:50am</td>
<td>…This was a really interesting experience in that it seems to demonstrate a persistent ethnocentrism in the students’ understanding of the benefit of international (and cross-cultural) relations. Are these ideas conveyed by family? Other teachers? It seems that Zhang Li’s altruistic message is either ineffective or misaligned with other more influential messages. In some ways it seems to differ from other comments she has made concerning development in the region…</td>
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School teachers, a senior one English exam, and numerous photographs of classrooms, science labs, and campus facilities. These documents were instrumental in constructing the description of the school and the foundation of school policies.

Data analysis

Following the advice of Miles and Huberman (1994), who “advise interweaving data collection and analysis from the start,” I conducted much of the initial data analysis while still living in China (p. 50). Since I interviewed each participant three times and wanted their primary responses to guide subsequent questions, this process was in fact necessary. In order to develop the questions for the second round of interviews, I first had to listen to and produce a preliminary transcription of the first round of interviews. While I did not complete the full transcription at that time, I used my handwritten interview and observation notes and the audio
recordings to formulate the next interview questions. While not always successful, I also attempted to keep a daily journal about my experiences in Xinjiang and the interviewing process that proved useful in analyzing the data and preparing for subsequent interviews. The following is an excerpt of a journal entry concerning the formulation of further interview questions:

July 12, 2008

…In interviews the participants mentioned that the Western Development Strategy has enabled all people in the region to gain better employment, make more money, and generally obtain a higher standard of living. All of this, in their view, is tied to education. They also often mention that Xinjiang Senior School is the best in the area, even the whole region, and that they hope their students will ultimately (after a university education) stay in Xinjiang and contribute to its development. My question, though, is if everyone is benefiting from development, and educational access is a key factor in benefiting from the development process, and this is the best school, and these students will be the ones who will construct the homeland, why are there no ethnic minorities here? I’d like to know what the participants’ think about this? But I need to pose this question delicately…

I completed the same journaling process between the second and third interviews.

In the portion of the transcriptions that I did complete, I made a special effort to protect the confidentiality of the school and participants by using pseudonyms. I named the school the Xinjiang Senior School and the participants chose to use their English names. However, I felt that too many people might know these names and decided to choose different English names for the participants. Yet, upon further reflection I decided that these English names might be perceived as a kind of researcher-imposed identity and ultimately chose to use randomly selected
Han Chinese names. I saved copies of the digital and written transcriptions in multiple password-protected flashdrives, which I secured and occasionally rotated among several different locations.

Upon arrival in the United States I began the task of fully transcribing the remaining interviews that I conducted in Xinjiang and rewriting and reorganizing my written notes. In the process of completing the transcriptions I began to notice certain topics or themes recurring in the data. After the transcriptions were complete I proceeded to reread the interviews and documents and develop a list of codes or categories of repeating information that I could ultimately use to identify the themes and organize the data into them (see Table 2). Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest creating a rather exhaustive initial list of codes, but I found Creswell’s (2007) “lean coding” approach – identifying no more than 25 to 30 categories and then “winnowing” them to five or six major themes – more effective (p. 152).

**Credibility of data analysis**

Establishing the credibility and validity of the data analysis is an important task which helps to ensure that the interpretations drawn from the analysis are the “right” ones (Glesne, 2006). Strategies for reducing unacknowledged researcher bias include: prolonging engagement and observation; utilizing multiple data-collection methods, sources, or theoretical perspectives; permitting peer review; analyzing negative cases; clarifying researcher bias; sharing interviews and transcripts with participants; writing rich and thick descriptions; and allowing a third party to “audit” the research notes, memos, and transcriptions (Glesne, 2006). While it certainly would have been more beneficial to remain at the study site for a longer period of time, three months was, I believe, long enough to establish rapport with the participants and elicit an adequate amount of information to answer the research questions. I also purposed to utilize interview,
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Corresponding Codes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Importing “advanced” knowledge</td>
<td>Visiting scholars/Western countries</td>
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<td>Visiting scholars/eastern China</td>
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<td>Change “traditional” ways</td>
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<td>“Advanced” instructional methods</td>
<td>Perceived inferiority</td>
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<td>Australian study-abroad program</td>
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<td>Science and technology</td>
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<td>Teaching reform</td>
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<td>Student-centered instruction</td>
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<td>Developing student ability</td>
<td>More equal teacher-student relationships</td>
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<td>Increased student engagement</td>
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<td>Develop student identity</td>
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<td>Reform college entrance exam</td>
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<td>Students solving practical problems</td>
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<td>Construction of the homeland</td>
<td>Talents needed in Xinjiang</td>
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<td>Develop student independence</td>
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<td>Develop student love for Xinjiang</td>
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<td>Science and technology occupations</td>
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<td>Economic growth</td>
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<td>Develop support for the Western Development Strategy</td>
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<td>Improved living conditions</td>
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observation, and document analysis in an effort to recognize broader themes in the data. While helpful and informative, the documents I was able to obtain, however, are few. In interviews I would often repeat statements the participant made in previous interviews and ask them to clarify their statements before I asked a new question. For example, in the following excerpt from an
interview with Zhang Li I asked her about specific terms she mentioned in a previous conversation:

Interviewer: Several times in our last interview you mentioned the terms “social stability” and “social progress” as key components of development. Could you talk a little more about what these words mean to you?

Zhang Li: Now, I think that it means with the Western Development Strategy the economy of Xinjiang is developing quickly and the living conditions of people here is improving. The people here are becoming more and more united and the society is more and more harmonious…

I have also tried to acknowledge and clarify my biases as a researcher in the politically and socially charged context of Xinjiang and sought to provide detailed descriptions of that context. Having engaged in these activities lends credibility and validity to the study’s findings.

Summary

Conducting research in China is problematic at best and in Xinjiang it is significantly more difficult. Because the province is a site of tense ethnic relations between the dominant Han Chinese and the Uyghurs, researchers are viewed with skepticism by authorities. However, with permission from school officials I was able to select a representative sample of participants from the English-speaking Han Chinese teachers at the Xinjiang Senior School. Utilizing qualitative research methods I interviewed four teachers about their perceptions of development and the role of education in the Western Development Strategy. Each of the four teachers agreed to participate in three one-hour semi-structured interviews and invited me to observe their instruction of one class period. In addition to the interviews and observations I collected several documents at the school. In the following section I employ the findings from these sources and
those of other scholars to generate a model of the ways in which Han Chinese and Uyghurs perceive development in Xinjiang.
CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the study. These results are based on observation data, an analysis of school-related documents, and participant interview responses to the following research questions:

1. How do teachers and administrators at Xinjiang Senior School perceive “development” as it relates to the Western Development Strategy in Xinjiang?
2. In what ways do they perceive the Western Development Strategy as having an influence on education in Xinjiang and/or at the Xinjiang Senior School?
3. In what ways do teachers and administrators at Xinjiang Senior School seek to prepare students to contribute to the Western Development Strategy?

After coding the interview, document, and observation data for emerging themes, I developed a model (see Figure 6) to describe the way in which the participants understand development in terms of the Western Development Strategy in Xinjiang and the role of education in the development process. The model presents the participants’ perceptions of development in Xinjiang as following a series of six stages: development as the importation of “advanced” knowledge, “advanced” instructional methods, the development of student ability, the construction of the “Homeland”, improved living conditions, and finally, the establishment of sociopolitical stability. In this view, the importation of advanced knowledge lays the initial foundation for future development processes, but is not sustained once development goals are achieved. Advanced instructional methods or strategies indicates the suggestions of Western and eastern Chinese scholars for Xinjiang teachers to abolish traditional methods in favor of more student-centered Western models. These models, they believe, will enable the teachers to better develop student ability and shift societal focus away from high-stakes exams and toward student
Figure 6. Xinjiang Senior School Teachers’ Perceptions of the Western Development Strategy and the Role of Education in the Development Process
ability to solve real problems. Because Xinjiang faces significant challenges to its development, teachers want to encourage their students’ affection for the region and their desire to use their abilities to meet these challenges. In this way students can contribute to the construction of Xinjiang, thereby improving living standards in the region. Improved living conditions, they believe, will lead to sociopolitical stability and prosperity for all.

The sections of this chapter, then, roughly correspond to this model. In each section I allow the participants to speak for themselves by utilizing extensive quotations. Because I was forbidden by the police and school officials to interview or interact with any potential Uyghur participants, I rely on my personal observations of the Uyghur population and evidence from the work of other scholars to construct a balancing voice to the Han Chinese perceptions of development discussed here. I begin with a discussion of the participants’ broad definitions of development and education in Xinjiang.

The development dream

The study participants, all Han Chinese teachers and administrators at Xinjiang Senior School, see development within the Western Development Strategy in Xinjiang as a process of economic growth that will contribute to China’s overall prosperity and foster regional social stability. In their view it is both a positive and necessary phenomenon and one in which education plays a critical role. While the following sections discuss participant statements about Xinjiang’s development in greater detail, Zhang Li offers a succinct but comprehensive preliminary description of the participants’ perception of the “development dream”:

Now, education has played a vital role in building the power and prosperity of China.

Now, gifted people are badly needed in the development of western China. Only by developing the education system can we realize our dream in west China. The
production, manufacturing, distribution, and construction of knowledge are the basis of economic activity. With economic stability we will have social stability.

It is clear from Zhang Li’s statement that building and establishing the overall “power and prosperity of China” is a central tenet in the development of Xinjiang. In another interview Zhang Li added, “If left unchanged, the underdevelopment in the west will affect the overall prosperity of our country”. Li You also mentioned that the Western Development Strategy in Xinjiang “is key to realizing China’s development goals” which “are to develop the frontier regions and promote economic development and to ensure social stability and ethnic harmony”.

Wang Peng follows Zhang Li and Li You by emphasizing that education will play an integral part in this process stating that “the development of Xinjiang means the central government lets Xinjiang’s education develop very quickly”. According to the participants, with the fate of China’s prosperity hinging on the success of western development and educational reform, the Western Development Strategy should advance at any cost.

On various occasions they also discussed the ways in which borrowing “modern” Western educational and business strategies would aid China’s development, helping it “catch up” to the “advanced” countries of the world. In this way participants share the view of neoliberals who assert that broadening China’s power and prosperity ultimately depends on its increased integration, and in some ways assimilation, into the Western-centered global liberal socioeconomic order (Ikenberry, 2008). Drawing upon structural functionalist theory, which seeks to establish societal harmony and consensus while avoiding conflict, neoliberal economists and globalization proponents argue that China must do this by following the lead of the West and demonstrating its intent to act as a “responsible partner” in international relations and implementing sweeping Western-style economic, political, and social reforms. However,
postcolonial and postmodern theorists, as well as neo-Marxist theorists like Hardt and Negri (2000), identify this global order as an imperialist empire which pervades all social, political, and economic functions of the world’s societies, demands participation by all, and tolerates no alternative narratives. The fact that participants are committed to altering their “traditional” educational methods and accepting more “advanced” methods from Western countries suggests that they, and the larger Han Chinese population, are attempting to integrate themselves into this global order and are largely consenting to its demands.

Yet the Han Chinese demonstrated resistance to these demands in the past. Zhao (1998) writes about Chinese education policies in the 1990s which sought to cultivate patriotism in students in order to build a politically, economically, and culturally unified nation-state in defiance of Western influences perceived as corroding its core principles. One can also locate resistance to Westernization in China’s insistence that they are not a capitalist country, but one that practices “socialism with Chinese characteristics” within a “one country, two systems” context in which socialism (mainland China) and capitalism (Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan) operate simultaneously. By rejecting Western suggestions that it implement sweeping liberal economic reforms and instead adopting largely state-guided development policies, China has demonstrated agency in exercising control over the management of its own impressive economic development. In the field of education the government has also confirmed its determination to choose its own course. For example, Zhang Li suggests that “we can’t do some things like some schools in Britain. It’s our duty, I think, to find a good way which fits the Chinese situation”. This indicates that the Chinese carefully select and implement only the “advanced” knowledge they consider beneficial to their overall prosperity and development.
However, participant responses reveal that the ways in which they employ these “advanced” methods to facilitate development in Xinjiang, in effect, colonize the region, subjugate its ethnic minorities, and deny them the agency and opportunity to contribute to or benefit from regional development processes. As previously mentioned, Kohn (2008) and MacQueen (2007) outline the fundamentals of colonizing activities as including the transfer of a population to a new territory in order to capitalize on natural resources and subjugate an existing population through a “civilizing” mission that involves their military, political, economic, religious, and sociolinguistic domination. McMillan (1981) suggests that the security and immigration policies of the Han Chinese within the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) amount to a military colonization of Xinjiang. Gladney (1999), applying the work of Hechter (1975), argues that through occupation, integration through immigration, and “minoritization” the Chinese state has internally colonized the Uyghur in Xinjiang. Zhang Li points to this phenomenon when she indicates that she believes there is a dearth of “gifted” people in Xinjiang who are able to facilitate development that will advance the goals of the state. This dearth, in her view, acts as an impediment to regional development. It follows, then, that people who are able to accomplish this task will initially come from outside Xinjiang and educate its residents in the adoption of the attitudes and skills which they deem suitable to facilitate regional economic growth and international integration. As a result, students in Xinjiang are undoubtedly schooled in ways that privilege and legitimize the “construction of knowledge” which is aligned with the development goals of the state and the dominant culture in society, the Han Chinese. In this way the participants believe that education will play a critical role in the Western Development Strategy by shaping students who are able to contribute to the achievement of the “development dream”.

Interestingly, Zhang Li describes western development in China as “our” dream, a seemingly pre-established collective agreement of all (Han?) residents to engage in the construction of a more “prosperous” region. Zhang Wei, too, claims that “everybody in the [Chinese] west should understand and support the strategy”. Unfortunately, this view of development, a collective, linear progression in which economic prosperity leads to social harmony, ignores the voices of millions of non-Han residents in Xinjiang despite the fact that they are the largest population in the region.

This “development dream”, benign as it may seem, serves as the foundation of the following discussion of the ways in which Han Chinese policies of development and education in Xinjiang acts as a conduits for the colonization of the province and the subjugation of Xinjiang’s ethnic minorities, namely the Uyghur. While orchestrating its own integration into the larger Western global economic order and exercising its agency in selecting largely Western education strategies to advance its development goals, China expects its minority regions to fully comply. However, the government affords them no similar agency in determining the ways in which they might integrate into the larger Chinese state and still retain some semblance of autonomy. The participants’ extensive comments about the importation of “advanced” knowledge offer a fitting point at which to start exploring the ways in which the “development dream” functions in Xinjiang.

*Development as the importation and implementation of “advanced” knowledge or skills*

In the view of the participants, development in Xinjiang is at least partially supported by “advanced” knowledge imported from Western countries and eastern China. That is to say that Xinjiang Senior School teachers, administrators, and local government officials are engaged in
the study, borrowing, and implementation of Western education and business strategies to bolster
development in Xinjiang.

Zhang Li describes the motivation behind the borrowing or importation of “advanced”
knowledge when she states that “We will try our best to catch up with the advanced countries of
the world, such as America and Britain”. Since the participants identified, at least to this
researcher, the United States and Great Britain as their models for development, thereby labeling
China and especially Xinjiang, as inferior and less developed, it follows that they would import
Western-style development strategies. Wang Peng explains that “the central government
introduced many technologies, many, many others – factories, industries, science, and
technology – from foreign countries and inner areas of China, other areas to here”. When one
tours this central Xinjiang city, it is clear that there is no shortage of Western influence in terms
of industry. In fact, the city owes much of its economic growth to advances in resource
extraction technology and the operation of massive oil refining facilities. Neither is there any
lack of Western fast-food restaurants, including McDonald’s and Kentucky Fried Chicken, or
shops selling Nike, Adidas, and numerous European brands of clothing.

Perhaps most important to the participants and to this discussion, however, is the
educational knowledge imported from scholars visiting Xinjiang from Western countries and the
inner areas of China. Zhang Li offers the clearest example of the role of “foreign” or “advanced”
knowledge from these areas in Xinjiang’s development:

It is the Western Development Strategy that has brought in a lot of new ideas and insights
which made us see the differences between Xinjiang and England, or abroad. Especially,
our leaders began by looking at a lot of advanced areas, advanced senior schools in
advanced areas, even foreign countries. Now, they have been equipped with a lot of new
ideas and thoughts about running our school. Many experts and specialists come from abroad and have been invited to our school to give us a lecture and they have brought us a lot of new ideas. I think it is very important to us. Now, we renew our old and traditional ideas and thoughts in teaching and running our school…I think the change of concept or thought is very important in developing our school.

Here, Zhang Li identifies a disparity between Xinjiang and “advanced” areas abroad, and uses it as a rationale for inviting foreign “experts” and “specialists” to the Xinjiang Senior School to change any “old and traditional” ideas about education. Interestingly, this renewal process seems to encourage the participants to locate perceived deficiencies in their own approach to education compared to the more “advanced” Western ones. Zhang Wei, for example, identifies one apparent deficit in the Xinjiang Senior School teachers’ educational style when she states that “sometimes we hear that Americans and British can work together well. They have teamwork spirit that Chinese don’t. Our school sometimes encourages us to do like this”. This seems to be a curious statement for a teacher from a collectivistic country espousing the benefits of socialism, albeit with Chinese characteristics. One might assume that compared to individualistic Western educators, teachers at the Xinjiang Senior School would be well acquainted with “teamwork”. Regardless of the statement’s accuracy in describing their work habits, it demonstrates how, in comparing themselves to the Western model, teachers at Xinjiang Senior School perceive differences as deficits to be corrected. This hints at the power of the dominant Western ideology to define “appropriate” occupational methods and habits.

Wang Peng also speaks about the advice offered by advanced scholars, referring to a recent conference held at Xinjiang Senior School:
For instance, twenty days ago there was a special talk at here from all of Xinjiang. There were many scholars who came from Shandong, Beijing, Shanghai, and others. They introduced many, many advanced methods of teaching to us. As you know, China wants to study and learn from the Western countries to teach.

While not invited to the conference, I was in the main classroom building on the day it was held and saw several Western scholars in attendance. In fact, an American scholar from Xinjiang University used my classroom to present a lesson to Xinjiang Senior School teachers concerning the latest research on teaching English reading strategies. When I returned to the classroom to teach the following day I noticed that the presenter had left the PowerPoint point presentation open on the computer desktop. Scrolling through the slides I noticed that the strategy examples included exclusively Western topics, none of which dealt with any content relevant to the Han Chinese students at the school. Even if Han Chinese teachers and administrators strive to make their lessons relevant to Xinjiang Senior School students, by the very fact that the conference was held at the school students understand that the new methods utilized by their teachers are Western ones. Events which occur at school, what scholars call the hidden curriculum, indirectly inform students of the cultural norms and values of society (Pai, Adler & Shadiow, 2006). Witnessing the conference and the resulting shifts in educational strategies indicates to students that Western methods and values are superior and should be pursued.

These are all intriguing statements and observations in that they suggest that the Han Chinese at the Xinjiang Senior School are largely content to disavow a long and prosperous history of education to adopt a largely unaltered Western model. This is indicative of the effect of immense Western globalizing forces which attempt to persuade non-Western countries to adopt liberal economic development strategies. Brennen (2008), identifying globalization as
neocolonialism or imperialistic, writes that under imperialism, conquest is maintained from a distance, often by the threat of military action or economic coercion. While there is presently little or no threat of Western military coercion against China, in order to further integrate into the global economic system it must continue to adopt Western-style education and business models.

However, the extent to which these models will be adopted by Xinjiang’s residents or effective in the school context is unclear. One observational experience suggests that there may be some student resistance to learning via foreign instructional methods or content. Zhang Li invited me to observe one of her classes and participate in a lesson about the similarities and differences in Chinese and American gestures. The students also read an English essay about the technological advances of various countries in world history. The class seemed to enjoy the brief interactive part of the lesson. A student and I stood at the front of the classroom and performed various gestures when Zhang Li called out words or phrases like “hello”, “goodbye”, and “come here”. Yet later, while Zhang Li lectured about the essay, the class assumed a defiant tone when she asked whether or not they could learn much from Western countries. Several students in the room shouted “No!” Zhang Li scolded them, comparing their attitude to the era of the Qing Empire, a time she claimed that the Chinese thought they were the most advanced society in the world. Her quelling of a seemingly rare resistant outburst points to the ways in which Western ideas and values are imposed in an effort to establish societal consensus and equilibrium and avoid conflict. If these are the ways in which Han Chinese teachers and administrators transmit modern Western ideas and values to Han students, the imposition of these values under the banner of development is more severe for the Uyghur population. Within the few scholarly works dedicated to the study the Uyghur population, the analysis of language as it relates to
ethnic identity is rather extensive and helps further an understanding of Uyghur resistance to the “advanced” knowledge offered by the Han Chinese.

*Mandarin as the most “useful” and “advanced” language.* Nationalistic sentiments demonstrated by these students underpin the ways in which the Han Chinese approach minority education in Xinjiang and seek to modernize and civilize the “backward” populations with “advanced” skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Participants largely frame the development of Xinjiang’s minority education in terms of language. For example, here Wang Peng explains the benefits ethnic minorities gain by studying at Han Chinese schools:

"Chinese is the official language in China so other nations’ languages are not used very widely, such as Uyghur language. So, the parents of the nations students want their children to go to the Han nation schools to study because they have the good condition, the best teachers. So they want to let their students study in this school. From study in this school their knowledge level will be better than other nations students."

Wang Peng’s comments indicate his ethnocentric perceptions of language in the context of Xinjiang in that he mistakenly identifies the Uyghur language as having limited usefulness in Xinjiang. Li You makes similar comments when she explains that “In Xinjiang we all use *putonghua* [Mandarin Chinese]”. Yet since the Uyghur are the largest ethnic group in the province, their language must be used more “widely” than that of the Han Chinese. He also implicitly situates Han Chinese schools, those with “good conditions” and “the best teachers”, opposite Uyghur schools, which must be less advanced in his view. In his perspective, with the advanced conditions of the Han Chinese schools, parents of minority students would naturally want their students to pursue their studies there.
These misconceptions speak to the larger problem of Han Chinese in Xinjiang utilizing education as a means of maintaining societal stratification and securing their dominant status in the province. There is a significant amount of research on the Uyghur population and language in Xinjiang. Benson (2004) writes that the predominant goal of minority education in China has always been to assimilate ethnic groups into a single and unified socialist state and language policies are one means of facilitating this process. Monolingual policy proponents in China often invoke an economic argument; in this view, individuals must all speak a common language in order to facilitate communication and economic development (Becker, 2000). Therefore, the central government promoted a plan for “bilingual education” for minority education. This plan defines “bilingual education” as education in which the native language is used as a transitional tool leading to full Mandarin proficiency (Schluessel, 2007). There is no obligation for the Han Chinese to learn Uyghur, regardless of the fact that the Uyghurs are the most populous in the region. The plan is progressing and in 2002 all universities, even those established as minority schools, began to use all Mandarin texts and instruction and in 2004, 50 minority and Han schools were consolidated without transitional periods for non-Mandarin speakers (Schluessel, 2007). By 2011, authorities hope that all schools will employ this method. These policies send a clear signal of the intent of the Han Chinese to assimilate, not integrate, Uyghurs into the larger society.

The imposition of Mandarin-only schooling, of course, breeds resentment among Uyghurs. They do acknowledge the economic value of speaking Mandarin, but research indicates that they prefer to maintain their own language and use Mandarin as a tool; in fact, Mandarin use outside of these parameters is considered shameful and uncomfortable (Schluessel, 2007). Minority students in Xinjiang are commonly classified as either minkaohan (students
schooled and tested in Mandarin) or *minkaomin* (students schooled and tested in a minority
language such as Uyghur) and the *minkaohan* students are often viewed by other Uyghurs as
having lost their language abilities and cultural knowledge in exchange for economic gain
(Rudelson, 1997). These individuals constitute what some Uyghurs call the “fourteenth
nationality” in Xinjiang, a population that often considers themselves both Chinese and Uyghur,
but feel alienated from both groups (Rudelson, 1997).

Often, cultural groups attempt to distinguish themselves in relation to other groups and
elevate their own status. In terms of language Smith (2002) argues that Uyghurs use it to clearly
delineate cultural boundaries between them and the Han Chinese, promote their own status, and
resist both the state’s assimilation policies and Han in-migration. One way Uyghurs accomplish
this task, she argues, is by distinguishing between the home environment (times when they speak
Uyghur) and the “outside” (times when they speak Mandarin). To most Uyghurs, Mandarin is
only a necessary tool and it is nearly inconceivable that a member of their cultural group would
speak Mandarin to another member in public (Smith, 2002). The author describes multiple
experiences of witnessing a Uyghur, initially not looking at the speaker, begin speaking to
another Uyghur in Mandarin. Upon looking up and noticing that his conversation partner was
another Uyghur, the individual immediately switched to using the Uyghur language and
apologized profusely for his mistake (Smith, 2002). At least with these individuals, the times in
which they used Mandarin or Uyghur define a distinct boundary between their own cultural
group and the “others”.

An interesting example of both Han Chinese and Uyghurs promoting their own cultural
status occurred while I was eating lunch at a Uyghur restaurant in the company of my Han
Chinese internship supervisor, Bai Huan. Ironically, she had only recently informed me that I
was not permitted to make contact with any Uyghurs because they are “dangerous” people and I didn’t “understand” them. The fact that the first restaurant we visited together was a Uyghur establishment suggests her interest in “protecting” me and defining the Uyghur culture on her terms. She discussed some brief “history” of the Uyghur people before acknowledging that she could not speak a word of Uyghur even though she was born and had lived her entire life in Xinjiang. We were the only non-Uyghur in the restaurant and it was clear in the volume and tone of her voice, as well as the slowness of her speech, that she assumed the server could not adequately understand her when she ordered our dishes in Mandarin. In what she understood to be deliberate resistance and avoidance, the waiter then served several other tables while we waited without food. Several times she asked him for more rice, commenting on how slow the Uyghurs are.

On another occasion, I had lunch with Li You at a different Uyghur restaurant in which a language was again utilized as a tool to define ethnic boundaries. Here, it was the contested use of English between Li You, a Han Chinese, and a Uyghur waiter. When he first arrived at our table to take our order he greeted us in English. Li You, somewhat surprised, said, “Oh, you speak English?” In strikingly clear pronunciation, he replied that he could speak a little; but she responded in Mandarin. My experiences with Uyghur students in eastern China always left me with the impression that, perhaps because of some linguistic similarities between English and their native language, they could pronounce English words easier and clearer than their Han Chinese classmates. On the other hand, many Uyghurs seem to have difficulty with Mandarin pronunciation. So, it is telling that Li You insisted on continuing the discussion with the waiter in Mandarin, a language in which she was clearly the expert. This seems to suggest that, even in
perhaps unconscious ways, Han Chinese are determined, however subtly, to demonstrate that they are the dominant culture of authority in Xinjiang.

To promote the status of their own cultural group vis-à-vis the Han Chinese, some Uyghurs use humor to mock Mandarin phrases. Smith (2002) illustrates the most common occurrence of this phenomenon with the Mandarin phrase *manman zou* (literally, ‘walk slowly’) that is spoken when another person is departing. She cites an occasion when a Uyghur laughed and posed a question of why anyone would want to walk slowly; they should walk quickly, he argued, in order to reach their destination before nightfall. Beller-Hann (2002) found similar results in her research of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. She suggests that some Uyghurs argue that since the Han Chinese know little or none of the Uyghur language, they must be of substandard intelligence compared to the Uyghurs, who can often speak some Mandarin. One participant commented that it was amazing to him that the Han lived in Xinjiang for such a long time and could still not speak a word of Uyghur (Beller-Hann, 2002). This perception is another clear example of ways that Uyghurs seek to elevate the status of their own culture through language. Rudelson (1997), however, is quick to point out that the Uyghurs are not a homogenous group and that boundaries are not always so clear in other parts of Xinjiang. For example, in rural areas many Uyghur peasants are proud to demonstrate their limited knowledge of Mandarin. One farmer, for instance, named all of his crops in Mandarin and it was clearly a source of pride for him (Smith, 2002). This suggests that in areas where the cultural contact is limited (few Han Chinese live in rural areas of Xinjiang) resistant identities are less prevalent.

Like Smith, I also encountered unexpected linguistic surprises in Xinjiang. On one occasion I happened to hail a taxi whose Han Chinese driver spoke Uyghur quite fluently. He claimed that it was important that he learn the language because it not only aids his business, but
also his relations with the majority population in the region. Experiences like this one suggest that the residents of Xinjiang may not be as resistant to integration as tensions indicate. At school, however, there were no such surprises and the obvious lack of any spoken or written minority languages points to the fact that through schools the government defines Mandarin as the dominant language in the region, even though it is spoken by a numerical minority. This definition is evident in the school’s environment and teachers’ instructional strategies.

*Utilizing the most “advanced” educational strategies*

According to the participants, the advanced knowledge from Western countries and China’s more developed east coast will help them reform their instructional methods and their school’s environment. Zhang Li highlights the importance of “improving the quality of teaching and learning by reforming our teaching ideas, patterns, and methods. It is very important to us.” A significant part of this improvement according to her is facilitating a more student-centered approach to instruction:

Now, in class, our teachers are often encouraged to return the classes to our students, offering them more opportunities to think over something, think of something, speak out their opinions, do something by themselves. Now, maybe it seems that we are renewing our ideas, our prospect of education. Maybe this is the beginning for us. However, we know for a long time that most Chinese teachers and students have been used to the traditional teacher-centered education. They have so many textbooks to write, so much homework to do, and so many examinations to take part in. So, I think this kind of educational pattern formed the students’ way of thinking. It makes them lack creativity and imagination. I think this kind of educational system or pattern will hold back the development of western China.
Wang Peng makes similar claims and shares a lesson he learned at the recent Xinjiang Senior School conference:

The Beijing and Shandong scholars give their good advice, their opinion, to Xinjiang teachers. Such as, if teachers have lessons, the teachers needn’t speak at all times. The teachers have to let the students speak a lot and a lot. The students have a discussion in the lessons. The students make questions and look for the many materials about teaching on the international web and others. If the teachers speak in all the lessons, the students are not interested in this. Maybe the students will sleep in your lessons. Maybe they feel very boring. When they hear this they feel very boring and very tired and they want to sleep. If the teacher lets the students speak lots and lots and if the students do many things in the class, they cannot sleep. From this, the scholars think, the students’ ability becomes better and better. I think this is similar to American classes.

One would likely find discussions of topics such as the ones identified above – a shift from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered methods, expanding student agency, and inspiring creativity – in any pre-service teacher’s instructional methods text. However, somewhat ironically, these are also main topics covered in Dahlman, Zeng, and Wang’s (2007) suggestions for Enhancing China’s Competitiveness Through Lifelong Learning, a book funded and published by the World Bank Institute. In an effort to encourage developing countries to adopt Western educational strategies, they illustrate that the “traditional” method of instruction in which the teacher is the primary source of information is no longer suitable and that the skills required by a “knowledge society” demand teamwork, problem solving, communications, and lifelong learning. More constructivist methods, they argue, situate the teacher as facilitator in student learning, not the transmitter of knowledge, and encourages learning through interactive
tasks that stimulate creative thinking. The ways in which teachers at Xinjiang Senior School approach schooling and implement these methods indicate their interest in pursuing a Western model of instruction. Yang (2004), the former president of Shanghai Normal University, a leading university for teacher preparation, also advises this wholesale borrowing of Western instructional methods to drive China’s socioeconomic development and subsequent merge into a system of “economic globalization”, asserting that no development is possible if China resists changes to its “old ways” of educating students.

Yet the degree to which these changes are taking place is questionable. One might assume that fostering an educative environment in which students are granted increased agency and encouraged to critically analyze problems in a collaborative manner would lead to student critiques of issues that are important to them. For example, one would expect to learn of collective student resistance to strict dress codes or a lack of elective courses. At least one would expect to witness students engaging in interactive, hands-on science projects and other discovery lessons that might help them to develop critical thinking skills. In the three months I spent at Xinjiang Senior School I encountered none of these. In fact, members of the student union volunteered to serve as class “monitors” to observe their classmates and help teachers and administrators to enforce rules governing student appearance and behavior. Nor are science labs often utilized. An Australian science teacher living in an apartment adjacent to mine once inquired about the use of a lab to introduce to his students a lesson on friction. School administrators informed him that experiments were a “waste of time” and that he should focus on lectures which illustrate the scientific laws explaining friction.

According to these observations, teachers largely retain the authority to “explain” subjects and ideas and guide students at Xinjiang Senior School in what they should learn. In the
majority of the classes I observed, students faced the front of the room and the teacher lectured for the entire period. Very few of these lectures were punctuated by brief opportunities for students to ask questions. Freire (2000) identifies this as the “banking” concept of instruction in which students behave as obedient “receptacles” in which teachers “deposit” information. The more obediently the children accept these “deposits” the better students they are and a “good” teacher is defined by how much they “deposit”. According to Freire this method defines education not as critical inquiry, but rather as a gift of those who are “knowledgeable” to those who know nothing.

While I was not permitted to observe any Uyghur schools, Benson (2004) offers some helpful insight by explaining that most Uyghur language educational materials are direct translations of the same Mandarin Chinese books used throughout China. Minority students are required to study Mandarin and courses on politics are also compulsory. Chapman, Chen, and Postiglione (2000) report similar findings in their study of pre-service teachers in ethnic minority regions of China and explain that minorities study the same central curriculum that all Han Chinese students learn. They additionally claim that there is an extremely small amount of curricular variation tolerated at the school level. So, one can assume that minority schools in Xinjiang also employ Friere’s “banking” model of education and socialize students in similar attitudes and ideas taught to their Han Chinese counterparts. These ideas, of course, support the Han Chinese development goals and seek to engender minority acceptance of an imagined national identity and social stability. Benson (2004) provides a telling example when she underscores the fact that minority students who ultimately attend university in Xinjiang are required to read the state-approved history of the Xinjiang region and pass an examination on its
contents in order to graduate. This history emphasizes supposed historical links between Xinjiang and ancient Chinese civilization and is ardently contested by most Uyghurs.

Like Zhang Li and Wang Peng, the two younger teachers, Li You and Zhang Wei, also mentioned the shift in educational style and instructional methods advised by the “advanced” scholars from eastern China and abroad. Their comments, though, focused more directly on the changing dynamics of student-teacher relations and student agency. An exchange with Zhang Wei provides an example:

Zhang Wei: During these two years, many teachers from Beijing, Shanghai, and Shandong come to our school, especially experienced teachers. They give us a lot of good experience and we learn something from them. The government pays more attention to teachers’ training than before and the teachers can treat the students as equal as others. You know, before, several years ago, it seemed that teachers’ positions and students’ positions are not equal, but now I think our position is equal. Sometimes the teachers are the students’ friends. Our relationship is closer than before.

Interviewer: So, the focus is more on the students and less on the teacher?

Zhang Wei: Yes.

Interviewer: Do you think that your teaching style or methods are different from older teachers here?

Zhang Wei: Yes.

Interviewer: How so?

Zhang Wei: For example, sometimes I prepare one class and if I find that students are not fit for the class, I will change to another way. Maybe I will give the students ten
minutes to have a rest, or have a joke, or have a funny story in order to cultivate the students’ interest in class. When I lose my temper, I will try my best to control it.

Interviewer: That’s very difficult sometimes.

Zhang Wei: [laughs] Yes. Sometimes, maybe I will make some mistakes, maybe misunderstand some students. After that, I will make an apology to them in front of the whole class. I think this is different because when I was a student, if a teacher misunderstood me, maybe he or she would never say they were sorry in front of the whole class.

Here, Zhang Wei underscores that in her view, with more teacher training and outside advice, teachers and students enjoy a more equal status in their relationships with one another, a positive improvement in her estimation. While certainly not novel or unusual practices for many Western educators, teachers who make themselves available to students, actively listen to their concerns, have empathy with and advocate for them, and promote teacher-student bonding successfully facilitate relationships with their students that better enable them to develop and adapt to life’s challenges (Johnson, 2008). A more open and equal relationship with students, then, assists teachers at the Xinjiang Senior School in their efforts to develop students who are well able to contribute to Xinjiang’s development.

Teachers and administrators are also trying to make greater strides in addressing student needs. For example, Zhang Li states that the school “pays great attention to helping the students to be sound in mind and various efforts are made to help the students’ psychological well-being”. They also claim to be making efforts to broaden the availability of elective courses and extra-curricular activities for students. Zhang Li describes some of the schools’ “offerings”:
After class our school is paying more and more attention to organizing all kinds of activities in our school. For example, our school offers a ten-day military and political training for our new students in Senior 1 through which the new students will hold the purpose of adapting themselves more quickly to the new environment. At the same time the students of Senior 1 and Senior 2 share participation in ten-day social practice. Picking cotton or peppers in autumn or planting trees in spring. Student associations provide a good stage for students to display their personality. At present there are 11 student organizations at our school. The construction of campus culture has been further improved. Our school holds culture activities organized by the students themselves. Not only does it enrich the students’ school life, but also they play an important role in creating a strong atmosphere of campus structure and greatly promoting positive progressive educational environment.

While presented by teachers as optional activities, the ten-day military, political, and social trainings are actually mandatory. The stated objective of the training, to help students adapt quickly to the new senior school environment, seems to mask the broader goal of socializing students in the military, political, and social views that will prepare them to contribute to the Xinjiang’s development. An important part of this task involves developing patriotism. Becker (2000) describes how patriotism has replaced communism in China’s schools even though children still swear an oath to love the motherland and defend communism.

Based on observations of students engaged in such activities, these efforts face significant challenges. On one occasion I was walking back to my apartment and noticed hundreds of students all over campus bent over in the grass pulling weeds. Several teachers and administrators walked among the students, giving directions and asking questions. The students
were clearly unenthusiastic about their task and I decided to approach a small group of boys and ask what they were doing. “Not getting paid,” one of them replied. Likely as a result of a generation of market reforms in China, students today seem to view income, not service, as their primary motivation. Therefore, after graduation most of them will gravitate toward areas of the country where they can “get paid”. In China, of course, these areas are located in the more prosperous coastal region. This is disheartening for teachers at Xinjiang Senior School who feel it is their duty to encourage students to remain in or return to Xinjiang to contribute to development efforts and construct their “homeland”.

**Development as fostering student ability to aid the construction of the “Homeland”**

Participants feel that the advanced knowledge and instructional strategies imported from the West and eastern China will help them to urge society and students away from a focus on exam scores and toward the goal of cultivating student ability. This is an arduous task as China has a long history of focusing on high examinations to select its best and brightest to attend university and receive promotions to high office. Wang Peng explains:

> The society, the parents, notice the high mark or good mark on high examination. But in the future maybe the government will give lots of new rules about the high examination. The new rules will let the parents and society don’t care for the mark. The new rules will let everybody mention the ability of the children.

He continues by giving an account of a comparison between the ability level of Chinese and Japanese students:

> Some years ago there is a summer holiday group from Japan in China. They went to have dinner outside and then climb a mountain and the Japanese little boys and girls can have dinner together, they can tell interesting stories when they are little. They can do
many, many things. But the Chinese boys and girls, after they slept for one night, when they go outside they forget their caps, shoes, and others. So, they are very limited, but Japanese children are very strong. Now, more and more Chinese parents think ability is very important, very good.

The ultimate goal of student ability is to further the development of Xinjiang. Wang Peng made repeated statements about the ways in which Xinjiang Senior School’s headmaster seeks to improve student abilities. “If they have these abilities,” Wang Peng claims, “I think they will want to have a good work and will serve Xinjiang and other cities in the future.” Zhang Wei provides an explanation of the way in which participants hope their students return to Xinjiang.

These years some students will come back to build our homeland. So when our school finds out this kind of phenomenon, we will say generally how we like to see students or people in Xinjiang who love their homeland. How to love a homeland? The way is that when you learn something from another province, from another university, please come back, come back. Use your talents to build our homeland. We hope more and more students after graduation or after further education come back. Because during the strategy we need lots of persons with ability.

Zhang Li also advocates for returning students, supporting any methods which “make our students have a heart for thinking whatever helps us. Whatever helps us. To make them love our hometown and to see the bright future of west China”. She later added the following statement:

Especially with the development of west China, more and more talents with rich knowledge and all kinds of practical ability are badly needed. They not only have to have a lot of book knowledge, but also the ability to study all of their lives and do
something – solve problems in their lives. Now, maybe this is what we learned from
Britain.

Like most educators, teachers at Xinjiang Senior School point to a few exemplary
students who embody these abilities and affection for Xinjiang. I happened to meet one of these
students while on a guided tour of the former location of the school near the city center. We
were approaching the door to the school when Bai Huan, the foreign teacher liaison, called out a
surprised greeting to a young man several yards away. She promptly introduced me to him, and
I learned that he was a former student of hers who finished high school and was then admitted to
Tsinghua University in Beijing, arguably the best and most selective university in China. Since
his graduation from Tsinghua, he had worked for a government agency in Lhasa, the capital of
Tibet. At the time of our introduction, he had just finished a three-month tour of China and he
excitedly spoke of all the things he had seen and done. Then he expressed his desire to pursue
his master’s degree in the U.S. before returning to Xinjiang to find work. Obviously pleased
with these plans, Bai Huan invited him to join us for dinner later that evening. For the teachers
at Xinjiang Senior School, these are the model students they seek to replicate, the ones who will
continue the construction of Xinjiang. According to them the early stages of this construction
are under way.

*Development as the improvement of living conditions*

When sorting the data I recognized four sub-themes embedded in the participants’
discussions of improved living conditions which represent a linear progression in their
perceptions. Here I present these themes – infrastructure, wealth, consumer goods, and
happiness – and provide exemplary participant examples of each.
Infrastructure. In most of the interviews the first aspect of development mentioned was infrastructure. According to the participants, then, infrastructure provides the support for and evidence of development in this central-Xinjiang city. For example, Zhang Wei talked about “some tasks of the strategy – one of them is to build some buildings, roads, and railways.” Wang Peng, too, cited the fact that “the central government helped Xinjiang to build the highway, the railway, and others.” These perceptions are supported by observations of construction projects throughout the city. First, the Xinjiang Senior School itself is new. Built in 2003, its gleaming facilities and lush landscaping lie just outside the city, which is rapidly expanding with major construction projects. New buildings are seemingly erected overnight and work is beginning on the construction of an additional “city center” project, which literally requires the local river to be rerouted. Roads, railways, and airports connecting the city to an ever-increasing number of locations are also being built or improved.

According to the participants, Xinjiang historically has lacked such infrastructure and current projects arrived on the heels of the central government’s efforts to develop the western regions. Wang Peng provides a lengthy, but telling example:

As you know, Xinjiang is very big, the biggest province in China, but the technology and condition is very poor than other areas in China. As you know in Guangdong, Shanghai, and Beijing the condition and the science and technology is very advanced, but Xinjiang is very poor. I think that Xinjiang is very poor. There are many reasons. The main reason is the history reason. As you know, in history there are seldom, there are little advanced conditions in industry and others in Xinjiang. As you know, a lot of Chinese education and others is very advanced, but in Xinjiang is very poor. So, in early of the 21st Century, the central government of China decided to develop the west area, including
Xinjiang. As you know, Xinjiang has many, many materials such as oil, gas, cotton, wheat, and others. I think that Xinjiang’s materials are more than or very important than other areas. So, I think in Xinjiang, the central government, in order to let the Xinjiang develop very quickly, the central government decided many, many steps.

In this response, Wang Peng first makes a distinction between the advanced conditions of science and technology in the thriving eastern provinces and the poverty and lack of such technology in Xinjiang. This perception provides the foundation for his argument in which the central government first presents the “modern” east as “developed” and then benevolently aids Xinjiang in its efforts to be like the eastern provinces. He also holds the view that Xinjiang has historically lacked any advanced conditions, but this is somewhat inaccurate. In ancient history, Xinjiang’s inhabitants, almost certainly not Han Chinese, were successful in establishing an extremely complex system of underground canals (karez) to irrigate crops in the region’s arid climate. In fact, the brilliance of this technology is now preserved and publicized in museums, which tout the canals as one of the wonders of ancient China. The most telling element of Wang Peng’s response, though, is his emphasis on the extraction of Xinjiang’s natural resources as the fuel for western development. By definition, colonialism entails one nation dominating the resources, labor, and markets of another, capitalizing on them, and securing the vast majority of the created wealth (Kohn, 2008; MacQueen, 2007). Of course, some of this wealth is used for the development of the local infrastructure that facilitates resource extraction, thereby increasing living standards, but the “colonized” share little of the profits.

The improved infrastructure provides the foundation for more products and people to be transported from the prosperous east to the remote and less developed west. With the aid of government investment and the flourishing local oil industry, so many products and people have
relocated to the city from other parts of China that it appears to be an eastern city virtually transplanted to Xinjiang. This, too, is indicative of the colonizing aspect of government development policies. These settlements, products of government-sponsored in-migration, signify the dominant status of the Han Chinese in the region. Easily unnoticed, however, is the section of the city where buildings are not being built and roads are not being improved. Adjacent to the city, and clearly segregated, the Uyghur section of town looks nothing like the gleaming new areas. Dirt roads weave through rows of one-story cement homes and shops where scores of people await the next customer. The only Han people seen in this section are uniformed police.

Wealth. Given this clear income disparity between the Han Chinese and the Uyghur population, it is somewhat ironic that the next sub-theme the participants mentioned was wealth. In one conversation Zhang Wei stated that development in Xinjiang would “use some natural resources to create wealth and improve the living conditions of people.” She later explained that because of the Western Development Strategy the incomes of local people have increased dramatically:

And the income of local people is much more than before. For example, in 2001 the average income in one year was 4,000 RMB. Now, in 2008, the number has increased to 20,000 RMB. I think it is proof that all peoples’ living conditions have improved. A five-fold increase in average income in seven years is certainly a strong indication that some locals are wealthier, but it is worth noting Zhang Wei’s perception that all peoples’ living conditions have improved as a result of Western Development Strategy. She is clearly not alone in holding this belief as I learned while on a scheduled school tour of a local farm operated by the XPCC. As I mentioned previously the XPCC operates numerous farms and prisons in
Xinjiang and provides the lion’s share of the funding for the Xinjiang senior school. In addition, most of the students at the school grow up on these farms.

All of the foreign teachers were strongly urged, if not required, to participate in the tour of a specific XPCC farm that was a short drive from the school. Two foreign teachers had already seen the farm, but nonetheless were expected to accompany us. The main guide on the tour was a math teacher at Xinjiang senior school and was raised on this particular farm. We stopped at field after field of tomatoes, rice, beans, and hops and he introduced us to smiling men and women working there. He readily pointed out that since the farms are owned and operated by the XPCC, those who labor in the fields are called “workers” instead of “farmers”. The workers’ pay, he said, increases as crop yields increase and many have the opportunity to become “rich” working for the XPCC.

While “rich” is not clearly defined, a conversation I had with Li You contradicts the notion that the Western Development Strategy is leading to increases in socioeconomic status for all residents of Xinjiang and that XPCC workers are “getting rich”. Here she describes some of her students:

Li You: Their families are in the Corps [XPCC] and their parents are farmers. Maybe many of them are farmers, but their living is too low. They are very pity. For one month they have money to eat about 200 RMB. Very low. Yeah, very low.

Interviewer: How do they pay for school?

Li You: If they got full marks or high marks our school, every three months, we will give them some money. We will give them 300 RMB for every three months. Yeah, they are very pity. Very pity life.
While neither the socioeconomic status of the Uyghur population nor the workers of the XPCC is increasing, the participants seem to focus on the fact that at least some people in the region are profiting from Xinjiang’s development. This is evident in the widening availability of consumer goods.

*Increased availability of consumer goods.* For the participants, rising incomes and the resulting demand for and availability of more consumer goods is a positive trend in the development of Xinjiang. While, unlike the other participants, Li You acknowledges that not all people in Xinjiang are benefiting from the WDS, she emphatically supports the view that a widening array of attainable products is a key indicator of improved living conditions. Consider her following statements:

Interviewer: In your view, has Xinjiang improved because of the Western Development Strategy?

Li You: Of course! Yes! I think that Xinjiang has improved and for example, you can look at the living level of our people here and our buildings. Many, more and more buildings have been built in [this] city. Living levels have improved and more and more people can afford cars. Many, many. All my friends, they have cars! There are more and more factories being built here, like the [name omitted] factory. Living standards – they have a better living. They eat better than before and they wear better than before.

Li You’s emphasis on what people are eating, wearing, and driving is indicative of the growing consumerism in Xinjiang. While the Chinese are famous for saving significant percentages of their incomes, the central government, facing a slowdown of its export-led growth pattern, is now attempting to bolster domestic consumption (Lai, 2002). Yet, increased consumerism only serves to further stratify society and facilitates the cultural hegemony of the elite. What people
eat, wear, and drive are all clear markers of socioeconomic status and as Han Chinese goods flood the local market they emphasize the fact that the Han Chinese are gaining most of the wealth from the development of the region. Zhang Li echoes Li You’s sentiments.

Interviewer: In our last conversation you said that because of the Western Development Strategy “the living conditions of people living in Xinjiang have improved.” In what ways have living conditions improved?

Zhang Li: Yeah, with the development of Xinjiang and west China there has been great economic growth from which the people benefit a lot. The living conditions are much better than before. The purchasing power has been raised. As you can see, more and more buildings are being built. From many modern buildings to various cars running on the road, from what different people are wearing to all kinds of goods in the super-market and in the street. Especially, I think, from peoples’ facial expression the living condition of here now has changed a lot. Now west China is becoming better than before.

Like Li You, Zhang Li highlights the fact that more wealth translates into more materials. She makes an important addition, though, in that one can discern from “peoples’ facial expressions” that living conditions have improved. To her, it seems that there is a linear connection from wealth and materials to happiness.

_Happiness._ Zhang Li mentions this idea several times and aligns herself with Zhang Wei in that she feels that “all of the people in [the city] are living a happier and happier life.” In her comments Li You demonstrates that, to her, the linear progression from infrastructure and wealth to materials and happiness is actually cyclical by stating that the local people “have a good mood so it is easy to develop our environment and to develop our community.” In the view of the participants, since _all_ of the people in the area are making more money, buying more products,
and living a happy life, the WDS ought naturally to be supported and extended. In one of our earliest conversations Li You said that development to her means “enlargement, improvement, betterment, and extension.” Zhang Wei added that “everybody in the west [of China] should understand and support the strategy.” In fact, according to Zhang Li, if the WDS is not supported and extended then “the underdevelopment in the west will affect the overall prosperity of our country.”

That increased development and the improved living conditions of its people are noble goals for any government is clear, but the ways in which that government manages its development is critical to ensure that all of its citizens benefit. Unfortunately, comments by Wang Peng seem to send an ominous message about how some may understand the necessities of development and its extension in Xinjiang. On multiple occasions throughout the summer, he visited me in my classroom before the students arrived or between classes. Characteristically verbose, he talked extensively about his passion for history and writing and, at times, the questions I raised in my interviews with him. One day we were talking about the WDS and he moved to a map of the United States that hung on the wall. Perhaps to thwart any potential challenge to the merits of the WDS he explained that in his view China’s development efforts and westward expansion is similar to the United States’ experience. He referred to major cities in or near the Rocky Mountains and other remote areas of the country and asked about natural resources and infrastructure conditions there. He then referred to the plight of the Indigenous peoples of the U.S. and the ways that the government systematically displaced them to reservations in order to establish control over the western region. He then asked about current relations between the government and these Indigenous peoples. Unclear about his judgment of these events, I suggested that most people in the U.S. perceive them as blights on our country’s
history that have yet to be adequately resolved. His muted response was also unclear and while I cannot definitively state that he intended to send this message, in many ways the discussion seemed to be a justification for current ethnic conflicts in Xinjiang and a suggestion that they will be resolved at a later date.

*Development as the establishment of sociopolitical stability*

Participants generally acknowledged regional social stability in interviews, but usually chose to address it briefly or indirectly. In our discussions, the participants largely spoke about Xinjiang’s “special” circumstances. For example, in this quotation Wang Peng refers to Xinjiang’s unique demographic characteristics:

As you know, Xinjiang is a special area in China. In Xinjiang there are many nations at here. The main nations are Kazakh and Uyghur and Hui and Mongol. So, this is a big nation at here. In Xinjiang there are two main nations, the Han and Uyghur nations, as you know.

Here Wang Peng underscores the fact that while Xinjiang is a multicultural province, the two largest and, in his view, most important ethnic groups are the Han and the Uyghur. It is worth recalling that in 1953 75 percent of Xinjiang’s population was Uyghur and only six percent were Han. The remaining 19 percent was divided among Kazakhs, Huis, Kyrgyz, and others. By 1990 the Uyghurs made up just 47.5 percent of the population and the Han nearly 38 percent (Toops, 2004). According to the 2000 census, the Han population had increased to nearly 41 percent of the total, but because the data is not disaggregated for other ethnic groups, it is impossible to determine the Uyghur population percentage change from 1990 to 2000.

Like Wang Peng, other participants and even other Han Chinese teachers and administers emphasized Xinjiang’s “special” social characteristics. The most noteworthy of these incidents
took place at a dinner arranged by Bai Huan, the Xinjiang senior school official responsible for foreign teachers. She invited me to a local restaurant in order to meet the other foreign teachers and to explain some of the schools’ rules and regulations. After the introductions, a meal, and some casual conversation, she focused the discussion on Xinjiang, informing me that it is a “special” place with many ethnic groups and that there are special school rules in place and enforced “for [my] safety.” Curfew was exactly midnight, on any night. Any overnight travel plans had to be pre-approved by both school officials and local police and were to include dates, plane and/or train ticket numbers, hotel names and addresses, and personal contacts. In fact, there was a three-week period just before the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games in which the government prohibited all travel by foreigners. At that time school officials were silent as to the reason for this travel ban, but I learned from a participant that it was due to government fears of foreign contributions to any Uyghur social disturbances as the Olympic torch passed through Xinjiang.

Such insistence on issues of safety in Xinjiang is interesting in light of the fact that the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) has more than 220,000 soldiers on standby in the region, not to mention a sizable police presence as well (Shichor, 2004). Clearly, whatever threatening menace that might exist would be utterly outgunned by the PLA and local police forces. This fact suggests that the concern for safety is directly linked to the “special-ness” of the province. As illustrated in Wang Peng’s previous passage and my experience with the foreign teacher liaison, what is so special, even fearful, to the participants about Xinjiang is the presence of the “Other” or non-Han Chinese.

Hall (1997) writes about the ways in which, psychologically and linguistically, relational difference is essential to meaning. For example, one only knows what “black” means if it is
contrasted with “white”. Similarly, one understands “night” because of “day”, “masculine” in light of something “feminine”, and so on. These binary oppositions are employed in understanding one’s difference from “others” as well. In this way an American would distinguish herself from others in that she is not-French, not-Brazilian, or not-Japanese. These oppositions are problematic, however, in that they are extremely simplified categories. Citing Jacques Derrida, Hall also points out that there are few neutral binary oppositions; one is usually dominant. Historically, such simplified categories have been utilized in the subjugation of Indigenous populations, such as during the African slave trade. Individuals identified “Blacks” as impure, savage pagans in contrast to the “Whites”, or non-Blacks, who were represented as pure, civilized Christians. In this way Blacks were to be feared and controlled, feelings that were instrumental in the justification for colonization and the slave trade. Perpetually referring to the presence of the Uyghur and other minority populations as dangerous is analogous to such fears and seems to be an underlying theme in Han-Uyghur relations.

_The importance of establishing safety._ In the participants’ view, a “special place” demands that a “special group” secure and control it. In one interview Zhang Li stated that the [XPCC] plays a very important part in the production and construction of Xinjiang. Now, I think, also, at the same time it also defends the people here from enemies and all kinds of natural disasters. They have been playing a very important role in maintaining social stability, especially in the development of west China, I think. Wang Peng also expresses the XPCC’s important role in defending Xinjiang and China from its “enemies” in the following comments:

As you know, the XPCC is a very special group. They are very like the army and the society. This group is very special. As you know, Xinjiang has many many nationalities
here like the Uyghur, Han nationality, Hui, Mongolian and other nationalities. As you know, there are many countries around Xinjiang such as Russia, Kazakhstan, India, and others. So, in order to let the Xinjiang be very safe, the central government decided to let this special group stay.

Less overt than the People’s Liberation Army (PLA), the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) serves as the provincial defender responsible for ensuring internal security in Xinjiang (Shichor, 2004). Originally created in 1954, the XPCC was composed of demobilized PLA troops and Guomindang (Nationalists), volunteers encouraged by the government to come to Xinjiang, and political and criminal prisoners (Toops, 2004). According to McMillan (1981) the XPCC is comprised of the armed forces which first conquered, or “liberated” Xinjiang, then attempted to promote the organization as the model of modernization, and finally sought to maintain regional control through a system of what he calls “military colonialism”. While still remaining a paramilitary organization, the militaristic element of the XPCC was somewhat diluted by increasing Han in-migration. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, especially during the Great Leap Forward (1958-1960), waves of young people were rusticated to Xinjiang and the XPCC opened reception stations to accommodate the nearly wholly Han arrivals (McMillan, 1984). Millward and Tursan (2004) claim that during these two years the XPCC handled over 2 million Han Chinese settlers from outside Xinjiang and processed another 1.6 million during the earliest stage of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1967). The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) thought that this in-migration would help integrate the region and produce the conditions necessary for economic development and modernization.

This plan has not been realized. Instead, in-migration of Han Chinese has exacerbated existing tensions in Xinjiang as the Han deny the Uyghur any real autonomy of self-
determination, grant the vast majority of available jobs to other Han, and restrict Islamic religious and cultural practices. The Han teachers at Xinjiang Senior School, however, believe that widening economic prosperity will ultimately dampen these tensions.

*Social stability as a result of economic prosperity.* While the XPCC is certainly an instrumental force in establishing safety and social stability in Xinjiang, participants feel that economic prosperity will also contribute. Li You cites “well-being” as an underpinning of hard work, development, and social stability:

> For me, I think if the people living in this area, they feel their well-being very good or very comfort, maybe they will work harder. They have a good mood every day, maybe they will work harder than before. They have a good mood so it is easy to develop our environment and to develop our community. They are friendly to each other and there is no fighting.

Zhang Li offers a similar view of the importance of economic prosperity in establishing social stability in Xinjiang:

> With the Western Development Strategy the economy of Xinjiang is developing quickly and the living condition of people here is improving. The people here are becoming more and more united and the society is more and more harmonious. All people here are trying their best to build western China. With economic prosperity, now social progress and political stability and beautiful landscape. Now with the economy increasing and living conditions improving our society will be more stable and make great progress, I think.

While it may be true that individuals who have “well being” and “comfort” work harder to develop the community and that with economic prosperity comes social harmony and political stability, but the fact remains that the Han Chinese are the main benefactors of development in
Xinjiang. Again, income disparities are sharp along ethnic lines, infrastructure projects are largely constructed in the predominantly Han dominated sections of the province, and coveted development employment jobs are granted to the Han as well (Weimer, 2004). As teachers at Xinjiang Senior School continue to promote and prepare their students for what they have identified as the “development dream” in Xinjiang, it is increasingly clear that this dream will exclude the Uyghur minority.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of the study of teacher perceptions of development and education in China’s Western Development Strategy in Xinjiang province. It illustrated a model that identified these perceptions as following a progression of six stages: development as the importation of advanced knowledge, implementation of advanced instructional methods, development of student ability, construction of the “Homeland”, improvement of living conditions, and the establishment of sociopolitical stability. The findings suggest that while these stages of development seem benevolent, they are actually a prescription for the control and colonization of Xinjiang according to the Han Chinese. The following chapter presents a discussion of these findings and a conclusion to the study.
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Unlike quantitative study results, qualitative findings are not generalizable. Instead, they offer a contextualization and interpretation of specific phenomena and often suggest the existence of similar responses, perceptions, patterns, or behaviors in a larger context. However, in this study the degree to which the participants, even though interviewed privately, reinforced the literature and echoed one another’s perceptions of development and education in Xinjiang suggests that their views may be common among the Han Chinese in the region.

This chapter presents a discussion of these perceptions in two main themes. The first addresses the ways in which teachers at Xinjiang Senior School symbolize the complex larger experience of China’s subjugation by and resistance to the Western neoliberal world order. The second is concerned with China’s control and colonization of Xinjiang and the ways that development and education are employed as colonial tools.

*China’s development agency*

The introduction of this study identifies the fact that while China is anxiously integrating into the neoliberal world economic order, it has also demonstrated its autonomy in this system by maintaining a complex system of “socialism with Chinese characteristics” and insisting on the management of a strong development state. For example, in the 30 years between Deng Xiaoping’s liberalizing economic reform era to its admission into the World Trade Organization, China has adopted numerous suggestions of the most powerful capitalist countries on how it should behave in order to be a “responsible partner” within the framework of the contemporary international system. At the same time, it has largely ignored foreign and domestic demands for democratic political reforms and the acknowledgement of human rights abuses. Clearly, China intends to adopt measures which strengthen its partnerships in international relations and
facilitate its national development goals while resisting demands it finds inconvenient or challenging to its own plans.

The findings of the study suggest that teachers at Xinjiang Senior School approach the development of and education in Xinjiang similarly. In their efforts to educate students who are able to contribute to Xinjiang’s development they willingly accept suggestions and advice from more advanced eastern provinces, and several Western countries, concerning their educative methods. They also accept a hierarchical structure in which the West occupies the premier position and China and Xinjiang follow. In this way, the teachers at Xinjiang Senior School permit educators from Western countries and eastern China, who have already adopted Western instructional methods, to define the knowledge and methods of instruction that are “best” for students in a region with which they are not familiar. Through these definitions the Western and eastern Chinese scholars reproduce knowledge that they deem acceptable and marginalize any alternative perspectives. The degree to which these teachers accept these prescriptions indicates their willingness to allow their own cultural and intellectual subjugation in order to integrate Xinjiang into the larger Chinese state and China into the Western neoliberal world order.

The teachers’ willingness to adopt such definitions and measures is seen in the way that Li You, for example, expressed the need of Xinjiang Senior School teachers to develop a more collaborative teamwork spirit like that of teachers in England or the United States. Ironically, she made this statement in a room literally two doors away from the office in which she and her colleagues regularly meet to ask questions and share ideas about their lessons and ways to improve their instructional skills. Yet, because a visiting scholar from eastern China informed her that American and British teachers have a positive teamwork attitude, she assumes that their method must be the better, more advanced, one.
The teachers in this study then extended this sense of inferiority to their students in the classroom. For instance, when introducing a lesson to her students, Zhang Li informed them of how much China should learn from more advanced countries like the United States and Japan. Due to bitter historical grievances with Japan, its inclusion in her lesson was surprising and likely offensive to her students. When they responded with defiance, she chastised them for their arrogance. This persistence of Xinjiang Senior School teachers to convey the idea of Western superiority is akin to the ways in which core countries impose upon dependent countries an educational system that trains students to adopt the values and behaviors of the core. In their emulation of Western models of education and development these teachers indicate to their students that the ways in which they ought to behave and think are the ways that Western students behave and think.

At the same time, like China’s resistance to some of the less convenient demands of international economic integration, teachers at Xinjiang Senior School do demonstrate a degree of agency in their adoption and application of Western instructional methods. While they largely accept the power of the advanced scholars from the West and eastern China to define the most appropriate methods for their school, the teachers acknowledge that the context in which they work is unique. Therefore, the methods proposed by the visiting scholars may not always be applicable. For example, Zhang Li illustrated the fact that because of Xinjiang Senior School’s large class sizes, lack of educational materials, and intense examination structure, educational strategies employed in England would not necessarily work well in the context of Xinjiang and that teachers should utilize methods which consider this context. In this way it is evident that even though teachers identify Western education models and methods as more advanced than their own, they do retain the right to choose the methods they find most applicable and helpful to
their integration efforts and ignore the others. Unfortunately, in terms of Xinjiang’s ethnic minority populations and their participation and contribution in regional development, similar rights are not granted.

Addressing the colonial question

As China’s economy grows and it seeks deeper integration into the world economy, its ethnic minorities, like the rest of its residents, want to share in the benefits of its development. Historically, the government’s plan to facilitate their participation relied not on policies of integration, but assimilation. By promoting an imagined nation of Chinese, the government sought to create a common homogenous culture in which all ethnicities would devote themselves to the state and its advancement. Recently, similar policies have been implemented by Hu Jintao, the current president of China, in his plan to build a “harmonious society”. These past efforts, and arguably the most recent attempt, to facilitate such a culture have met minority resistance. In Xinjiang, this resistance has and continues to be pacified through efforts to colonize and control its western borderlands.

Again, the basic definition of colonization is a situation in which one country or people moves to a new area or frontier, establishes settlements, capitalizes on natural resources, and effectively dominates the other country or people through military, political, economic, religious, and sociolinguistic control. The findings support existing literature that indicates that the Han Chinese continue to engage in these processes in their efforts to develop Xinjiang. Schools, and especially teachers, play an instrumental role in the transmission of these processes. Through both overt and hidden curricula they promote the dominant culture’s interpretation of development, define challenges to this interpretation as deficits to be changed, and impose the dominant culture’s political, social, and linguistic structures upon students. At the Xinjiang
Senior School these measures were evident in the ways in which teachers encouraged Han students to return to Xinjiang and build the “homeland”, posited the argument that everyone in the province should support the development strategies, and employed monolingual Mandarin social and political training.

In terms of settlements the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, through an extensive jurisdiction including whole cities and hundreds of collective farms, schools, and prisons, has generally served as the central conduit for establishing Han Chinese settlements in Xinjiang. Since the early 1950s, this organization has facilitated the in-migration and settlement of millions of Han Chinese and still has a population of over two million people. Even though its numbers underscore its significance and power in the region, it is important to note that Xinjiang’s provincial government has no authority over the XPCC. Instead, this organization is directly controlled by the State Council in Beijing. This suggests that the government is unwilling to compromise its development goals in Xinjiang by relaxing its control of the settlement and security of the province. It also suggests that the autonomy granted to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region is nominal at best.

The participants also confirmed the fact that the XPCC is intimately involved in Xinjiang’s security. They highlighted the regions unique demographic characteristics and proximity to the newly established Central Asian countries. Participant descriptions of this context are shrouded in a discussion of danger and the need for safety. These discussions support literature which demonstrates that when referring to Xinjiang the Chinese government focuses on fears of what it calls the three evils of terrorism, separatism, and extremism. Yet “terrorist” activities in Xinjiang have been relatively few, in part because of partnerships and positive relationships China has cemented with Central Asian states through the Shanghai
Cooperation Organization. These discursive practices of fear perpetuate negative stereotypes of the Uyghur “others” and in effect legitimize and embolden the government’s strict control of the minority population.

Not only does Beijing directly control the in-migration and settlement of the dominant Han Chinese and the security of Xinjiang, but also the extraction of natural resources in the region. In fact, extraction and capitalization of oil and natural gas is the platform of the Western Development Strategy. However, like classical colonial practices, the lion’s share of the benefits gained from these resources is consumed by the core, or dominant culture. In Xinjiang, for example, extracted oil and natural gas are directly transported via pipeline to eastern China where it is used for energy or sold on the world market. Xinjiang residents benefit little from this process. Those who do reap rewards are largely the Han Chinese who either emigrate from eastern China or already live in Xinjiang and have the training and skills necessary to gain employment in the extraction business.

Schools and teachers, then, play a significant role in the training of these new Han immigrants. The extremely small number of ethnic minorities studying at elite institutions like the Xinjiang Senior School suggests that the Han Chinese will continue to be the primary beneficiaries of the Western Development Strategy. Interestingly, the teachers at Xinjiang Senior School, while touting their school the best in its district and competitive in Xinjiang as a whole, seem unaware of the absence of the minorities in their institution. When they emphasized that their school, which is funded and operated by the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, was one of the highest ranked and that ethnic minorities in the region had the same opportunities as the Han Chinese, I asked why there were no minorities at their school. In a matter-of-fact response Wang Peng explained that there were few minorities in the XPCC, so
there are few minorities studying at the school. These teachers apparently miss the implication that if the XPCC operates the best schools in the province and minorities are not included, then they do not have the same opportunities as the Han Chinese. In fact, their lack of access to quality education ensures their continued subjugation by the Han Chinese within Xinjiang’s development processes. This lack of access to quality education perpetuates a situation in which ethnic minorities are also dominated economically, evidenced by sharp income disparities along ethnic lines.

Schools and teachers not only play a significant role in perpetuating the economic domination of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, but also their sociolinguistic dominance. While some schools do employ a version of bilingual education, albeit one that rather abruptly transitions students from native language classes to Mandarin medium classes, this researcher found no evidence of minority language coursework at Xinjiang Senior School. Even in public spaces around Xinjiang numerous business and government signs include Arabic and Cyrillic script in addition to Chinese characters. These signs, however, generally contain a propaganda message that encourages national unity. For example, a large sign at the city center and near to Xinjiang Senior School reads “Be civilized and build our harmonious society” in Uyghur, Russian, and Chinese. Such signs, while still contributing to the sociolinguistic domination of minorities by employing their native language as a tool of assimilation, are at least visible.

Xinjiang Senior School displayed no minority languages at all. To the few minority students who do study at the school, this absence clearly signals the school’s intent to assimilate them into the larger Han Chinese nation.

**Conclusion and suggestions for future research**

These various measures of control and domination clearly amount to classical internal
colonizing activities. They are also continuously conducted under the banner of the seemingly benevolent Western Development Strategy. While the government and teachers at Xinjiang Senior School demonstrate flexibility and agency in the ways in which they adopt Western behaviors and educative methods to integrate into the global economic system, they offer little flexibility to ethnic minorities concerning the ways in which they might contribute to and benefit from the development of China’s western provinces. Instead, they execute measures of control and colonization in Xinjiang that seek to assimilate its minorities.

This study is unique in that it focused narrowly on Han Chinese teachers at a predominantly Han senior school in Xinjiang, and sought to understand their perceptions of regional development processes and the ways in which they prepare students to participate in these processes. Future studies, then, might explore this topic longitudinally to determine the degree to which Han Chinese students do in fact remain in or return to Xinjiang to contribute to development efforts. Also, as difficult as it will be to navigate the complex web of government restrictions on ethnic minority research, it is important for future studies to focus on Uyghur teachers and their perceptions of development and how they convey these perceptions to their students. For example, one might explore the ways, if any, that they foster resistance to Han development measures in their students. It is also important that these studies are conducted in the participants’ native language in order to generate the most accurate interpretations. Whatever the research approach, there is considerable work to be done in China’s western borderland.
REFERENCES


Starr (Ed.), *Xinjiang: China's Muslim borderland* (pp. 63-100). Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.


May 6, 2008

TO: James Pippen
EDFI

FROM: Richard Rowlands
HSRB Administrator

RE: HSRB Project No.: H08T302GE7

TITLE: Education in Xinjiang: Effects of China’s Great Western Development Strategy in Pedagogy and School Administration

You have met the conditions for approval for your project involving human subjects. As of May 5, 2008, your project has been granted final approval by the Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB). This approval expires on April 23, 2009. You may proceed with subject recruitment and data collection.

The final approved version of the consent document(s) is attached. Consistent with federal OHRP guidance to IRBs, the consent document(s) bearing the HSRB approval/expiration date stamp is the only valid version and you must use copies of the date-stamped document(s) in obtaining consent from research subjects.

You are responsible to conduct the study as approved by the HSRB and to use only approved forms. If you seek to make any changes in your project activities or procedures (including increases in the number of participants), please send a request for modifications immediately to the HSRB via this office. Please notify me, in writing (fax: 372-6916 or email: hsr@bgsu.edu) upon completion of your project.

Good luck with your work. Let me know if this office or the HSRB can be of assistance as your project proceeds.

Comments/Modifications:

cc: Dr. Christopher Frey

Research Category: EXPEDITED #7
APPENDIX B: STATEMENT OF RESEARCH INTENT FOR XINJIANG SENIOR SCHOOL

With the consent of the leadership of [redacted] high school, I, James Pippin, plan to conduct qualitative thesis research of the perceptions of teachers and administrators at [redacted] regarding the Western Development Strategy. Participants in this project will be asked to complete three separate audio recorded interviews of approximately one hour in which they will answer questions about the educational methods employed by [redacted] to prepare students for post-secondary enrollment. Attached to this statement is a document which details the planned research activities and demonstrates that these activities have been approved and deemed benign by the Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB). The duration of this research will not exceed a period of six weeks.

In addition, my wife, Jennifer, is accompanying me on this trip.

[Signature]

James Pippin
APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT LETTER OF CONSENT

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by James Pippin and Dr. Christopher Frey in the College of Education and Human Development at Bowling Green State University. The purpose of this study is to gather information about the perceptions of teachers and administrators at the middle school regarding the Great Western Development Strategy and their efforts to prepare students for post-secondary enrollment. You can aid our efforts by providing your own insights and experiences.

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be one of approximately five people asked to complete three audio recorded interviews in which you will answer questions about your perceptions of the Great Western Development Strategy and educational methods used at the middle school to prepare students for post-secondary enrollment. You will be asked to complete these three interviews within two months. Completion of each of these interviews will take one hour of your time. The estimated total amount of time for your participation is three hours. Your participation in these interviews indicates your consent.

There are neither any foreseeable direct benefits, nor direct risks, associated with your participation in this study. However, your participation will help us better understand the perceptions of teachers and administrators concerning the Great Western Development Strategy and essential educational methods to prepare students for post-secondary enrollment.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study, without penalty, at any time and for any reason. Participation or withdrawal will not affect any rights to which you are entitled, nor will it affect your relationship or standing with the researcher.

All of the information collected will be kept confidential. The interviews will be conducted in a private, secure location. Data, including audio recordings and transcripts, will be kept in separate password-protected hard drives or locked file cabinets until completion of the study, upon which time these documents will be shredded. Data will be entered into a password protected database to which only the researchers will have access. Upon completion of the study, data will be reported at the group level. At no time will your name or any personally identifying information be reported or disclosed in connection to the information you provide for this study.

If you have any questions about this research study, you may contact me, James Pippin, at [redacted], Xinjiang, China, (513) 465-8448, pippinj@bgsu.edu, or pippinj@gmail.com. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Christopher Frey at (419) 372-9549 or cfrey@bgsu.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Human Subjects Review Board at Bowling Green State University at (419) 372-7716 or hrbr@bgsu.edu.

Sincerely,

James Pippin

Bowling Green, OH 43403-0246
(419) 372-7265
Fax: (419) 372-9265

BGSU HSRB - APPROVED FOR USE
ID # HSBT-32247
EFFECTIVE 5/1/17
EXPIRES 5/1/19

05/06/08 TUE 09:47 [TX/RX NO 54081]
Regulations For Foreign Teachers’ Management At High School

1. All foreign teachers are to abide by the Constitution Of PRC and relevant laws and regulations, respect the Chinese customs and traditions. Political, economic and cultural activities irrelevant with the teacher’s status are forbidden.

2. Foreign teachers are to respect China’s policy on Minority ethnic groups and pay follow for the local minorities customs and traditions. No missionary work such as handing out publicity materials and cultivating disciples is allowed.

3. Foreign teachers are to observe the stipulations with regard to teaching and school administration.

4. No lodgers other than foreign teachers themselves are allowed in the foreign teachers’ dormitories. If the regulation above is violated, disciplinary action will be taken according to the seriousness of the case.

5. Guest registration is a must. Only those who have an appointment or are invited with permission from the school leaders responsible for foreign affairs are welcome. Return to the campus before 12 pm. Visitors are not allowed beyond 12 pm without permission from the vice-headmaster responsible for foreign affairs.

6. No smoking and no spitting on the campus or other public places. No contact with students of opposite sex during the after-school hours. Be a paragon of virtue and learning. Tidy clothes are required.

7. Devotion to teaching and research on teaching English as a foreign language are highly expected. Each foreign teacher is to make a detailed teaching plan for the new term.

8. Each term evaluation on foreign teachers’ work will be carried out by school International Department and department in charge of teaching affairs. Teaching content and materials outside text books are to be checked.

9. All foreign teachers are welcome to take part in activities promoting teaching or talent shows among teachers and students.

10. Foreign teachers are to abide by the teaching syllabus and plan stipulated by the
school. Each foreign teacher is required to observe the timetable strictly. No exchange of classes at will. Teaching materials provided by High School are compulsory and cannot be changed freely. Supplementary teaching materials such as tapes, videos, books and magazines etc can only be applied after the consent of the Department of Teaching Affairs.

11. A notice for leave due to private matters or disease is to be handed in to the head of Department of Teaching Affairs ahead of time. For example, requesting sick leave should follow the procedures below:

1). Present the notice with a doctor's diagnosis.

2). Get written approval from head of Department of Teaching Affairs and then vice headmaster responsible for foreign affairs.

3). Report to Department of Teaching Affairs when the sick leave is due.

All classes thus missed should be made up in time.

12. In general, the school won't arrange for foreign teachers to hold lectures or attend some communicative activities outside school. But if there do exist any reason for doing so, a written approval from Department of Teaching Affairs is necessary.

13. A three days' notice should be given before traveling, which shall include traveling time, routes, destination and time of returning. If there is any mishap arising on the trip, just contact the school authority.

14. Take good care of the teaching equipment and living arrangements provided by the school. When the contract terminates, all the equipment and articles will be checked and examined. If there is any loss, damage, compensate according to the cost.

International Department of Teaching Affairs

2006.12
APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL 1

Interview Protocol 1: Xinjiang Senior School Han Chinese Teachers’ Perceptions of Development and Education in Xinjiang

Time of Interview:
Date:
Location:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of Interviewee:

Questions:

1. What is your understanding of the Western Development Strategy in Xinjiang?

2. What is your understanding of “development”?

3. How does the Western Development Strategy influence teaching or administration at Xinjiang Senior School?

4. How do teachers and administrators at Xinjiang Senior School prepare students to contribute to or participate in the Western Development Strategy?

5. How do teachers and administrators at Xinjiang Senior School prepare students for university enrollment?
APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL 2

Interview Protocol 2: Xinjiang Senior School Han Chinese Teachers’ Perceptions of Development and Education in Xinjiang

Time of Interview:
Date:
Location:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of Interviewee:

Questions:

1. Please provide some approximate demographic information about the student population at Xinjiang Senior School.
   a. How many students are male and how many are female?
   b. How many are wealthy or poor?
   c. Are there any ethnic minority students? If so, how many?
   d. Do most students come from Xinjiang or elsewhere in China?

2. Please tell me about your average workday at Xinjiang Senior School.
   a. What time do you arrive for work?
   b. How many classes do you teach in one day?
   c. How many hours do you spend in teaching meetings?
   d. How many hours do you spend grading homework?
   e. How many hours do you spend creating lessons?
   f. How many hours do you spend with students?
   g. Do you often consult with students’ parents?
   h. In what kinds of extracurricular activities are you involved?
   i. What time do you leave work on the average day?

3. Some participants mentioned that because of the Western Development Strategy, “the living conditions of people living in Xinjiang have improved.” In what ways have living conditions improved? Please provide some examples.

4. Several have mentioned the terms “social stability” and “social progress” as key components of development.
   a. What do these terms mean to you?
   b. In your opinion does education contribute to or ensure social stability? If so, how?

5. Some have stated that fostering a more student-centered education in which children have the opportunity to develop individual interests, solve everyday problems, and become lifelong learners is necessary for future development in western China. In your experience has student-centered education been successful at Xinjiang Senior School? If so, how?

6. Many view educational development in western China as a long-term project. In ten or twenty years, what is your vision of education at Xinjiang Senior School?
APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL 3

Interview Protocol 3: Xinjiang Senior School Han Chinese Teachers’ Perceptions of Development and Education in Xinjiang

Time of Interview:  
Date:  
Location:  
Interviewer:  
Interviewee:  
Position of Interviewee:

Questions:

1. In your opinion what is the purpose of schooling?

2. What are the required courses for students at Xinjiang Senior School?

3. Are there any elective subjects? If so, what are these subjects?

4. It seems that all senior schools in China require students’ families to pay tuition or fees. How, then, do you distinguish between public and private schools?

5. There are many nationalities in this city yet there are few of these nationalities studying at Xinjiang Senior School. In your opinion, what is the reason for this?

6. Participants have mentioned that recent teaching reforms encourage a more student-centered education. Are students at Xinjiang Senior School encouraged to form clubs or other organizations based on their own interests? If so, how are these organizations funded and/or managed?

7. Do students at Xinjiang Senior School organized any type of student government? If so, what are the roles of this organization?