

A STUDY ON CHINA'S UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT IN RELATION TO  
THE NATIONALISM OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

By

Jungwon Yang

THESIS

Submitted to  
KDI School of Public Policy and Management  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

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Professor Hunjoo Park

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## ABSTRACT

### A STUDY ON CHINA'S UNEQUAL DEVELOPMENT IN RELATION TO THE NATIONALISM OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

By

**Jungwon Yang**

China has been the most rapidly growing economy in the world for over 25 years. This growth has fueled a remarkable increase in per capita income and a sharp decline in poverty rate. At the same time, however, different kinds of disparities have increased. Inequality has risen, propelled by rural-urban gap and regional gap.

In other aspects, there have been ethnic minority movements for entire sovereignty or separatism in China. At first, it started from repulsion of the oppressed process of unification by the Chinese Communist Party, but as time passes by, the aspect of the nationalism has been changed. At the level of pre-industrialization, nation difference or inequality was not severe enough to regard them as suppressed class nation or "periphery". However, after declaring Chinese way of Capitalism and adopting an opening-door policy, the gap amongst regions has sharply increased. Minorities become a nation class. Hechter argued that it is "Internal Colonialism". According to his logic, minorities as periphery have difficulty in getting over inequality situation and escaping from poverty because their human and natural resources are used for the development of core.

Based on this hypothesis, this study assumes whether Chinese unequal development affects the rising of minority nationalism, and tries to reveal its relation. If inequality influences the occurrence of minority nationalism, conflict regions will suffer much more from unequal development. If they have similar conditions to other autonomous minority regions, another factor should be considered. Therefore, in this study, the research objects will be categorized into four groups (five leading regions, non-autonomous regions, autonomous regions and conflict regions) and compare data which can estimate the degree of economic and social development. From the analysis of each data's result, we could prove the relation between unequal development and minority nationalism.

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Dedicated to My Parents

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1. Background

“Nation is an imagined political community.” argues Benedict Anderson. He indicates that it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.<sup>1</sup> In fact, a nation seems to be quite a vague and rather subjective community. However, in spite of the ambiguity of its substance, this imagined community is stronger than any other political or religious community and has a certain destructive power which is expressed as nationalism. Regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in the nation, the nation itself is always conceived as being founded upon a deep and horizontal comradeship. Ultimately, it is this fraternity that over the past two centuries made it possible for many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings.<sup>2</sup> Owing to this reason, at the national level, governments sometimes try to use it as an effective method of suppressing social conflicts and justify its own system. Only giving impression that a government advocates the right of the nation can have power over its people. However, this kind of propaganda is not always valid in every country. If a country has more than one nation

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<sup>1</sup> Benedict Anderson, “Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism”, Revised Edition ed. London and New York: Verso, 1991, p.5

<sup>2</sup> Benedict Anderson, same book, p.7

within it, the government should focus on the majority nation and conflicts; otherwise, dissatisfactions of other minority nations could not be escaped. As a matter of fact, countries that are only comprised of a single nation are rare in the world and therefore, there has been a significant increase of ethnic or nation conflicts in the last decade. They constitute one of the main sources of domestic political instability in multi-national countries. China, the most typical example of a multi-national country, has not been exempt from this trend, as demonstrated by ethnic conflicts in Tibet, Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia.<sup>3</sup>

The problem surrounding Chinese minority nationalism has been focused on by many scholars. However, Chinese government officially denied the existence of ethnic conflicts and this made it difficult to do precise research on it. Studies on Chinese ethnics minorities were mostly triggered by the issue of Tibet; but until 1990s even studies with a limited scope were not performed well; and moreover, until the 1980s the dominant perspective even among western scholars was that China was a unitary country, and interest for Chinese minorities or China as a multi-ethnic state did not exist at all. There were only limited conversations about nationalism as a major ideology of Chinese Communism, but not about minority nationalism. After China opened its doors to the western world in the 1980s, a new generation of scholars of Chinese studies started to show interest in minority problems. However, their work was limited to regions where the Chinese government could control sources and data, or regions where the

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas Heberer, *China's nationalities policies: Quo Vadis?*, Institute of East Asian Studies, University Duisburg-Essen, Germany. p.1

minority group had a positive attitude toward the central government.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the diversity of religions, languages and social development of each minority region prevented the scholars from doing more precise research. These factors caused the research to stay at a basic level.

Despite restrictions and difficulties, some scholars like Harrell, Heberer and Hechter have studied the subjects of political autonomy, economic policy and identification of minorities and endeavored to reveal that these factors related with minority nationalism.

Harrell insisted that the source of minority conflicts was from the collective memory of historical knowledge, especially from Sino-centered images. He set forth that the Cultural Revolution was not only directed at psychological and physical annihilation and suppression, but comprised an element of “memoricide”, that is, the extermination of historical documents, accompanied by rituals of intimidation, with the goal of demonstrating who had the monopoly of interpreting Chinese history. This memoricide had not been forgotten, especially today, where representatives of various minorities are trying to reappraise the interpretation of their history. Concurrently, among ethnic minorities in China we can see the rediscovery of their history and an increasing consciousness thereof. Accordingly, Steven Harrell argued that a triple pattern of ethnic classification exists in China: ethno-history, a scholarly discourse of the history of a nationality or an area; state

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<sup>4</sup> Colin Mackerras, “China’s Minority; Integration and Modernization in the Twentieth Century”, Oxford Univ. Press, 1995, p.15 Quoted in Lee, Jinyoung, “Study on the theoretical base of Chinese minorities policy”, Asia-Pacific study, Kyunghee Univ. Asia-Pacific research center, Dec. 1999, p.279

discourse of ethnic historization, the official classification by Chinese authorities; and ethnic identity, the perception of one's own ethnic identity.<sup>5</sup> The conflicts among them make ethnic minorities realize their distorted and suppressed history, provoking nationalism. Undoubtedly, there are differences in the ways in which each nationality evaluates its history and historical events, so the aspect of nationalism is different from nation to nation. And there is also a constraint of this perspective that it is not sufficiently understood by the political leadership of the Han people, the majority ethnic group of China.<sup>6</sup>

Taking a different point of view, Herberer emphasized that political source was the main reason causing minority conflicts. He insisted that the year 1982's constitution re-evaluated minorities and the year 1984's "Autonomy Law" formally extended to them the widest-reaching freedoms since the founding of the People's Republic.<sup>7</sup> But most of the clauses of the Autonomous Law were so vaguely worded that they are not complementary in the absence of accompanying laws. It is a soft law that sets goals that should be followed as much as possible by state policies. It lacks reference to an effective system for the protection of autonomy. In addition, there are no legal measures for the implementation of this law. Therefore, Herberer points out that there are correspondingly many complaints that local authorities do not

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<sup>5</sup> Harrell, Steven, "The History of the History of the Yi, in: Harrell, S., ed, Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers", Seattle and London; University of Washington Press, 1995, p.98

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Heberer, "China's nationalities policies: Quo Vadis?", Institute of East Asian Studies, University Duisburg-Essen, Germany. p.5

<sup>7</sup> Heberer, Thomas, "Gesetz über die Gebietsautonomie der Nationalitäten der VR China", Übersetzung and Kommentar, in: China aktuell, October, 1984, pp 601-604. Quoted in Thomas Heberer, "China's nationalities policies: Quo Vadis?", Institute of East Asian Studies, University Duisburg-Essen, Germany. p.8

keep to it.<sup>8</sup> However, this perspective also has the limit that it does not explain why there are some minorities or regions that have stronger nationalism whereas there are others who do not, in spite of similar level of adjustment of autonomous law to all minorities. Rather, the Chinese government tends to give more priority or advantage of political autonomy right to conflict regions to alleviate the tension. However, the result seems prone to backfire despite its intentions.

There are also some scholars<sup>9</sup> who emphasize the importance of revitalization of religions. They insist that the increasing consciousness of national identity, especially among the larger peoples, expresses itself, among other ways, in increasing religiousness. The growing influence of religion and traditional culture among ethnic minorities has to be understood as an indication of rising ethnicity. In this context, religions and traditions are not only a reminder of one's own culture and cultural identity, but also serve to get to grips with a social change. The increasing influence of religions and traditions are thus also a reaction to the process of social changes. Some scholars go as far as to say that the process of modernization and transformation weakens the cohesion of an ethnic group and produces mobilization to preserve the group identity in religion and in that way promotes ethnic nationalism.<sup>10</sup> However, this perspective bears the danger of neglecting other possibly influential factors and blaming a specific religious group or

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<sup>8</sup> Wang Geliu 1997; He Gaowa 1997; Ma Wenyu 1997; Wu Zongjin 1998, pp. 167ff; Hao 1998, pp241; Shen/Shi 1998, pp136; Wang Yongwu 1998. Quoted in Thomas Heberer, "China's nationalities policies: Quo Vadis?", Institute of East Asian Studies, University Duisburg-Essen, Germany. p.8

<sup>9</sup> Shen Jun (1997), Bajie Rihuo(1998), Zhou/Xia(1995), etc.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Heberer, "China's nationalities policies: Quo Vadis?", Institute of East Asian Studies, University Duisburg-Essen, Germany. p.14

community for all conflicts. Rather than being at the root of nationalism, the revitalization of religion overwhelmingly seems to be a comfort mechanism to forget about the harsh reality.

Finally, there exists a perspective that argues that unequal development is the causal factor of minority nationalism. Actually, the process of economic development increasingly generates inequalities within nations. While rural-urban and regional inequalities continue to widen in many countries, internal divisions along ethnic lines are understood worse. However, historically and in the present, ethnic inequalities have grown alongside regional inequalities in many nations.

<sup>11</sup> On this point, Hechter used the concept of “Internal Colonialism.” The internal colonialism model argues that the process of national development leads to divergence in economic integration as well as cultural and political integration among different ethnic groups located within a single nation. Hechter states that “the internal colonialism model posits altogether different consequences resulting from heightened core-periphery interaction. Structural inequalities between the regions should increase, as the periphery develops in a dependent mode. Individuals of the core culture are expected to monopolize the high prestige roles in the social structure of the peripheral regions, as is the situation in overseas colonies. The bulk of the peripheral population is confined to subordinate positions in the social structure. In sum, a cultural division of labor arises.” (Hechter, 344)<sup>12</sup> This model

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<sup>11</sup> Christopher Sullivan, “Inequality in Reform era China: The Ethnic question”, Paper prepared for the population association of America’s annual conference, session on Chinese inequality, April 2006, Los Angeles, CA, p.1

<sup>12</sup> Hechter, Michael, “Internal Colonialism”, London; Routledge & Paul, 1975. Quoted

does not fully indicate that internal colonialism is closely connected to the occurrence of minority nationalism like other theories. It tends to focus on the causal factor of regional inequality rather than ethnic nationalism. However, it is meaningful in that it reveals that regional inequality is not simply a product of a policy failure, but is also influenced by the unequal treatment between the core and periphery alongside ethnic differences. If we consider the Han people as the core and the other minorities as the periphery in China, we are able to adopt a different perspective on serious development problems involving regional inequalities, free from the idea that this results from the inevitable policy of “Choice and Concentration”, the view of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Additionally, assuming that poor periphery regions have been treated unequally, we can deduce that a seriously deteriorated region would have strong complaints and a high level of dissatisfaction about the core. This can lead to the occurrence of nationalism.

Ernest Geller also points out that the fervent level of nationalism happens at the point of industrializing and when the gap between the ones who possess authority or power of politics, economy and education and the others who do not is at its widest.<sup>13</sup> In a community of nation under a stable agricultural system, features characteristic of nationalism are inexistent. Even if a class was suppressed or exploited by another class, they would not subvert the political system until they

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in Christopher Sullivan, “Inequality in Reform era China: The Ethnic question”, Paper prepared for the population association of America’s annual conference, session on Chinese inequality, April 2006, Los Angeles, CA, p.1

<sup>13</sup> Ernest Gellner, “Nation and nationalism”, Yeha Publisher, 1988, p.155

classified themselves as a separate nation or race. Only when a certain nation becomes a suppressed class and recognizes that its community is treated unequally, does a nation take actions with political intentions. Only a national class or class nation can become a political catalyst.<sup>14</sup> If industrialization gives a great wealth to a group of people but does not reduce the economic gap between national classes, emotions of nationalism may be provoked. Only when the ruling class and ruled class are categorized according to national differences, can the emotion of nationalism be wounded seriously. In this point, there is a high possibility that the area where minority races reside in a severely deteriorated surrounding can be the highly potential place of origin causing minority nationalism. This logic is quite similar to “Internal Colonialism” mentioned above.

Following this logic, not only isolated conflict regions such as Tibet, Inner Mongolia, and Xingjian, but also other regions could become hotbeds for conflicts in the near future as they recognize that they are exploited by the Han people and do not share the fruits of economic growth despite providing abundant natural resources in their areas. In the past, they were connected under the banner of Socialism and the gap among them was not so big. But now they do not have any title or justification that can tie them up with each other. Actually, riots and demonstrations in autonomous areas of ethnic minorities have already occurred. They asked for independence or full autonomy while displaying anger at the difference in economic growth between the

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<sup>14</sup> Ernest Gellner, “Nation and nationalism”, Yeha Publisher, 1988, p. 165

areas of Han people and theirs.<sup>15</sup> Although the Chinese government tries to combine together all nations under the name of “the Great Nation of China”, the questions of whether this concept can work effectively linger on. Once the open economy of China boosts regional inequality even more and the ethnic minorities’ respect and expectation towards China’s Communism fade away due to the realization that they remain at the periphery, what will happen?

For studies focusing on causal factors of minority nationalism in different historical aspects, the lack of political autonomy or religious reason are also valuable lines of explanation. However, these factors could be regarded as results caused by the economic inequality because they can occur in the process of adjusting unequal economic policy or a reaction to it. Therefore, in this study, I will focus more on economic factors<sup>16</sup> (unequal development by regions and within region) to explain the cause of minority nationalism and reveal that the depth of economic plight in conflict regions at the periphery is stronger than in other more peaceful regions, which in turn provokes strong nationalistic emotions.

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<sup>15</sup> For example, in February of 1995, in Inner Mongolia, a group of executives having hundreds of Mongolian Protestants were arrested in the name of criminal offense of subversion and disunion of a country and agitation for anti-revolution. In Xinjiang Uygur, from the middle of April of 1996 to May 20<sup>th</sup> there were 45 riots gathering 65,000 people at fifteen places. They joined ‘East Turkistan national revolution group’ of Kazakhstan and demanded the foundation of independent country. And for six days from February 5<sup>th</sup> of 1997, in Xinjiang, a demonstration of the largest scale ever to have taken place in China since the founding of the country took place. (Chinese study, 82 series, Seoul, Hanyang Univ. The research center of Asia-Pacific regions,1999)

<sup>16</sup> It does not simply mean purely economic factors. It belongs to the social unequal development as well as the economic inequality.

## 2. Contents and Purpose of Study

The contents of this study can be divided into three parts.

Firstly, by way of looking into the present condition and situation of Chinese ethnic minorities, their symbolic and realistic status will be discussed. Thus light can be shed on why Chinese communism puts a lot of emphasis on the policy of autonomous areas in spite of their numeric inferiority. Later on, the focus will move to the overall situation of three conflict regions such as Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Xingjian and the origin of the most severe nationalism will be discussed. Still now, these regions account for the bulk of separatist movements in China and demands for full autonomy are still raised. To suppress these demands, China's communist government has used both carrot and stick policies; and by encouraging the immigration of Han people, the government has tried to decrease the ratio of ethnic minorities within these areas.<sup>17</sup> Some of these policies proved to be effective, but most of them were ineffective. There will be a need to find out why special ethnic minorities' nationalism or separatist movements are so strong and do not disappear. To know the cause, two broad perspectives will be shortly mentioned; one is a perspective that looks at the non-economic factors such as differences of historical culture, political autonomy and religion as decisive factors. The other perspective looks more closely at economic and social development factors as possible causes. The former is the more dominant theory among Chinese scholars, but I will focus more on the latter.

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<sup>17</sup> In the policy of Han immigration, it causes more discontents because minorities start to realize that even the small fruit of regional development can be deprived by Han people.

Secondly, the unequal development situation in China will be discussed. As I mentioned before, this study focuses on the relationship of ethnic minorities' nationalism with inequality. First of all, by dividing all 31 regions into four categories - leading five regions, non-autonomous regions (with an overwhelmingly Han population), autonomous regions (ethnic minorities) and conflict three regions (Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Xingjian), the different degrees of development will be considered. Six indicators for measuring inequality will be used; the difference of economic structure and GDP, unemployment rates and total wage, educational degree, urban and rural development, infrastructure and social welfare system among regions will be discussed. Secondly, the situation of inequality or discrimination within conflict regions between Han Chinese and ethnic minorities is discussed. With difficulties in collecting data, this part relies on literature references. It certainly has the limit to show clear-cut image, however, as a complement of data outcomes, it will be helpful to understand the concept of core-periphery relations or internal colonization occurring in the same region.

Thirdly, based on second part, I will analyze the data and lead to the result of correlation of inequality development and minority nationalism. If all the three conflict regions have conditions similar to other autonomous regions, the other factors should be emphasized and the basic assumption of this study should be revised. If not, we can reach the conclusion that unequal development is a strong causal factor of minority nationalism in China,

Based on this, this study has clear purposes.

Firstly, it is to detect strong causal factors of the problems of minority nationalism. By comparing the region's unequal situation, I will show that conflict regions are in a much worse economic state than other regions, especially even than other autonomous regions. From the result, I will reveal that this unequal treatment in development leads to high dissatisfaction of people in those regions, which in turn may encourage conflicts and minority ethnic nationalism.

Secondly, it is to encounter a solution to the problem of ethnic minorities' nationalism. Facing the 17<sup>th</sup> National People's Congress Standing Committee (NPCSC), Chinese communists will decide the policy for the next four years and three ways are rumored to be discussed. Broadly speaking, left wing people will insist that only a more tightly planned economy can save China from its current problems and solve the minority nationalism while right wing people are insisting on the necessity of democratization. And the rest is arguing in favor of a vague middle way between them. Will these conversations really benefit ethnic minorities and the future of China? What will be the real solution or policy of minority nationalism problem? This study will take these considerations into account.

### **3. Methodology of Study**

#### **(1)Literature References**

Firstly, were reviewed white books, master's and doctoral theses, articles in periodicals, research papers regarding nationalism, China, Chinese nationalism, ethnic minorities, autonomous areas of China, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Xingjian.

Secondly, were also reviewed working papers from websites of the World bank, Columbia international affairs online(CIAO), Human right watch and articles of newspapers from people daily ([www.peopledaily.com.cn](http://www.peopledaily.com.cn)), China Youth Daily([www.bjyouth.com.cn](http://www.bjyouth.com.cn)), Agence France-Press([www.afp.com](http://www.afp.com)), Xinhua([www.xinhua.org](http://www.xinhua.org)), Dong-Allbo([www.donga.com](http://www.donga.com)),Hankyorehllbo([www.hani.co.kr](http://www.hani.co.kr)),Guardian([www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk)) and Independent([www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk)), Wall Street Journal([www.wallsteetjournal.com](http://www.wallsteetjournal.com)) and official homepage of Tibetan government in exile([www.tibet.com](http://www.tibet.com)).

## **(2) Analysis on Data of National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC)**

The raw data from 1996 to 2005 from the National Bureau of Statistics of China were downloaded from their webpage<sup>18</sup> to be analyzed. Microsoft Excel was used as a statistical tool for arranging data and statistical analysis.

## **4. Scope of Study**

The time scope of this study ranges mainly from 1996 to 2005.<sup>19</sup> As a matter of fact, to obtain more exact result, it would be more suitable to set the time scope from the time that Deng Xiaoping started an open economy policy in 1978 up to now. During that time, however, there have been some changes in administration districts and that makes it more difficult to access each region's data. Almost all data in this study are from the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC); so, I set the

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<sup>18</sup> [www.stats.gov.cn](http://www.stats.gov.cn)

time scope as wide as I could, according to the availability of securing raw data. As the last decade is the period that China has experienced a rapid growth rate and development while at the same time the Chinese government policy for the autonomous areas should show results, it will be meaningful to study this time scope.

The objects of this study are 31 regions of China. It is based on the distraction division from the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC). I will divide them into four groups: the first is the group of five leading cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Gwangdong and Chongqing; second come eight regions (Shanxi, Jiangsu, Anhui, Fujian, Jiangxi, Shangdong, Henan and Shaanxi) of non-autonomous areas where Han people dominate; the third is the group of fifteen regions(Hebei, Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Zhejinag, Hubei, Hunan, Gangxi, Hainan, Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan, Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia) of autonomous areas where minorities reside; and the fourth is that of three conflict regions of Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang. Among the five leading cities, Gwangdong and Chungqing are autonomous regions, but as they are special areas the central government takes special emphasis on in terms of economic development, including these cities in the category of autonomous regions could result in bias. For the same reason, three major cities are also excluded in the group of non-autonomous regions. In light of this problem, these regions are managed in this study as a separate group- five leading cities.

## 5. Constraints

Firstly, this study has the limit of time scope of data.

As mentioned earlier, the time scope of data in this study ranges from 1996 to 2005. For more exact analysis, it would be desirable to collect all data from the foundation of China up to now. In this way, we could also compare the situation of the regions under a totally socialist system and after the adoption of an open market economy. However, with the actual difficulties in collecting reliable data by regions, most of them must be collected from the National Statistics of Bureau of China. It provides information only from 1995 to 2005. Therefore, inevitably, the time scope of data had to be limited for ten years.

Secondly, this study has the limit of selecting research subjects in analyzing data.

Among various subjects of data, this study deals with only a few data analyses. They are major items that can show the overall situation of unequal development. However, it can not be deniable that in some subjects there is possibility to endow somewhat different results. So I would like to confirm that the results of this study are confined only to presented data. And also I want to point out the fact that in some autonomous regions, according to the ratio of Han people's immigrant population, the figure can be somewhat overestimated or underestimated. All figures are targeted on all residents in those regions.

Thirdly, this study has the limit of researching and collecting the exact

and precise conflict situation of minorities.

As well known, it is hard to collect rich data or articles regarding ethnic minorities' conflicts thanks to the Chinese government's inspection and sanctions. Only throughout some newspaper articles or research papers, their situation can be known to the people and no one can sure the exact number of riots or the frequency. There are some articles that present Hui, an Islamic ethnic group of China, as the possible conflict minority, but with the difficulties of knowing exact regions, background and the degree of conflict, this study has to exclude the case of Hui. My short knowledge of Chinese also makes constraints in collecting broad data of them.

## **II. Chinese Ethnic Minorities and Nationalism**

Before foundation of a country, it is well known that the economic situation of Chinese minority residency so fell behind. At that time, most ethnic minorities worked in the traditional primary industry; more seriously in Xingjian, they were still under the serfdom system, the primitive industry. Therefore, there was an inequality gap between areas where Han people resided and those where minorities did in terms of industry structure and level of economic situation. With the perception that this inferior economic situation could encourage the minority nationalism, Chinese Communist Party has done trials to reduce this gap after foundation. As a result, it is true that the economy of minorities has quite developed. However, as their situation was

originally so inferior, it looks comparatively improved, but in real terms most of them are still under the level of average.

Recently, after adopting open economy and reformation, the rapid economic growth and development make China leap to a big country's status in the international community. However, in a more critical perspective, it brings up very important questions. It means that the only one ideology, Socialism, which had tied all Chinese up would not have powerful influence upon the people anymore and as a substantial economic gap increases between regions and cities, movements of separatism or riots have strongly appeared. Comparing to the Eastern regions' outstanding development, the development of South-western regions where most ethnic minorities reside is going with snail's gallop. As the pace of industrialization is accelerated, the gap between them will be widened even more seriously than now. The problem is a possibility that this kind of situation could stimulate some minorities' nationalism and separatism more; and, if there are not any changes of policy towards them, these movements will not disappear. Under this assumption, this study will, first, look into actual situation of minorities; and, next, tries to find clues if there are actual relations with occurrences of nationalism and unequal development. From analysis of data, we could find an answer to a step forward to solve the problem of Chinese minority nationalism and we should ask questions as to whether the policies of the Chinese Communist Party are going into the right direction, as well.

To begin with, let's look at the outline of Chinese ethnic minorities and their importance.

## 1. Outline of Chinese Ethnic Minorities and Their Significance

China, which officially represents itself as a “Unified multi-national country” or “Multi-national socialist country,” has small and large sized 55 ethnic minorities except Han people. According to the 5<sup>th</sup> population census, the ratio of the ethnic minorities is only 8.41%<sup>20</sup> and Han people occupy more than 92% of the whole population. Therefore, in terms of population, the ethnic minorities are not given much more weight. However, in spite of the numerical inferiority, Chinese ethnic minorities can not be considered as a simple “minority.” In fact, the ratio of their population to the whole Chinese is low, but their total population is almost one hundred million and it is the number that exceeds the scope of any one country.

They live spreading out mostly to the South and West of China. China’s communist government sets the special districts where large numbers of minorities reside as an autonomous area and adopts special policies for them. One of them is an immigration policy which encourages Han people to move to minority districts and weakens the density of minority. However, because the birth rate of minorities is quite high, the total ratio of minorities to the whole population does not seem to show a big change.

### **[Table 1] Administrative Division and Population of Minority Nationality Autonomous Areas (1995/2005)**

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<sup>20</sup> The ratio of minority peoples in population has increased. At the first population census in 1953, it was 5.89%, but in 1982, it became 6.62% and recently (2000) it increased up to 8.41%. The reason that the ratio of them has increased was the policy of curbing the increase of population had not been comparatively enforced. Moreover, it is because that some minority peoples, who had been stated as Han people, recovered their own nationality.

Provinces and Autonomous Regions	1995			2005		
	Population In Minority Areas (10 000 persons)	Minority Population	Minority Population as Percentage to Total Population in Minority Areas(%)	Population in Minority Areas (10 000 persons)	Minority Population	Minority Population as Percentage to Total Population in Minority Areas(%)
<b>National Total</b>	<b>16068.4</b>	<b>7232.1</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>17507.10</b>	<b>8238.95</b>	<b>47.06</b>
Hebei	190	103.4	54.4	196.17	114.18	58.21
Liaoning	335	152.8	45.6	334.64	170.10	50.83
Jilin	321.9	118.2	36.7	330.71	114.06	34.49
Heilongjiang	24.8	5.2	21	25.06	5.26	21.00
Zhejiang	17.4	1.7	9.8	17.73	1.82	10.29
Hubei	436.5	205.7	47.1	446.46	240.80	53.94
Hunan	535.8	371.3	69.3	489.03	360.22	73.66
Guangdong	44.3	14.6	33	47.68	17.95	37.64
Guangxi	4502	1734	38.5	4925.00	1898.00	38.54
Hainan	182.3	78.3	43	157.03	78.42	49.94
Chongqing				252.69	170.05	67.29
Sichuan	850.4	461.6	54.3	653.77	369.81	56.57
Guizhou	1409.4	787.3	55.9	1588.62	945.79	59.54
Yunnan	1990.2	1070.7	53.8	2124.94	1163.82	54.77
Gansu	290.5	139.9	48.2	321.61	183.77	57.14
Qinghai	291.5	168.6	57.8	327.01	201.92	61.75
Ningxia	512.4	174.9	34.1	596.20	214.51	35.98
<b>Inner Mongolia</b>	2237.2	433.8	19.4	2386.40	515.76	21.61
<b>Tibet</b>	235.6	228.8	97.1	276.00	258.00	93.48
<b>Xinjiang</b>	1661.4	981.4	59.1	2010.35	1214.69	60.42

Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1995 and 2005

Note: The bolds are conflict regions.

In terms of territory, their residential areas are 612 ten thousand km<sup>2</sup> and it means that they live occupying 63.7% of the whole land. In addition, the western areas where ethnic minorities live densely are the rich repository of natural resources, Hydropower and underground resources, such as coal, oil, gas and gold, as well as food resources.

**[Table 2] Natural Resources in Minority Nationality Autonomous Areas**

Item	2004	Percentage to All country
Total Area (10 000 sq. km)	611.73	63.72
Area of Grasslands in Pastoral and Semi-pastoral Areas (10 000 hectares)	30000	75
Area of Forest (10 000 hectares)	5648	42.2
Stock Volume of the Forest (100 million cu.m)	42.49	51.8
Hydropower Resources (100 million kw)	4.46	66

**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 2004**

Moreover, the western areas are important strategic points. Namely, among 21,000km of border line of China, 19,000km belong to the Minority autonomous regions and the majority of cities are theirs. Around their residential district, newly independent countries after Soviet Unions fell down, such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan,

and other 12 countries like Mongol, India and Vietnam are adjacent to 33 ethnic minorities. More important points are among them; 20 minorities have very similar nationality, customs, traditions, and religions to the right outside of borderline and they have contacted each other and sometimes shared the same history. Therefore, these countries might play an important role in overall situation of other ethnic minorities; and Chinese minority groups' unstable situation or discontents can affect the foreign relations with adjacent countries.

## **2. Nationalism of Chinese Ethnic Minorities – focusing on Inner Mongolia, Tibet and Xinjiang**

Among ethnic minorities, three of them are very famous for the severe movement of separatism; Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang. In this section, we will briefly look into their nationalism and situation.

### **(1) Inner Mongolia**

Inner Mongolia, the third largest region of China<sup>21</sup>, located in the northern area and its territory is almost one eighth of the whole country. Many minorities such as Mongolian, Hui, Mansu, Daur and Oraquen live together. It was designated as the first autonomous area on May 1, 1947 and that was before the time when Chinese Communists declared victory to the battle with Kuomintang. The reason Chinese Communists tried to establish the autonomous government of Inner Mongolia under the difficult situation was to prevent it from uniting with the Republic of Mongolia. The republic of Mongolia declared

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<sup>21</sup> The largest region of China is Xinjiang and the second is Tibet.

independence from China and established its own country in 1911 with an aid from Soviet Union. China did not admit its independence at first, but after deciding to accept the existence of the republic of Mongolia via people's vote, Chinese Communists had to admit the independency of it. As there is such a precedent, Chinese Communists could not overlook the possibility that Inner Mongolia might try to join the republic of Mongolia and make a vast country. It means that not only China is deprived of their large territory but also the northern areas can be threatened. In case of Beijing, the capital of China, the distance from the border line is now 600 km, but if Inner Mongolia is separated, it will be shortened up to 300 km. In terms of national security, Inner Mongolia is highly significant and serves as a breakwater.

Therefore, Chinese government makes every effort to suppress the occurrence of independence movement in this region. The Chinese practiced a policy of genocide during 60 years and took the precious lives of countless Mongolians. In a well-planned and measured manner, the Chinese massacred the Mongols who ranged from well-known patriots, prestigious intellectuals and wealthy families to literate herders. Between the winter of 1968 and the spring of 1969 alone, there were about 320,000 Mongols who were either killed or tortured to receive injuries (official Chinese statistics). Since the year 1911, one million Mongols had died in the hands of the Chinese without natural causes. There are not any clear symptoms or actions that Inner Mongolians want to integrate with the Republic of Mongolia, but still the nationalism of this region seems to be quite strong.

As Inner Mongolia has the world's largest reserve of rare earth and its

reserves of coal, iron, oil, natural gas and gold are largest in China, during the past 60 years the Chinese government literally robbed the region off of these natural resources and transferred them to heartland of China as well as exported them abroad. Starting from the 1990s, under the name of "opening up the West", the Chinese accelerated their process of 'robbery' and turned many areas of inner Mongolia into mines. This kind of exploitation incurs Mongolian's wrath and dissatisfaction from discouraged economic situation is rising to the surface.

The situation of Human rights violation is also serious. The ideological repression and oppression have always been more severe in Inner Mongolia than in the heartland of China. To control and suppress Inner Mongolia's nationalism, Chinese government uses a more severe policy. The Mongols do not have the least freedom of expression and press. Mongolian authors and intellectuals, who wrote to expose national oppression and injustice, to express their dissatisfaction and disappointment, and to call for democracy, are subjected to political pressure, discrimination and intimidation. Their works are still banned and most of them are in prison.

## **(2) Tibet**

Tibet, famous for the nickname "a roof of the world", is a plateau area where most of its land is located at the height of more than 4000m. This plateau occupies two thirds of the total autonomous area. Tibet is the most serious conflict region and the population of Han people is

also the lowest.<sup>22</sup> The history of struggle started in 1950. Chinese Communists ignored the insistence of Dalai Lama, who asked for a separate independent country, and invaded this region, persisting in the idea that Tibet belongs to China. On October 19, 1950, People's Liberation Army of China sent troops, and, using coercive measures, China succeeded in making a "seventeen-point agreement"<sup>23</sup> with Dalai Lama. Of course, the agreement was made only to satisfy the Chinese Communist Party and it only affirmed China's sovereignty over Tibet. Tibetan guerrilla resisted the policy of Chinese Communists; in response to their rebellion, Chinese government mapped out the plan of Dalai Lama's confinement. Due to the realization of Tibetans in advance, this plan failed, but big demonstrations and riots of Tibetans to protest against the Chinese Communist Party occurred everywhere in Tibet. The Chinese government overwhelmed them with military forces and during the suppressive process lots of Tibetans were killed. Some Tibetans have accused the People's Republic of China of a campaign of terror after the invasion, which led to the disappearance of up to one million Tibetans. The Chinese government denies these claims, but charges of genocide, crimes against humanity, state terrorism and

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<sup>22</sup> In Tibet, the ratio of minority population is almost 94%. Comparing to other regions, this figure is so outstanding.

<sup>23</sup> The Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet, or the Seventeen Point Agreement for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet for short, is the document by which the delegates of the 14th Dalai Lama reached an agreement with the government of the newly-established People's Republic of China on affirming Chinese sovereignty over Tibet. It was, under People's Liberation Army's military pressure, signed and sealed in Beijing on 23 May 1951 and confirmed by the government in Tibet few months later. When the Dalai Lama fled in 1959, he and the Government-in-exile repudiated the agreement.

torture are currently being investigated by a Spanish court.<sup>24</sup>

After the 14th Dalai Lama and other government principals fled to exile in India in 1959, lots of protests and riots also had happened; and, as a result, between the 1960s and 1980s, many prisoners (over 1 million, according to Harry Wu<sup>25</sup>) were sent to laogai camps in Amdo (Qinghai). Since the 1980s, increasing economic liberalization and internal mobility has also resulted in the influx of many Han people into Tibet for work or settlement, though the actual number of this floating population remains disputed.

Throughout some preferential policy of the Chinese government, the antipathy and discontents have somewhat weighted down, but Tibet is still named as a risky area that could trigger nationalism. Despite preferential policies or trials of guaranteeing their own customs and religion, Tibetan Nationalism does not extinguish. The existence of the government of Tibet in exile<sup>26</sup> is also a big concern for the Chinese Communist Party. It blames that the economic plan and policy of China has done a good job only for the heartland, not for Tibetans and the Chinese government deprives Tibetans of innate right for its territory and resources.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://news.independent.co.uk/world/asia/article656410.ece>

<sup>25</sup> Harry Wu (born 1937; Chinese: Wu Hongda) is an activist for human rights in the People's Republic of China. Now a resident and citizen of the United States, Wu spent 19 years in Chinese labor camps, for which he popularized the term laogai

<sup>26</sup> The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), officially the Central Tibetan Administration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, is a government in exile headed by Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, which claims to be the rightful and legitimate government of Tibet. It is commonly referred to as the Tibetan Government in Exile.

### **(3) Xinjiang**

Xinjiang, the largest region of China, is adjacent to many neighboring countries, such as the Republic of Mongolia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, etc. The total border line is 5,700 km and, in some of the areas, some dispute over territory with nearby countries still remains unsettled. The autonomous region was set on October 1, 1955 and nine ethnic groups are evenly spreading out to this region. At first, the ratio of Han people was low, but, due to the immigrant policy of China, the current percentage of Han People to Minorities is quite even.

In Xinjiang, there have been inward conflicts between different minorities and outward conflicts between minorities and Chinese Communists. Moreover, in terms of military, there were conflicts between countries. From the end of 1950, the Soviet Union and Chinese Communists had placed troops centering on the borderline of this region; in 1962, when some people of Xinjiang fled to the Soviet Union, the relation between both countries was so strained. From that time on, there were some big and small military conflicts, but after the death of Mao Tsetung and dissolution of the Soviet Union, the national conflicts are under a brief period of tranquility; instead of them, inner conflicts come onto the surface.

Since independent states were established in Central Asia, the Chinese government has tightened controls over Uighur in terms of expressions of ethnic identity in Xinjian.<sup>27</sup> Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States, the Chinese government has equated peaceful

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<sup>27</sup> Human Right Watch, "Devastating Blows: Religious Repression of Uighurs in Xinjiang", Bovingdon ;"Autonomy in Xinjiang: Han Nationalist Imperatives and Uighur Discontent", Human Rights Watch, April 2005.

expressions of Uighur identity with "subversive terrorist plots."<sup>28</sup> Xinjiang government has increased surveillance and arrests of Uighurs suspected of "harboring separatist sentiments" since popular movements ousted Soviet-era leaders in Ukraine, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan.<sup>29</sup> In May, 2005, the Xinjiang government intensified its "strike hard" campaign against activities it characterizes as ethnic separatism, religious extremism or international terrorism.<sup>30</sup> In September, 2005, Chinese authorities declared the "East Turkestan forces" the primary terrorist threat in China, and acknowledged that Xinjiang authorities have increased police surveillance and political controls throughout the region this year.<sup>31</sup>

Recent government policies only exacerbate ethnic tensions in Xinjiang. The government's promotion of economic development in the region disproportionately benefits Han people. Together with restrictions on religious, linguistic and cultural freedoms, and government-supported, large-scale Han migration into the area have increased Uighur resentment and fears of coercive cultural assimilation<sup>32</sup> and fears of

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<sup>28</sup> He Ruixia, "Political Thought Work In the Course of Strengthening and Improving the Struggle Against Nationality Splittism", Seeking Truth, No. 2, 2004, pp.2-4

<sup>29</sup> Commission Staff's Interview. "Press Conference on the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region", Tianshan Net (Online), 25 August 05, Quoted in Congressional Executive Commission on China 2005 Annual Report ( [http://www.cecc.gov/pages/annualRpt/annualRpt05/2005\\_3a\\_minorities](http://www.cecc.gov/pages/annualRpt/annualRpt05/2005_3a_minorities))

<sup>30</sup> "In the Midst of Glory and Hope: Key Points in Propaganda for Xinjiang 50th Anniversary"[Xinjiang zai huihuan yu xiwang zhong fengyongqianjin: qingzhu Xinjiang weiwuer zizhiqu chengli 50 nianzhou xuanchuan jiaoyu yaodian], Xinjiang Daily, reprinted on Tianshan Net (Online), 19 May 05; "AFP: Xinjiang Ribao Carries 'Editorial' Against Separatism as Uzbek President To Visit," Agence France-Press, 25 May 05 (FBIS, 25 May 05).

<sup>31</sup> "Xinjiang Has Become the Main Battlefield For China's Antiterrorism Struggle," China Youth Daily, 6 September 05 (FBIS, 7 September 05).

<sup>32</sup> Human Rights Watch, "Devastating Blows: Religious Repression of Uighurs in Xinjiang", Arienne M. Dwyer, "The Xinjiang Conflict: Uighur Identity, Language Policy, and Political Discourse", Washington: East-West Center Washington, 2005

deprivation. Although the extensive security apparatus in Xinjiang appears for the present to have crushed Uighur calls for greater autonomy, scholars report that "the majority of Uighurs does not like the system of autonomy and the course of politics." One Western scholar notes that "repression on this scale may temporarily succeed in subduing the expression of ethnic identity but in the long-term it can only increase the resentment that Uighurs feel and fuel deeper conflict in the future."<sup>33</sup>

### **3. Factors causing Nationalism of Chinese Ethnic Minorities**

When finding factors causing these regional conflicts and nationalism, it might be natural to consider the background about each region's different history, tradition, religion and life style. Normally scholars point out the propensity for selecting regional elites, the difference of religions, historical emotions and difference of nations as reasons.<sup>34</sup> In China, it is a common view that the minority nationalism is a kind of regional conflict and it results from suppressed historical events and the differences of nationality or religion. Especially in case of Tibet, this insistence is quite reasonable. Officially speaking, Tibetans admire Dalai Lama as a rebirth Maitreya<sup>35</sup> and regard him as a spiritual leader. China as a Socialist country prohibits this kind of powerful religious activity and thinks it as a kind of idol worship. The Chinese government worries Tibetans can provoke a separatist movement and bring Dalai

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<sup>33</sup> Michael Dillon, "Uighur Language and Culture Under Threat in Xinjiang

<sup>34</sup> Park, Gwangduk, "Chinese regional conflicts and national unification centering on national conflicts", The collected book of Korea East Asia Research, the fourth series(1997), p.133

<sup>35</sup> Maitreya means the merciful Buddha.

Lama forward as their political leader. With some historical events for suppressing Dalai Lama and Tibetans intermingled, this prediction would be quite reasonable.

However, only finding reasons causing minority nationalism on outward differences will have a certain limit. In Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang, the difference of religion does not seem to have much weight on the issue of conflicts. Are those from the difference of nationality? Considering other regions, however, some minorities also have a different nationality and culture. Since the official foundation of China, it has passed more than 60 years. During this period, Chinese ethnic minorities have lived under the special system, Chinese socialism, and that would not make much difference from the similar nationality living in the bordering countries. Furthermore, after adopting open market economy, China developed quickly, and its high status and the pride as a member of China cannot be easily overlooked.

In terms of historical background, it is true that these regions have an especially wounded memory, but no one can explain why other minorities, who do not share it within these regions, participate in riots and show emotional consent with the rise of nationalism. Political autonomy or propensity of elites in certain nation is not the best answer because it applies to all nations. Why are particular regions noticed as the origins causing separatism movements among many autonomous regions? The question starts from this. As a matter of fact, dissatisfaction of conflict regions would not be simply based on the anger over ignorance of their religions or collective memory. The other factor must affect their antagonistic feeling and trigger nationalism.

In this aspect, the other perspective pays attention to the unequal development and the feeling of isolation in the process of industrialization. Let's look at Table 3.

[Table 3] Main Indicators of National Economic and Social Development by Eastern, Central, Western and Northeastern Region (2005)

Item	National Total	Eastern Region	Central Region	Western Region	Northeastern Region
		As Percentage of National Total			
<b>Natural Resources</b>					
Area of Land (10 000 sq.km)	960.0	9.5	10.7	71.5	8.2
<b>Population</b>					
Population at the Year-end (10 000 persons)	130756	36	27.4	28.0	8.4
<b>Employment</b>					
Employment At the Year-end (10 000 persons)	75825	36	28.0	28.6	6.9
Urban Area	27331	45	21.5	22.1	11.1
<b>National Accounting</b>					
Gross Domestic Product (100 million yuan)	183084.8	55.6	18.8	16.9	8.7
Primary Industry	23070.4	37.7	27.0	25.8	9.5
Secondary Industry	87046.7	58.5	18.0	14.8	8.8
Industry	76912.9	59.8	17.5	13.9	8.8
Tertiary Industry	72967.7	57.2	17.5	17.0	8.3
<b>Investment in Fixed Assets</b>					
Total Investment in Fixed Assets (100 million yuan)	88773.6	52.4	18.5	20.3	8.8
Real Estate Development	15909.2	60.8	14.0	16.8	8.4
<b>Government Finance</b>					

Local Government Revenue (100 million yuan)	14884.2	60.2	15.2	16.6	8.1
Local Government Expenditure ( // )	25154.3	46.0	18.7	24.9	10.4
<b>Foreign Trade</b>					
Total Value of Imports and Exports (100 million USD)	14219.1	89.9	2.9	3.2	4.0
Exports	7619.5	89.2	3.2	3.4	4.2
Imports	6599.5	90.7	2.6	2.9	3.8
<b>Agriculture</b>					
Output of Major Farm Products (10 000 tons)					
Grain	48402.2	26.4	30.5	27.8	15.3
Cotton	571.4	32.5	30.9	36.6	0.1
Oil-bearing Crops	3077.1	29.5	40.7	24.9	4.9
<b>Industry</b>					
Output of Major Industrial Products					
Coal (100 million tons)	22.1	12.9	41.8	36.9	8.4
Crude Oil (10 000 tons)	18135.3	37.1	3.2	24.8	34.9
Electricity (100 million kwh)	25002.6	45.1	22.7	24.4	7.7
Crude Steel (10 000 tons)	35324.0	55.2	21.2	12.9	10.7
Cement (10 000 tons)	106884.8	51.6	22.5	20.6	5.3
<b>Transportation</b>					
Expressways	41005	41	25.5	25.7	8.0
Total Passenger-kilometer (100 million person-km)	17466.7	40.1	28.1	23.5	8.3
Total Freight Ton-kilomete (10 million ton-km)	80258.1	67.4	13.3	12.1	7.2
<b>Post and Telecommunication</b>					
<b>Services</b>					
Total Business Revenue(100 million yuan)	12028.5	54.2	17.5	19.6	8.7
<b>Domestic Trade</b>					
Total Retail Sales of Consumer Goods	67176.6	54.4	19.4	17.0	9.2
<b>Education</b>					

Number of Institutions (unit)	1792	39.8	26.1	23.9	10.2
New Student Enrollment (10 000 persons)	504.5	41.3	27.3	21.6	9.8
Student Enrollment (10 000 persons)	1561.8	41.2	27.3	21.2	10.3
Number of Graduates (10 000 persons)	306.8	42.2	26.3	20.8	10.7
<b>Health Care</b>					
Number of Hospitals (unit)	298997	33.0	22.8	33.4	10.7
Hospitals and Health Centers	60397	27.8	25.7	37.9	8.6
Medical Technical Personnel (10 000 persons)	446.0	38.6	25.5	25.0	10.9
Doctors	193.8	38.0	24.5	26.5	11.0
Number of Hospital Beds (10 000 beds)	335.1	37.8	24.5	26.2	11.5
Hospitals and Health Centers	313.5	37.6	24.7	26.4	11.4

**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 2005**

It is a table that shows the main indicators of national economic and social development by Eastern, Central, Western and Northeastern Region in 2005. There are 40 indicators that can help to know the overall situation of each region. It will be natural that every country has a different gap among cities and regions, but as you notice, the situation of China is more serious and special. First of all, it is because the gap amongst regions is so outstanding and partial. Secondly, it is because the developed regions are identical to the areas where mostly Han people reside. Using the terms of Hechter, the distinction of core and periphery seems to be quite clear. Ethnic inequalities are shown alongside unequal regional development. With the development of telecommunication and transportation, minorities could know the rapid growth of eastern regions and this could make them have a feeling of

deprivation or isolation. Social safety net under the socialism has been demolished and life of minorities would be harder than before. Even though Han people live spreading out in the minorities' autonomous regions, the percentage is very small and most disadvantages from this inequality are totally ascribed to the minorities. The more precise things regarding this fact will be discussed later.

Consequently, from the data that shows unequal and partial development situation in China, the second perspective has a question and assumes that severe inequality is attributed to the resurgence of minority nationalism.

### **III. Situation of Unequal Development amongst Regions and within Conflict Region.**

In this section, based on assumption of the aforementioned second perspective, this study will find out evidences of the relation with minority nationalism and unequal development. To get more clear-cut image, first of all, I compare various data which can measure the degree of development amongst regions. These data will be divided into 6 categories: first, the differences of economic structure and GDP amongst regions; second, the differences of unemployment rate and total wage amongst regions; third, the differences of educational degree amongst regions; fourth, the differences of urban and rural development amongst regions; fifth, the differences of infrastructure amongst region; and sixth, the differences of social welfare system

amongst regions.

Afterwards, this study will try to find out the situation of inequality between Han people and ethnic minorities within the conflict regions. Because of the difficulties in collecting raw data, this section depends on literature references. Rather having constraints, it will give us a tip to understand why ethnic minorities are not satisfied in spite of some preferential policies and a certain degree of development propelled by the Chinese central government.

From these analyses, we can even estimate the possibility of “internal colonization.”

## **1. Unequal Development Situation by Issues and by Regions**

I use six categorized issues to know unequal development situation by regions. I mentioned them right above.

The time scope of data ranges mainly from 1996 to 2005. As a matter of fact, to obtain more exact result, it would be more suitable to set the time scope from the time that Deng Xiaoping started an open economy policy in 1978 up to now. However, there have been some changes in administration districts and that makes it more difficult to access each region's data. Almost all data are from the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC), so I set the time scope as wide as I could, according to the availability of securing raw data.

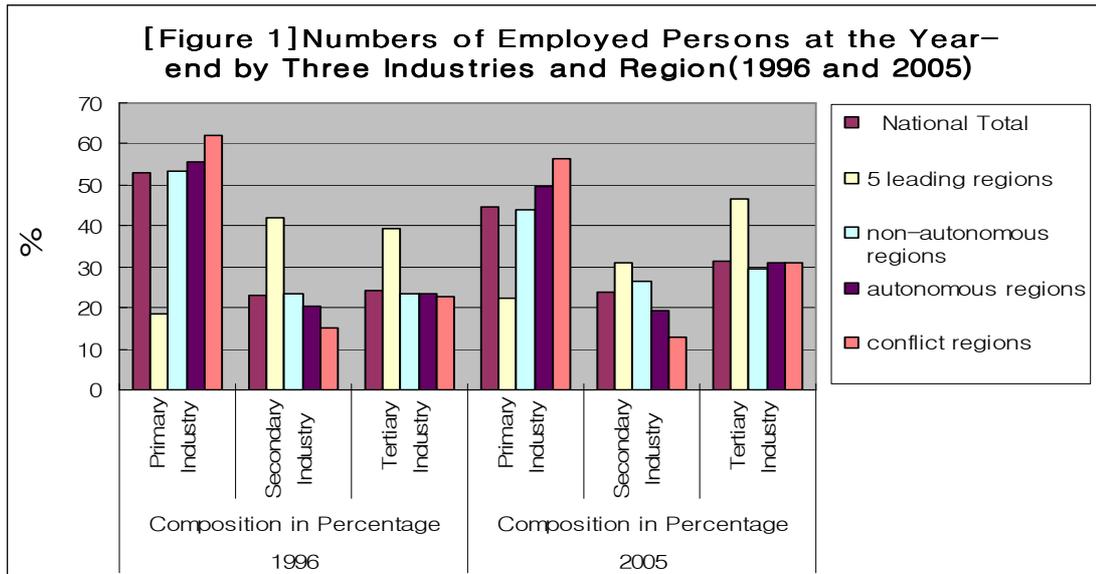
The objects of data are 31 regions of China. It is based on the distraction division from NBSC. I divide them into four groups: the first is the group of five leading cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Gwangdong and Chongqing; second come eight regions (Shanxi, Jiangsu,

Anhui, Fujian, Jiangxi, Shangdong, Henan and Shaanxi) of non-autonomous areas where Han people dominate; the third is the group of fifteen regions(Hebei, Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Zhejinag, Hubei, Hunan, Gangxi, Hainan, Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan, Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia) of autonomous areas where minorities reside; and the fourth is that of three conflict regions of Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang. Among the five leading cities, Gwangdong and Chungqing are autonomous regions, but as they are special areas the central government takes special emphasis on in terms of economic development, including these cities in the category of autonomous regions could result in bias. For the same reason, three major cities are also excluded in the group of non-autonomous regions. In light of this problem, these regions are managed in this study as a separate group – five leading cities.

### **(1) Differences of Economic Structure and GDP amongst Regions**

To know the overall economic structure of each region and growth, two data will be discussed. First is the data that could let us know the level of industrialization; second is the one that could show the degree of development. Let's look at the [Figure 1] first.

[Figure 1] is a graph that shows numbers of employed people at the year end by three industries and regions in 1996 and 2005. To get a more clear comparison, time series data is not used.

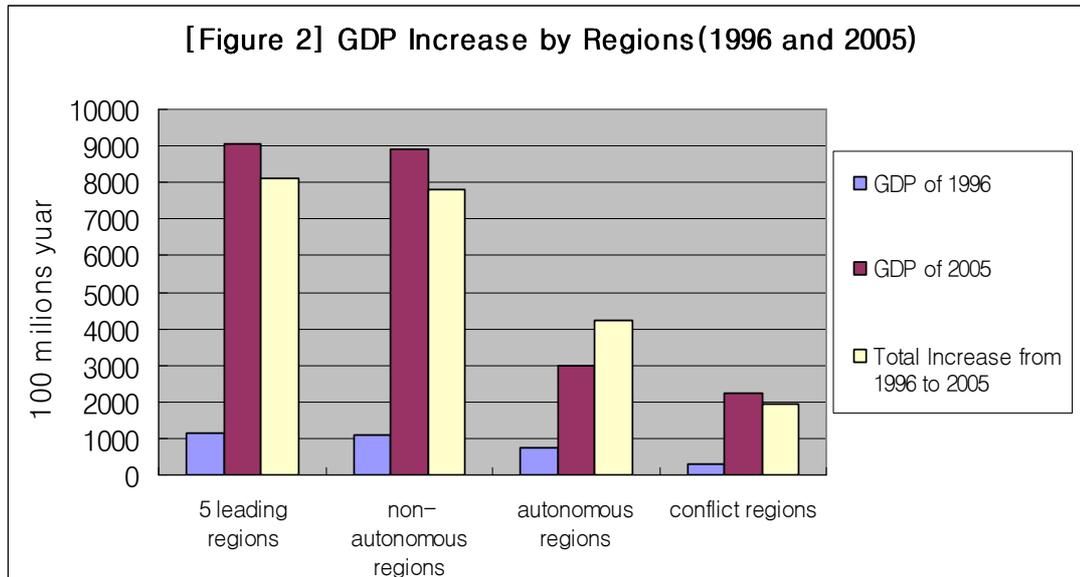


**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1996 and 2005**

Overall, all regions have increased in Tertiary industry. Compared to the small increase of Secondary industry, it is quite an interesting result that Tertiary industry has developed more quickly. Especially, in conflict regions, the increase ratio is outstanding. The percentage has changed from 22.6% to 31.1%. This result seems to have been caused for reasons of rapid growth of tourism industry in Tibet and of poor investment in Secondary Industry. Generally Speaking, in the process of Industrialization the path toward a developed society is moving from the primary industry to the tertiary industry step by step. And, considering the stage of China's development, the secondary industry must be the major growing sector. However, in both autonomous and conflict regions, there is a decrease in secondary industry. It means that they do not have any meaningful fundamental investment in this industry; thinking about the high percentage of primary industry, we can say that there is no change in industry structure. They still remain

at the pre-industrialization level. On the other side, 5 leading regions and non-autonomous regions seem to follow the right step toward industrialization.

Next is a graph about GDP increase by regions.



**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1996 and 2005**

[Figure 2] shows a GDP increase between 1996 and 2005. In 1996, as you can see easily in the graph, there was not much difference amongst regions. Among them, conflict regions occupied almost one fourth of 5 leading regions, but the total difference was only 84600 million Yuan. In 2005, however, the gap between them becomes surprisingly huge. The average GDP of 5 leading regions in 2005 becomes 903500 million Yuan and that of non-autonomous regions is 890800 million Yuan. They show a similarly rapid increase growth rate in GDP. In contrast, even though there is also an increase in both autonomous and conflict regions, the degree of them is small. The increased GDP amount of autonomous regions for 10 years is 420500 million Yuan and that of

conflict regions is only 196400 million Yuan. Within the minority regions, it also shows a substantial gap between autonomous regions and conflict regions. Moreover, the gap between 5 leading regions and conflict regions is 616500 million Yuan, almost four times the GDP of conflict regions. That means that catching up the pace of 5 leading regions is almost impossible and that there should be a different economic policy by regions. Considering the abundant natural resources in these regions, it is estimated that these resources are not used for themselves, but used for “core” regions.

## **(2) Differences of Unemployment Rate and Total Wage among Regions**

Whereas we discuss macroscopic data of economy above, we will see microscopic data in this section. They are unemployment rate and total wage gap among regions.

[Table 4] is about urban unemployed people and unemployment rate by region. If taking into consideration that China does not experience entire urbanization yet, the figure is quite high in overall regions.

**[Table 4] Urban Unemployed People and Unemployment Rate by Region**

Region	Unemployment (10,000 Persons)				Unemployment Rate (%)				Average Rate (1990– 2004)
	1990	2002	2003	2004	1990	2002	2003	2004	

<b>5 Leading Regions</b>	9.2	20.1	20.2	19.7	1.7	3.5	3.4	3.3	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Non-autonomous Regions</b>	14.5	23.8	24.7	26.5	2.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	<b>3.4</b>
<b>Autonomous Regions</b>	10.3	23.6	24.5	25.2	2.9	4.1	4.2	4.3	<b>3.9</b>
<b>Conflict Regions</b>	12.4	9.2	13.8	11.0	3.4	4.2	4.0	4.1	<b>3.8</b>

Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1990–2004

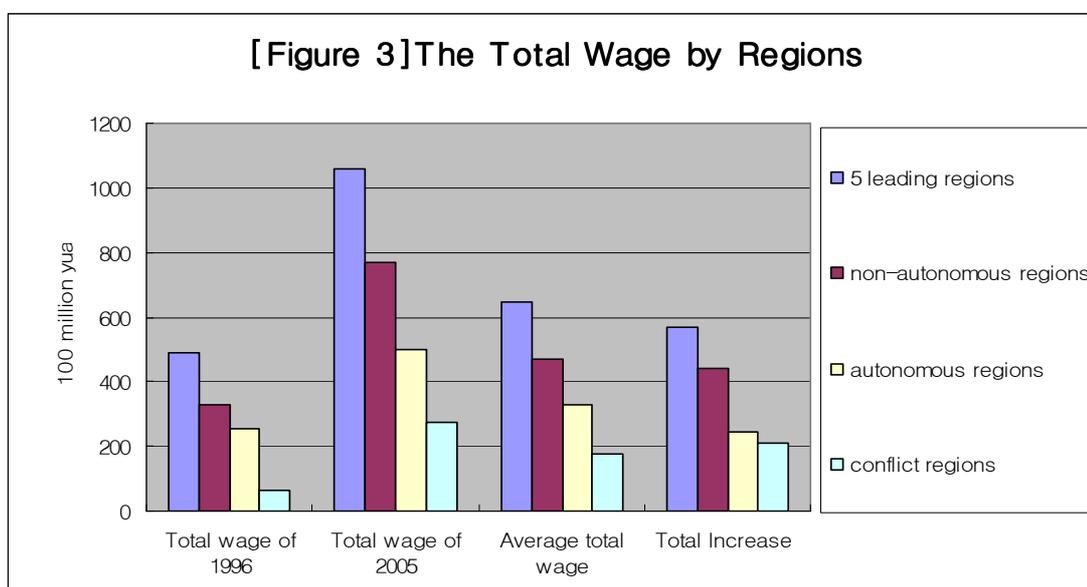
Note: In conflict regions, the figure of Tibet's 1990 and 2003 is not included because there is no data.

In case of 5 leading regions, there is a big sharp increase from 1990 to 2004. It must be because there is a rapid inflow of people from other rural areas and industries that these regions can not properly absorb the laborers. In other regions, however, especially in conflict regions, the unemployment rate has been constantly high for fifteen years. Unemployment rate is used in sociology as an indicator that could show crime, social instability and dissatisfaction of the current situation. Considering this aspect, there is a possibility that in conflict regions there are groups of people who are malcontented with the current system and policy of the central government because in general terms people regard unemployment problem as the government's policy failure.

Next is about the total wage by regions.

[Figure 3] shows an increase of total wage between 1996 and 2005 by

regions. All regions present a substantial increase during this period, but they also show different increase rates amongst regions and the gap is becoming huge. In case of 5 leading regions, the total increase of wage is 56900 million Yuan; that of non-autonomous regions is 44100 million Yuan. On the contrary, the total increase of wage in autonomous regions is 24700 million Yuan and it is almost half in the figure of non-autonomous regions.



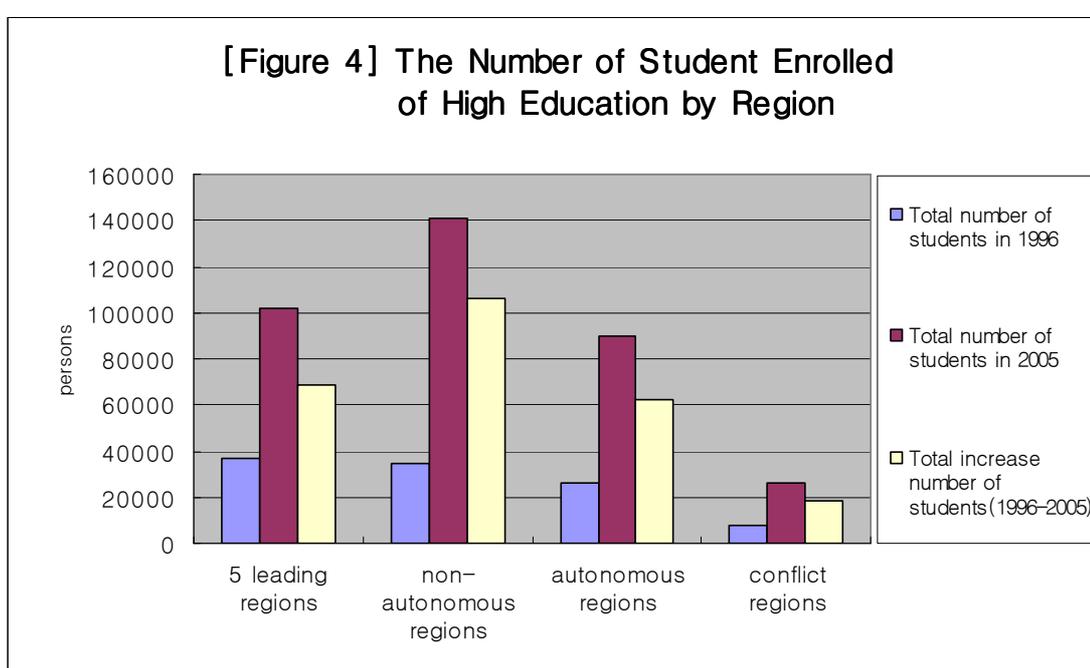
**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1996 and 2005**

The increase in conflict regions is similar to the level of autonomous regions: It is 20900 million Yuan. But, in this figure, conflict regions show again the lowest increase, which means that among the same minority regions there is also inequality between conflict regions and non-conflict regions.

### **(3) Differences of Educational degree among Regions**

Education is a crucial factor responsible for future social development

and producing future leaders and highly-qualified workers. Therefore, in this section, we will discuss the data of high education student<sup>36</sup> enrollment and educational structure of employees by regions. If a region has more students and employees educated in higher institutions more than other regions, it means that it has a potential growth engine for future development and can advance by a step forward towards the stage of mature industrialization.



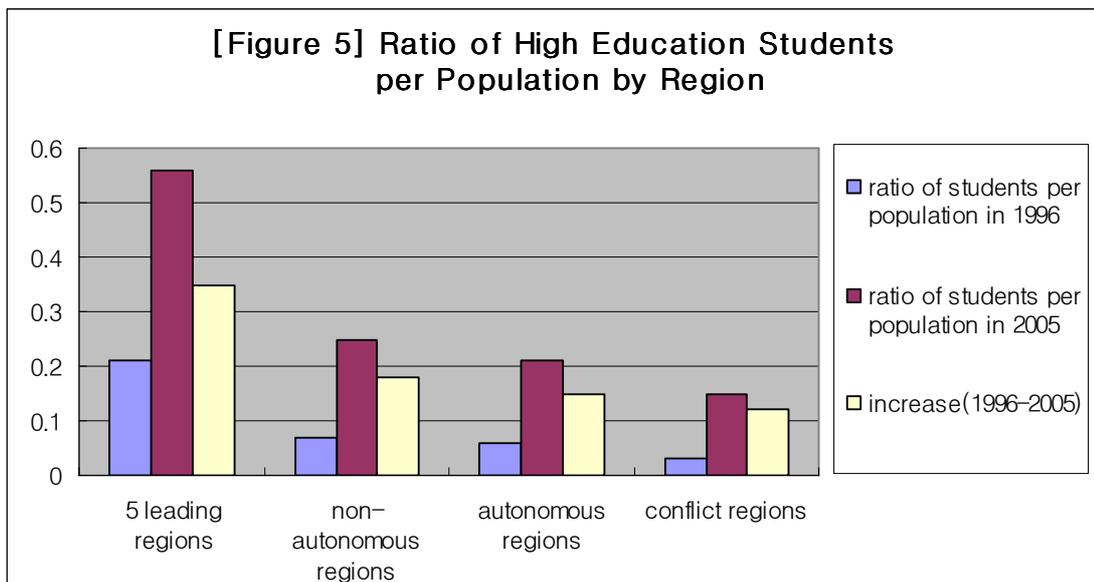
**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1996 and 2005**

[Figure 4] is a graph showing the number of students enrolled in high education by region. Unlike common expectations, non-autonomous regions have a largest number of students of high education. In this sense, we can predict these areas have a full capacity to develop quickly in the near future. In case of autonomous regions, the degree of

<sup>36</sup> In this study, high education students mean ones who are educated in over college or university education level.

increase is rather low, but it shows almost similar figures of 5 leading regions. The question is as to conflict regions. Comparatively, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang show a better result in absolute figures that are over the average of some autonomous regions. If we consider that the populations of these regions are the second and third largest in minority regions, however, the ratio of higher education students to the whole population is absolutely low. In the raw data, Tibet has more miserable figures. The total increase in number of people with higher education during 10 years is only 700. It does not show an actual increase of high quality human resources.

Let's look at the [Figure 5] along with the same context.

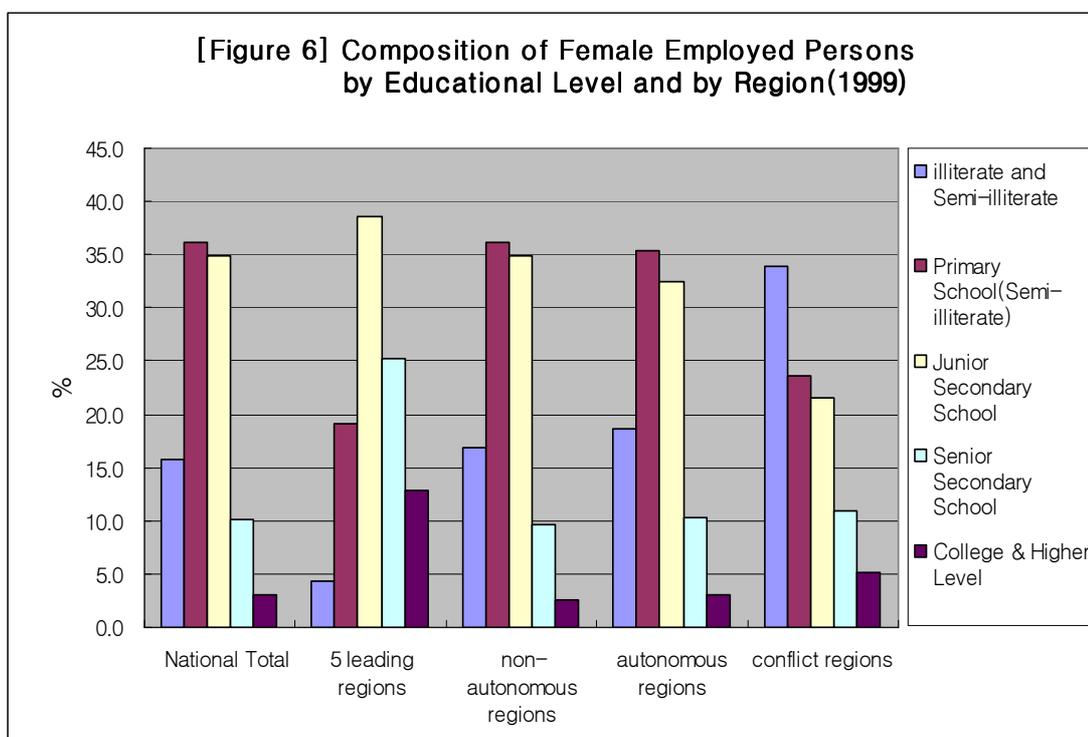


**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1996 and 2005**

It shows the ratio of high education students per population by region for 10 years. The absolute ratio of students is higher in five leading regions in both 1995 and 2005, and you can see that the total increase

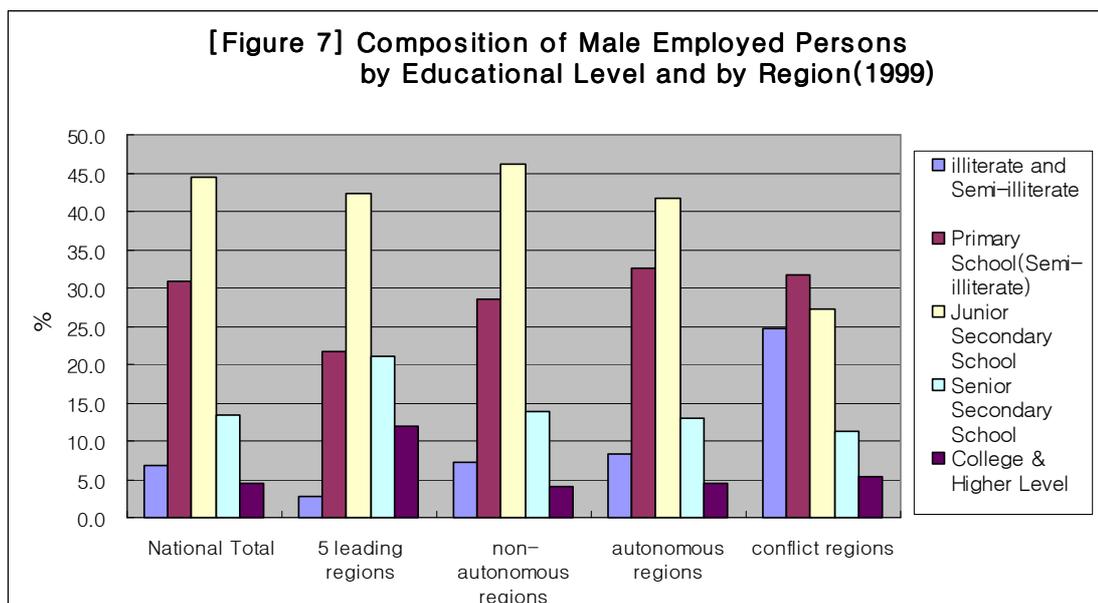
for 10 years is also highest in them. Even though in [Figure 4] non-autonomous regions seem to have the largest number of students, after reflecting the total number of population, we could know actual investment and effort for higher education are given to the 5 leading regions. In autonomous regions, the overall increase is slightly lower than non-autonomous ones. Still in this figure, however, conflict regions show a disappointing result. It shows only a half, compared to other two regions and a fifth of five leading regions. In this pattern, conflict regions can be seriously deteriorated in educational level and cannot easily cultivate the competent young people, which are directly linked to the competitive power in near future.

Next two graphs represent the figures about the composition of male and female employed people by educational level and by region in 1999.



Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1999

In terms of national total, most workers have attainments in scholarship at the level of primary school and junior secondary school. It shows that China still does not enter the society of higher education and it should focus more on investment of education for the future development. Fortunately, the 5 leading regions have relatively high figures of senior secondary education and college level, but other regions show poor results. An interesting thing is that in conflict regions the figure of college level is quite high. If remembering that increase rate of higher education and the total number of them are so low, this result is mysterious. I assume that there are some immigrant workers from other regions according to the policy of Chinese government. Compositions of illiterate and semi-literate people are higher in autonomous regions than in non-autonomous regions; in conflict regions the figure is almost up to 34%. More than one third of the employees cannot do complicated work nor read books.



**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1999**

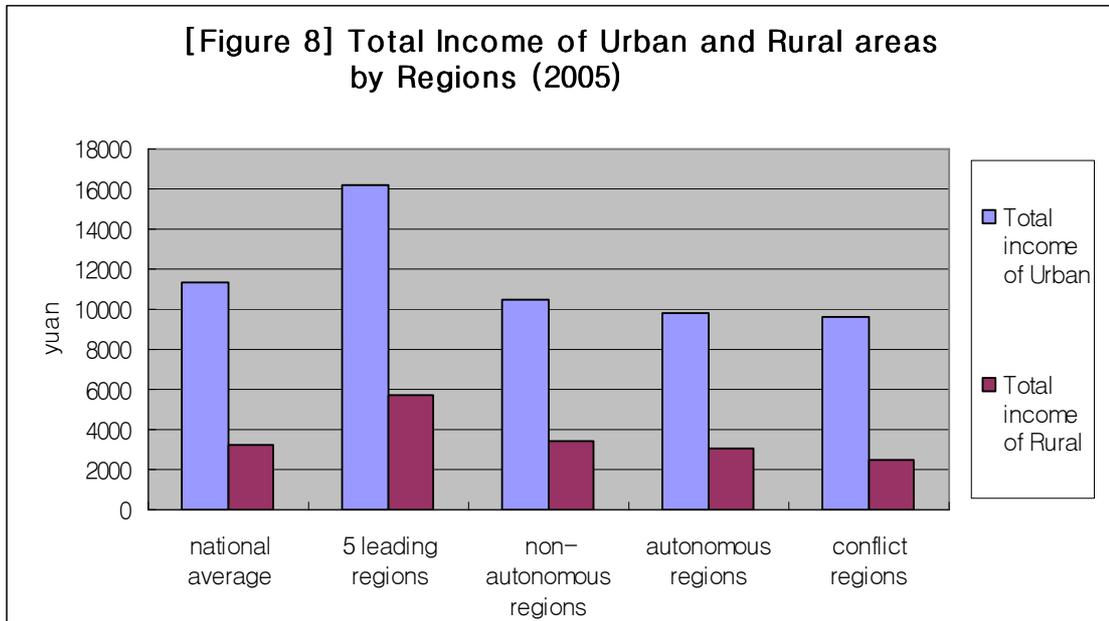
In case of male employees, the situation is almost the same. If we point different things, the composition of illiterate and semi-literate males is lower than females; in non-autonomous and autonomous region, the ratio of males in junior secondary school is higher than that of females. This figure shows that male workers are more educated than female ones. But, in this graph, the composition of illiterate people in conflict regions is also the highest. More than half of the workers are under or at the basic level of education. Without a powerful and drastic policy for bringing up qualified people, the way to develop these regions in step with other region's growth will be far away.

#### **(4) Differences of Urban and Rural Development among Regions**

In this section of the study we will see the difference of urban and rural development degree among regions. In China, the most serious inequality problem except for regional inequality is the urban-rural inequality relation. Even in Han people areas, the gap between urban and rural areas is huge and this causes social instability and conflicts within them. Moreover, the serious poverty in rural areas plays a critical role in hindering further development. Because, relatively speaking, residents in poor rural areas could not invest money in human resource development and medical care, this turns back as a vicious circle in overcoming poverty. By comparing the gap between urban and rural areas and the degree of poverty in rural by regions, therefore, we can predict the future development of each region and

estimate a sense of incongruity within the region.

The first figure is about the comparison of total income (per household) of urban and rural area by regions.



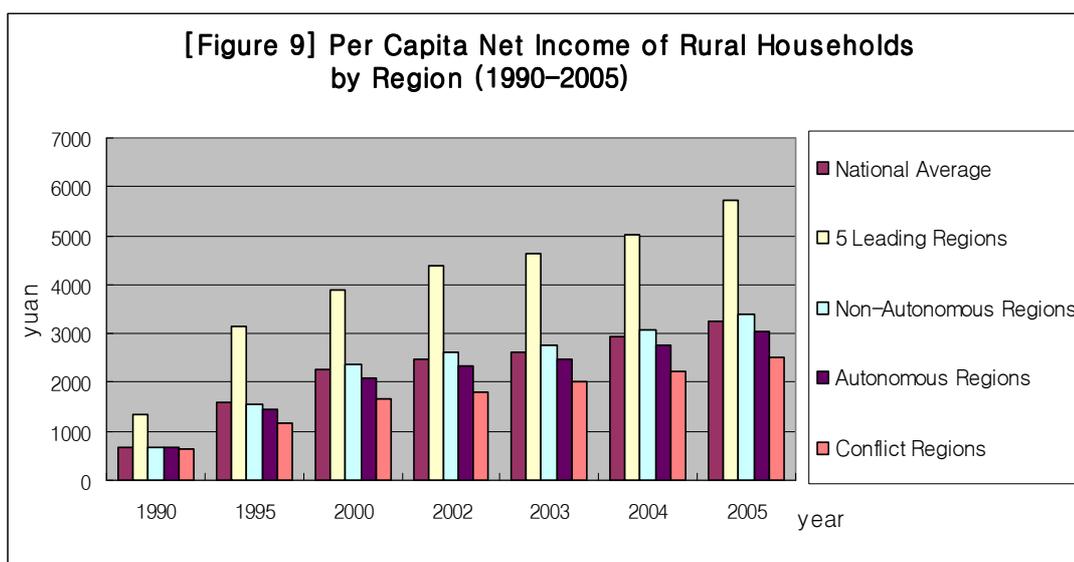
**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 2005**

Except for the 5 leading regions, other regions are below the national average of total income of urban area. The gap between the 5 leading regions and the others is so substantial that we could know that even non-autonomous regions do not enjoy fruits of urbanization and advanced life. Conflict regions still stay in the lowest. In the 5 leading regions, however, the gap between urban and rural area is also the biggest.

Interestingly the sense of social incongruity between rural and urban areas could be higher in advanced regions than in others. The gap in non-autonomous and autonomous regions is quite similar and the amount of total income of urban and rural areas also shows close

figures. In case of conflict regions, the difference between the other two regions is not so huge, but they are the lowest, still. The gap between urban and rural income is the second highest.

[Figure 9] is a graph about per capita net income of rural households by region from 1990 to 2005.



Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1990-2005

In 1990, besides 5 leading regions, other three regions were under 1000 Yuan and showed almost the same figures. The living standard in rural areas was not very different from each other. Since 1995, however, there has been a difference between them. The absolute amount of rural income has increased as time passed by and the gap has also increased according to the time sequence.

There are two informative messages from this figure: firstly, in terms of rural income and development, the gap between non-autonomous regions and autonomous regions is not more impressive than the gap amongst the 5 leading regions and the others. At least, in case of rural

poverty problems, ethnic inequality would not be strongly affected. Secondly, regardless of minor gap, the order has not changed. Autonomous regions and conflicts regions are the third and fourth, respectively. In a sense that the gap has slowly increased, we should watch the same pattern of development degree.

### (5) Differences of Infrastructure among Regions

In order to know the basic degree of social development and the effort of the government in the infrastructure, the level of public facilities and city construction between regions will be discussed in this section,.

[Table 5] Level of Public Facilities in Cities by Region (1996 and 2005)

Region	1996			2005		
	Percentage of Population with Access to Tap Water (%)	Percentage of Population with Access to Gas (%)	Per capita Public Green Area (sq/m)	Percentage of Population with Access to Tap Water (%)	Percentage of Population with Access to Gas (%)	Per capita Public Green Area (sq/m)
National Total	94.89	73.21	5.29	91.09	82.08	7.89
Five Leading Regions (1997)	98.45	89.03	5.13	95.63	90.69	7.79

<b>Non-Autonomous Regions</b>	83.8	66.95	5.08	91.38	79.67	7.62
<b>Autonomous Regions</b>	94.68	65.22	5.20	87.57	74.22	7.29
<b>Conflict Regions</b>	94.46	72.82	13.29	86.49	70.42	4.86

Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 1996, 1997 and 2005

Note: Because of finding difficulty of data of five leading regions in 1996, it will use data of 1997.

[Table 5] shows an interesting result. Even in the five leading regions, the percentage of population with access to tap water has somewhat decreased from 1997 to 2005. Autonomous regions also present some decrease in percentage of population with access to tap water; in conflict regions there is quite a big decrease in every section. Only the non-autonomous regions show an increase. We cannot know a clear reason for this. But, supposing that in the five leading regions, especially in Chongqing and Shanghai, it could be the increase of total population or rapid influx whereas the number and system of infrastructure are of old. If regarding other possible reasons, however, the decrease of conflict regions in every area is quite surprising. Even per capita public green area decreased rapidly from 13.29 in 1996 to 4.86 in 2005. We cannot but think that there has been privatization of public green area or environmental destruction.

When only looking at the figures in 2005, the gap between regions is

quite clear. In 1996, there is not any significant inequality between regions. In 2005, however, both in the leading 5 regions and conflict regions, the figure decreased gradually one by one. It seems that in the basic infrastructure inequality might be between the residency of Han people and that of minorities.

Next, we will look into the overall city development situation by regions. [Table 6] is about the statistics on city construction in 2005.

**[Table 6] Statistics on City Construction by Region (2005)**

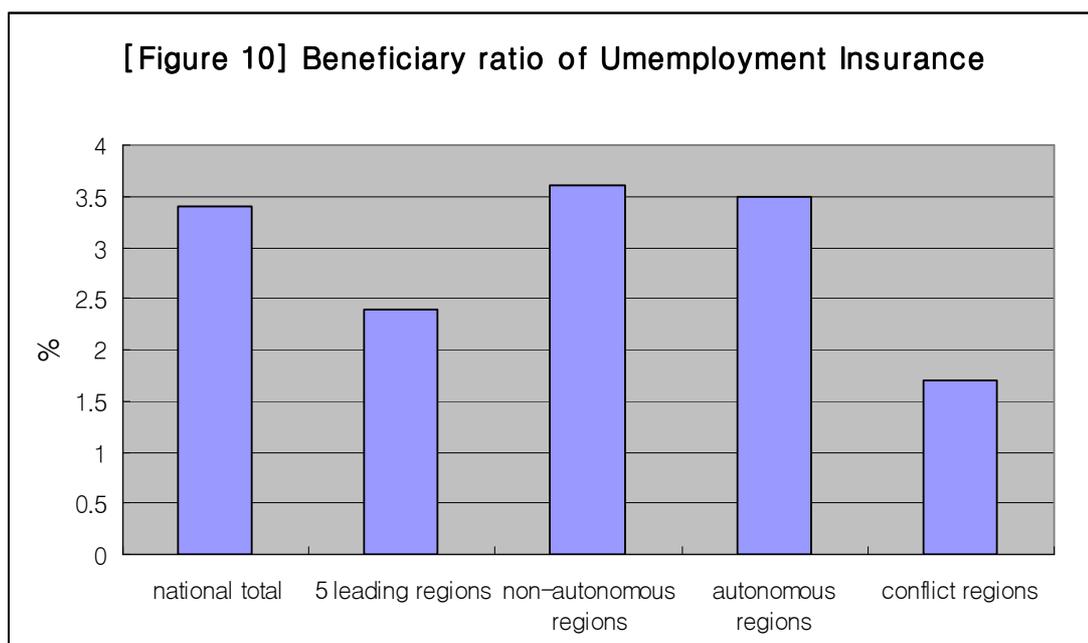
<b>Region</b>	<b>Developed Area (sq.km)</b>	<b>Land Put in Requisition for State Construction Project (sq.km)</b>	<b>Population Density of Urban Area (persons/sq.km)</b>	<b>Total Floor Space of Buildings (year-end) (10,000 sq/m)</b>	<b>Total Floor of Residential Buildings (year-end) (10,000 sq/m)</b>
<b>National Total</b>	32520.7	1263.5	870.2	1645064.1	1076899.6
<b>Five Leading Regions</b>	1350.3	47.5	1394.9	64817.9	40893.7
<b>Non-Autonomous Regions</b>	1311.7	63.6	2119.4	66620.5	43021.1
<b>Autonomous Regions</b>	918.7	32.8	1403.7	48433.4	32668
<b>Conflict Regions</b>	498.2	8.5	675.2	20503.5	12747.3

**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 2005**

As mentioned earlier, the territorial area of minorities is over 60%. However, the total developed area in all autonomous regions is only 1407 sq. km and it is slightly over the figure of five leading regions. In the column of land put in requisition for state construction project, conflict regions show outstandingly low figures than any other areas. It is only one fourth of autonomous regions and one eighth of the five leading regions. Non-autonomous regions show the highest figure in population density of urban area than the 5 leading regions, so we could estimate that there will be much labor inflow into these areas; urban circumstance of those regions is inferior to that of the leading ones. In contrast, autonomous and conflict regions reveal the low density of urban population, but it also means that they did not start urbanization yet. In total floor space of building and residential building, minority regions show low figures whereas two regions have similar conditions. Conflict regions are averagely at the half level of other autonomous regions.

## **(6) Differences of Social Welfare System among Regions**

Finally, this study will cover the differences of social welfare system among regions. It will be divided into three categories: unemployment insurance, medical insurance and basic pension insurance. To avoid bias caused by the differences of total population, these data use the ratio to the total population.



**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 2005**

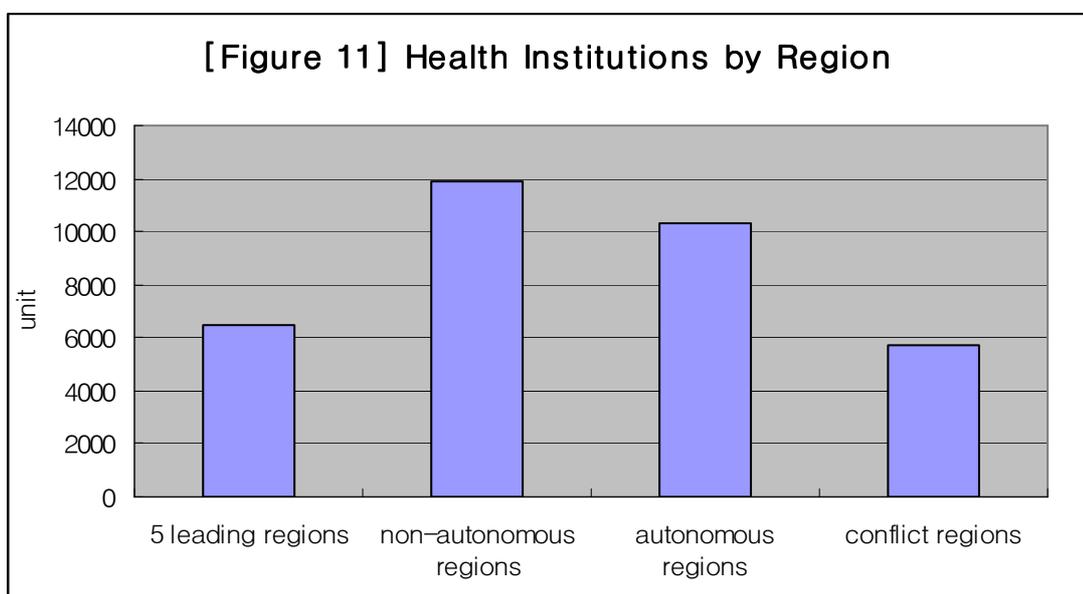
[Figure 10] shows the beneficiary ratio of unemployment insurance. Unexpectedly, the 5 leading regions present a lower percentage of the beneficiary ratio. Instead, non-autonomous regions show the highest ratio and autonomous regions are also above the national total average. Comparatively, these regions would be stable in economic depression or changes; possible social conflicts or crimes that result from unemployment could be low. But in case of the 5 leading regions, the ratio is quite low. Presumably there are some factors that lead to a low unemployment insurance ratio, such as rapid turn over of labor or massive influx of workers from other regions.

In this case, as local government could not deal with unemployment within its financial scope, the beneficiary ratio can be low. However, in conflict regions, which do not have liberal inflow or outflow of laborers, it will be an inadequate explanation. Han people immigrate by the policy

of government, so most of them have the status of employment. If so, we can predict that the local governments of conflict regions do not give enough finance or do not have a proper policy for unemployed people. As you see the unemployment rate by region above, the unemployment rate has been high. In that sense, complaints about an incomplete policy or government inability can be provoked.

Next is about the number of health institution and medical insurance.

[Figure 11] is a simple comparison of the number of health institutions by region. If considering the total population of each region, the result of this data will be reasonable. The number of medical institutions in conflict regions is the lowest again, but it shows a similar figure of the 5 leading regions. It means that the ratio of the number of institutions to the whole population could be higher than the 5 leading regions.

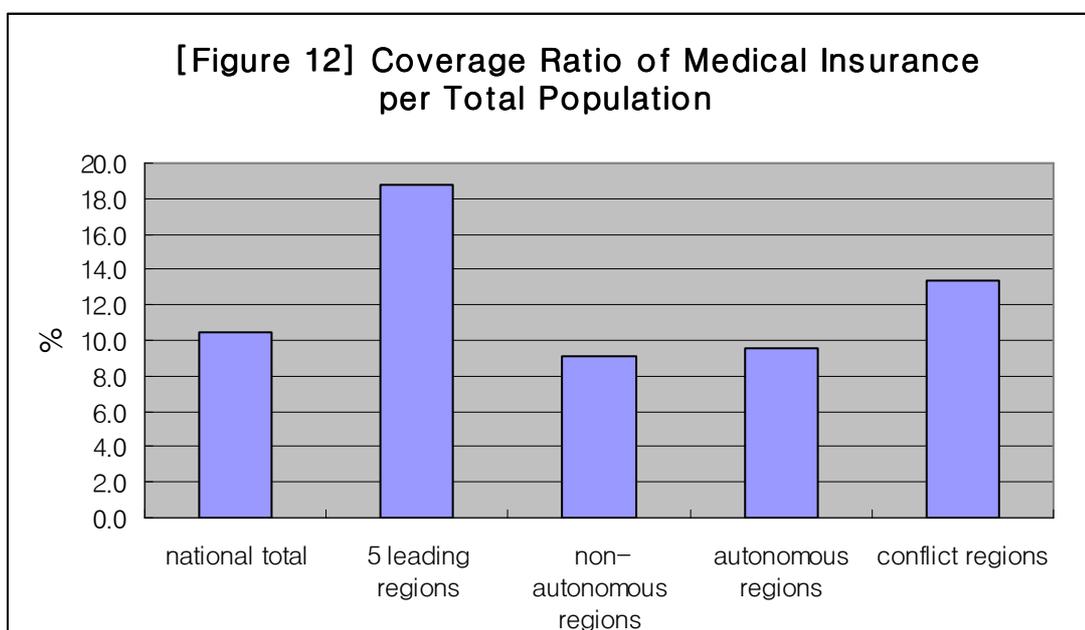


Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 2005

However, conflict regions have vast territory; so, if these institutions

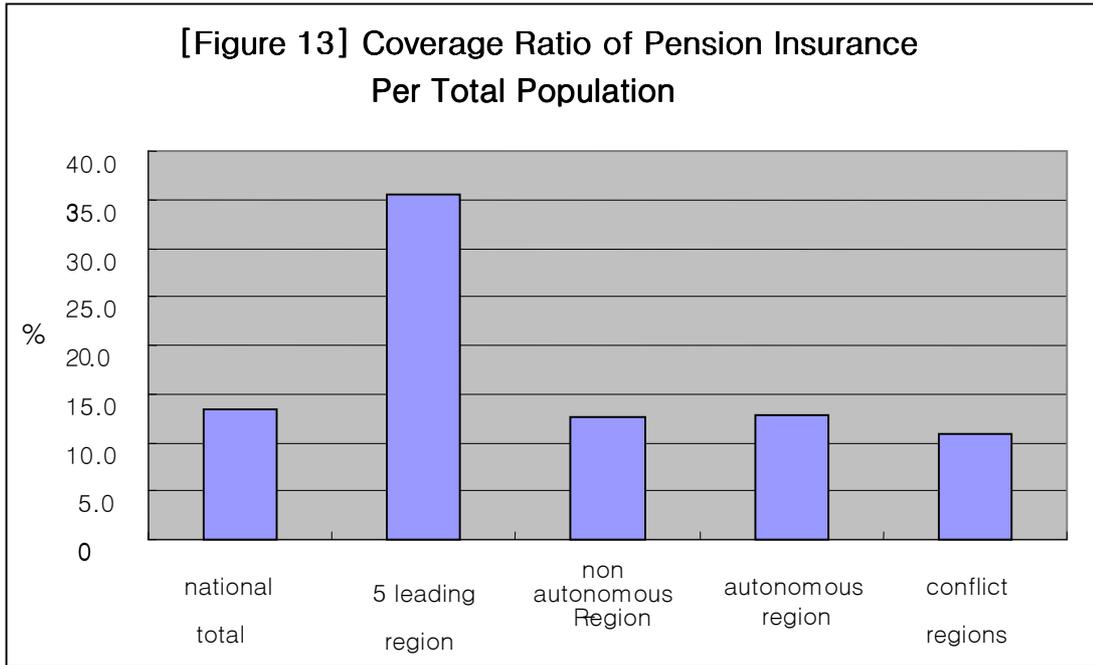
are concentrated in certain areas, the accessibility to these medical institutions will be worse.

Next figure is about the medical insurance by regions. In spite of the small number of medical institutions, the coverage ratio of medical insurance is the highest in the 5 leading regions. Conversely, non-autonomous region and autonomous regions show the lower ratio in medical insurance. They are below the national total average. If there are outbreaks of striking diseases, these regions can be more vulnerable and people are hardly capable of coping with the high cost of medicine. Interestingly, conflict regions show a somewhat high percentage of medical insurance coverage. Local governments may have more interest in medical field than the other two regions do.



**Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 2005**

Lastly, [Figure 13] is about the coverage ratio of pension insurance.



Source: National Statistics of Bureau of China (NSBC) 2005

In pension insurance, three regions show similar figures. The coverage ratio of Non-autonomous regions and autonomous regions is about 12% and it is slightly lower than national total average ratio.

In conflict regions, it does not reveal an absolute gap between the other two regions, but it also shows the lowest ratio in pension insurance. Prominently, the 5 leading regions show the highest ratio and it is over three times higher than that of conflict regions. Stability and the level of living in those regions will be surely different from others, and the anxiety or fear of uncertain future would be low.

## **2. Unequal Development Situation within the Conflict Region**

In this section, we will discuss about the unequal development situation within each conflict region. It can be regarded as a more serious factor that makes ethnic minorities feel anger and grievance because it is life

that they face everyday.

To what extent, it is true that even conflict regions have been developing as you saw above. Comparing to other regions, the degree and speed of development are slower, however, it is undeniable fact that they are starting to get better and seem to reach on the similar level of other autonomous regions in some issues. Someone insists that with the help of “Western Development Project” driven by Chinese central government, the inequality amongst regions has been reduced, therefore, it would not be a determinant factor in arising nationalism. But another problem arises on the surface; internal inequality within each conflict region between Han people and minorities.

White report of the government of Tibet in exile comments that the price Tibet paid for this development was higher than the gains.<sup>37</sup> Year by year, the Chinese government claims great economic advancement in Tibet such as bumper crops, industrial growth, improvement of infrastructure and so forth. However, given China’s record in ethnic minorities, two things must be borne in mind when assessing social and economic developments: the first is that the Chinese government claims cannot be taken at face value. Even official statistics appear to be drawn up to prove a particular political point rather than to present an objective picture of the situation. Secondly, evidence shows that it is not the ethnic minorities who benefit from the economic development. The primary beneficiaries of China’s new open economic policy are the Chinese settlers in these regions, their government and military, and

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<sup>37</sup> This was the Panchen Lama’s last verdict on three decades of Chinese rule in Tibet. The 6<sup>th</sup> of white paper of the government of Tibet in exile, “Socio-economic conditions and colonialism” ([www.tibet.com/whitepaper/White6.html](http://www.tibet.com/whitepaper/White6.html))

their business enterprises.<sup>38</sup>

As a method of suppressing nationalism in conflict regions and making them assimilate with Han Chinese, the Chinese government has encouraged immigration of young Han people to these regions. Some estimates indicate that 250,000 Han Chinese make the journey west each year.<sup>39</sup> It achieves the desired end of the Chinese government in a sense. However, it also leads the result that minorities recognize their inequality situation. To make worse, according to quality of life indicators such as education, unemployment, life-expectancy, and poverty-rate, ethnic minorities lag far behind their Han Chinese counterparts. Recent central government initiatives economic disparities in the regions have actually highlighted and perpetuated the problem. Many of the large infrastructure construction projects initiated by the central government provide jobs for migrant workers (not local workers), and in spite of preferential policies for ethnic minorities,<sup>40</sup> jobs often go to Han workers rather than indigenous workers.<sup>41</sup>

In the usage of natural resources, ethnic minorities seem to be marginalized and have little control over their own natural resource base. For instance, timber and mining industries in Tibet are areas that

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<sup>38</sup> Same paper

<sup>39</sup> John Pomfret, "Go West, Young Han," Washington Post, Sept. 15 2000, p. A01. Quoted in Matthew D. Moneyhon, "Taming China's "Wild West: Ethnic Conflict in Xinjiang". p.11

<sup>40</sup> See Barry Sautman, "Preferential Policies for Ethnic Minorities in China: The case of Xinjiang." in William Safran ed., Nationalism and Ethno-regional Identities in China, London; Frank cass, 1998, p.88. Quoted in Matthew D. Moneyhon, "Taming China's "Wild West": Ethnic Conflict in Xinjiang. p. 12

<sup>41</sup> One young Uyghur in Xinjiang vents "Look. I am a strong man and well-educated. But Han Chinese firms won't give me a job. Yet go down to the railway station and you can see all Han Chinese who have just arrived. They will get jobs. It's a policy, to swamp us.", "Go west, Young Han", Economist, Dec.23, 2000.

not only receive large chunks of China's "financial assistances," but are also amongst the most important employers of Chinese immigrants in Tibet. The products of these industries are carted away to China. Even taking the case of road construction, the primary objective of construction in conflict regions is to deploy occupying forces along with defense materials, and immigration of Chinese, as well as to exploit the natural resources like forests and minerals, which are transported primarily to China.<sup>42</sup>

Therefore, the Chinese pattern of development in conflict regions is considered to have intention of controlling the Ethnic minorities' economy rather than stimulate initiative, enterprise and production. It works by creating a vicious circle in which local demand for goods is served by state-owned enterprises in China. Profits from these enterprises are then ploughed back as subsidies, serving to create conditions for the further extraction of natural resources needed by China's own enterprises. In the light of experiences, ethnic minorities cannot but view the recent opening of Tibet's economy to foreign investment as a move to accelerate the transfer of Chinese population and exploitation of their natural resources for the benefit of the colonial power.

In the matter of social welfare, discrimination exists between Han people and minorities. For example, in case of Tibetan health service, it is not only urban-biases, but serves the rich people better than the poor. Only 10 percent of financial outlay for health goes to rural area;

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<sup>42</sup> The 6<sup>th</sup> of white paper of the government of Tibet in exile, "Socio-economic conditions and colonialism." p.5

90 percent goes to urban centers where Chinese settlers are concentrated and where most of the hospitals are located. Even when available, medical facilities are prohibitively expensive for the most of Tibetans. Moreover, as the previous free health care system was demolished, competent doctors do not need to do obligatory work in deteriorated regions. As a result, most of doctors in these areas are not capable ones, and what make worse, many of them are unqualified.<sup>43</sup> Consequently, the Chinese government claims that there are 3,700 doctors and health personnel, but this official statistics in health care service can not be fully trusted. Ethnic minorities are comparatively exposed to the deteriorated circumstances, so the prevention and cure of diseases are an important issue in deciding the level of the standard of living. However, changed health care system and indifference of the central government make their lives harder than before.

In terms of higher education, every year a certain number of university seats are officially reserved for ethnic minority students and their expenses form part of the budget for minority education. It is one of the preferential policies for ethnic minorities. However, most of these seats go to Chinese students. To go to university, the student must pass a competitive examination after graduating from upper-middle school. Since the examinations are conducted in Chinese, ethnic minority students are disadvantaged and lose places to Han Chinese students. The growing trend is that Chinese students who have failed entrance examination in their homeland go to autonomous regions to resit their examination. Because the general standard of education in

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<sup>43</sup> Same paper, p.6

these regions is much lower than in China, these students fare well against minority ethnic students, and thus take places in universities.<sup>44</sup> In conflict regions, massive immigration of Han people propelled by the Chinese government makes worse this situation. Therefore, the real number of students in higher education in these regions can be much smaller than one of statistics.

Consequently, although there are some preferential policies for ethnic minorities, the effects are questionable. Rather some of them served as momentum which makes ethnic minorities realize their harsh and unequal situation. A kind of internal colonization seems to be proceeding.

### **3. Analysis of the Result**

From the results of data and literature references, this study indicates three points.

Firstly, inequality development in China is proceeding alongside ethnic differences.

Almost all data show that inequality has increased ranging from the five leading regions to conflict regions. Only except for some cases, such as unemployment insurance coverage ratio and the number of health institutions, the five leading regions always stay at the top and non-autonomous regions follow suit. Granting that many of these regions are located in coastal area and it is of great help to develop them the gap amongst regions is so substantial and has been increasing. Merit of location cannot explain why other autonomous regions could not

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<sup>44</sup> Same paper, p.9

develop in spite of abundant resources and Chinese government's ambitious plan "Western Development Project". The Chinese Communist Party has advertised that this project has promoted the standard of living in minority regions and pushed to speed up their economic growth rate. However, the data in this study reveals that it failed. Considering the absolute figure of each data without regional comparison, they seem to develop. But if considering the overall situation of other regions' development, that of autonomous regions is improving at a snail's pace and in some cases they are deteriorated more than before. In the meantime, the natural resources exploitation by central government has speeded up. For minorities in autonomous regions, the construction of some infrastructure, like train, paved road or gas pipeline, is viewed as an effective way for Han people to exploit the resources for the sake of their own development. As long as the investment or support of Western Development Project is not purely used for minorities' development, this inequality development alongside ethnic differences will not be changed.

Secondly, conflict regions experience much more inferior development than other autonomous regions do.

Amongst the same autonomous regions, three conflict regions, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang, show the greatest deterioration in every aspect. They are suffering from high unemployment, high rate of illiteracy, pre-industrialization structure, low level of social welfare system, etc. Some people can say that this kind of inferiority would have resulted from the severe nationalism in those regions, not from

the failure of policy or exploitation by the central government. However, nationalism of conflict regions was not so devastating enough to prevent overall economic and social development. Instead, we should pay attention to the fact that resurgence of minority nationalism falls into step with the unequal development recently.<sup>45</sup>

Thirdly, there is also inequality and discrimination within each conflict region. They are mainly resulted from the immigration policy and “Western Development Project”, which mainly target on conflict regions. The primary goals are to assimilate ethnic minorities with Han Chinese and to develop these areas like eastern coastal areas. However, biased plans and policies forward Han Chinese breed discourse. The fruits of the economic development in these regions are mostly heading for Han Chinese and the feeling of deprivation get shown on the face. The moment the construction of massive infrastructure and foreign investment are not for them but for Han Chinese and the moment their bountiful natural resources are not used for their own development, ethnic minorities can realize that they are colonized. As the powerful social welfare system is collapsed and Socialism is not the powerful propaganda in China anymore, minorities find something to unite them; the strongest one will be nationalism. The frequent uprisings in Xinjiang and potential but ceaseless asks for independence in Tibet are not irrelevant to these inequality situation. The fact that conflict regions are under the most serious unequal

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<sup>45</sup> Dru Gladney, “Ethnic Conflict Prevention in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Regions: New Models for China’s New Region”, Draft 02.07.20 v.1, July 3, 1996

development lets us think of the relation between nationalism and inequality issue. If this assumption is right, minority nationalism will not disappear, so long as inequality is not alleviated.

#### **IV. Summary and Suggestion**

China has been the most rapidly growing economy in the world for over 25 years. This growth has fueled a remarkable increase in per capita income and led to a decline in poverty rate from 64% at the beginning of the economic reform to 10% in 2004.<sup>46</sup> At the same time, however, different kinds of disparities have increased. Inequality has risen, propelled by the rural-urban gap and the regional gap.

In other aspects, there have been minority movements for entire sovereignty or separatism in China. At first, it started from repulsion of the oppressed process of consolidation by the Chinese Communist Party, but as time passes by, the aspect of the nationalism has changed. At the level of pre-industrialization, nation difference or inequality was not severe enough to regard them as suppressed class nation or “periphery”. They were tied up under the name of Socialism and government provided the basic needs, such as medical care, employment, education or pension. Even though the level was so basic and most Chinese had suffered from serious poverty, minorities themselves did not aware of repressed or exploited nations. However,

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<sup>46</sup> David Dollar, “Poverty, Inequality and Social Disparities during China's Economic Reform”, World Bank. 2006, p.1

after declaring new Chinese way of Socialism and adopting an opening-door policy, the gap amongst regions has sharply increased. As Ernest Gellner indicated, at the level of industrialization they become a nation class and a new way of relation between majority people and minority can be formed. Majority people try to exploit labor and resources of minorities. Hechter argued that it is “Internal Colonialism”. There can be the relation of core and periphery within a nation. According to his logic, minorities as periphery find it hard to get over inequality situation and escape from poverty because their human and natural resources are used for the development of core, Han Chinese.

Of course, Hechter’s logic has constraints; some criticize that growing differences in income, education, employment and social welfare may be occurring, but it is important to note that such a growing disparity cannot be explained solely through the lens of ethnicity. The majority of both Han and non-Han are experiencing roughly the same uneven regional benefits of national economic development based on geographic residence and socio-economic background, not simply ethnicity.<sup>47</sup>

However, as there are not profound researches about the disparity between Han and non-Han people within the same region, we could not jump to the conclusion that Hechter’s logic is absolutely wrong. There are some indications that Han immigrants are mostly well-educated and assigned to develop the deteriorated region by the central government. Moreover, Han people are somewhat advantaged to do business than

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<sup>47</sup> Christopher Sullivan, “Inequality in Reform Era China: The Ethnic Question”, Paper prepared for the Population Association of America’s Annual Conference, Session on Chinese Inequality, Los Angeles, CA, April 2006, p.22

minorities because they use the standard language. These things can make the Han get more benefits or earn more money despite the coarse situation. As a matter of fact, many minorities do not welcome the immigration policy of the central government in these regions because Han Chinese take up the seats in universities as well as job opening market.

Therefore, this study assumed that the Chinese unequal development can affect the rising of minority nationalism and tried to reveal its relation. The hypothesis will be like this: if inequality influences the occurrence of minority nationalism, conflict regions will be suffering from unequal development much more. If they have similar conditions to other autonomous minority regions, another factor will be strong. So, in this study, the research objects were categorized into four groups (five leading regions, non-autonomous regions, autonomous regions and conflict regions) and the data result which can estimate economic and social development was compared. In addition to that, we briefly look into the inequality situation within conflict regions. Whereas data analysis is for revealing the “broad and external inequality”, this is for revealing “internal inequality” and adding for compliment on data results.

It concluded that, firstly, inequality development in China is proceeding alongside ethnic differences; secondly, conflict regions are much more inferior to any other region. Without an exception, conflict regions were ranked in the lowest and the gap amongst other regions was huge. As time passed by, the gap has been increasing. Consequently, it showed that Hechter’s theory is quite reasonable in China’s case.

Through the data analysis, we also deduced the fact that the inequality factor could be the causal factors of social incongruity and instability. Income gap, small amount of GDP, illiteracy, unemployment, urban-rural gap and improper insurance system are the major contributors impeding social integration, which is true everywhere. If the emotion of being deprived is added and they realize that losers have a distinguished nationality, the individual anger or dissatisfaction can link to collective discontents or nationalism.

In order to integrate various peoples under the single banner of a country, therefore, the inequality development policy should be reconsidered. Conflict regions' unequal development does not simply mean "lagging behind." Without solving the problems of minority inequality and nationalism, the simple "choice and concentration" policy could cause great disadvantages in the near future.

Lastly, with some recommendations for the minority development policy, I will conclude this study. Facing the 17<sup>th</sup> National People's Congress Standing Committee (NPCSC), the Chinese Communist Party will decide the policy for next four years. Three ways are rumored to be discussed. Left wing people will insist that a more tightly planned economy only can save China from its current problems and solve the minority nationalism while right wing people are insisting on the necessity of democratization. And the rest is arguing in favor of a middle way between them. Right now, the Chinese seem to consider which way will be best for solving critical problems in China: Democratization or a more tightly planned economy? However, from the minority's standpoint, both seem to have limits. Democracy is

basically the logic of majority. It will be desirable for the future of China, but, for minorities, another inequality policy might have been started. Moreover, because there are not many educated people in minorities and more than one ethnic group are living together within a region, establishment of an entirely autonomous government means that they must go through lots of trials and errors in the long run. A more tightly planned economy will worsen the situation. It is another expression of a more strict policy of inequality.

Therefore, rather than following the linear direction of the Chinese Communist Party, a precise and prudent approach to the minority inequality problem will be needed. To further this discussion, I would like to introduce some possible new models for ethnic Minorities' future which are mentioned by Gladney.<sup>48</sup>

First is the Alaska Model. Residents of ethnic minority direct dividends for returns on wealth derived from regional natural resources, in accord with Article Two of the International Covenant on Economics, Social, and Cultural Rights. By according benefits to all 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> generation residents of these conflict regions, China can perhaps obviate inter-ethnic tensions in the region and deflect criticisms that recent non-local migrants "lured to the region" by a government interested in integration through immigration are the real beneficiaries of China's increased investment of the region.

Second model is the Scotland one. Although it is clear that China would never consider granting full independence to the region, an approach

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<sup>48</sup> Dru Gladney, *Ethnic Conflict Prevention in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Regions: New Models for China's New Region*, Draft 02.07.20 v.1, July 3, 1996.

that grants the region more control over its own resources and governance, while maintaining central control over national defense and international trade would not only seem to make sense in the modern era, but parallels traditional models of Chinese imperial control of the regions under the last dynasty.

Finally, there is the Hawaii's model. China must find a way to allow its local peoples to legally, democratically and officially express their concerns about the development process in the region, the future directions of tourism and trade, and the prospects for greater autonomy and sovereignty. State and Federal funding for elected representatives of indigenous peoples, which have real input into the legislative process, such as the elected office of Hawaiian Affairs attempts to accomplish.

We cannot sure which one will be suitable for current China now. To get the right solution for ethnic minority problem, more painstaking concerns and endeavored researches will be needed. Anyhow, the most important thing will be that they should be utilized to promote the quality of living and activate the local economy. By giving an impression that the central government worries about the minority's living standards and authentic developments, lost faith between them should be rebuilt.

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