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**Urban Xinjiang Ethnic Minorities under the Development Policies:  
Strengthen Ethnic Identity or Assimilation**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of development policies towards ethnic minorities in urban Xinjiang. Try to find out how ethnic minorities define themselves and be defined by others along with the changing circumstances and interests which caused by the implementation of development policies.

Semi-structured interview was the main method to collect first-hand data. Observation was going on during the whole process of fieldwork. A state-owned company in urban Xinjiang was chosen as a case study. In order to make the study more comprehensive a private-owned company has been used as a comparison. Four main factors – “access”, “participation”, “payment”, and “promotion” – have been used to analyze the influences of development policies against the ethnic minorities’ workers.

The result of this paper could be seen from two aspects: firstly, the implementation of development policies combined with some old system and regulations would marginalize people from ethnic minority groups in a disadvantage situation. Thus, strong ethnic consciousness roused up. Secondly, due to the changing circumstances and interests, ethnic identity would be reinterpreted and reproduced.

**Key Words:** Ethnic Minorities, Xinjiang Uyghurs Autonomous Region, Ethnic Identity, Western Development Policy, Bilingual Language Policy

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
HR	Human Resource
NRCSTD	National Research Center of Sciences and Technology Development
OCP	One Child Policy
PRC	People's Republic of China
SOE	State Owned Enterprise
WDP	Western Development Policy
XPCC	Xinjing Production and Construction Corps
XUAR	Xinjiang Uyghurs Autonomous Region

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## **FOREWORD**

First and foremost, my heartfelt thanks and appreciation should go to Dr. Ann Kull, my supervisor, without her valuable and enlightening guidance my paper will not come into its present form. During the whole process of thesis writing, Professor Liu Chunrong from Department of Political Science of Shanghai Fudan University, my teacher Dr. Arianne Gaetano, my dear classmates Korakit Choomgrant, Sun Mee Lee, Luo Jing and one of my best friends Zoey helped me by recommending many books and reading materials as well as constructive suggestions and comments. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my great gratitude to all of them.

Secondly, I want to thank all the informants from Liudaowan Mining Company and Saibote Auto Car Company (A branch company of Hongda Group) in Xinjiang province for providing me lots of fundamental resources for the thesis.

Sincere thanks are also given to all the staff at the Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies of Lund University and all my teachers and classmates for the unforgettable overseas study experience and beautiful memories in Sweden.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Problem

China's Opening-up reform that has been adopted over 30 years ago. Western Development Policy (WDP) has implemented for almost 10 years. With temporarily happened social issues in Xinjiang Uyghurs Autonomous Region (hereafter Xinjiang), this remote region catches growing attention of scholars in academic area.

Xinjiang locates in northwest of China. Covering an area more than three times the size of France, Xinjiang has long been an important crossroads of trade and culture (Wilson and Toland, 2008). After the Opening-up reform, the economic discrepancy between eastern and western region has been enlarged. As the largest administrative province, Xinjiang's social and economic development has been left far behind. Although the Chinese government has invested heavily in developing regions in which Turkmen<sup>1</sup> reside, they still lag economically, as admitted in a white paper published by the state news agency (online resource: Minority at Risk). Western Development Policy is aiming at minimize the gap and revitalize the region. With strong state action, the social and economic situation in urban Xinjiang has been improved. Lots of Han people have migrated to Xinjiang because of both state encouragement and attractive working opportunities. In urban Xinjiang labor market, Han and non-Han applicants compete for the working opportunities.

The non-Han Uyghur ethnic minority group is the largest ethnic group in Xinjiang. This ethnic minority group owns distinctive symbols of ethnic identity. They speak Turkish based Uyghur language and believe in Islam. Strict pork avoidance food regulation is following by every member. They wear traditional colour silk and spend *Gu'erbang Day*. The implement of WDP and strengthen of bilingual language policy has influenced their lives to some extent. Because of WDP, government financial

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<sup>1</sup> Refers to Uyghurs

subsidy, FDI, human capital and the labor forces have come into Xinjiang. It has moved towards the market economy day by day. The competition in labor market has also been upgraded. From one side, Turkmen in China have been historically disadvantaged economically, with lower average incomes and under-representation in commercial activities, professions and government (online resource: Minority at Risk). In order to get rid of the language barrier and disadvantaged situation, competing with Han applicants in labor market. Some Uyghurs started to learn Mandarin and fluently use it as the language of instruction. Furthermore, since Han culture is labeled as the advanced civilization, some of Uyghurs started to learn not only the language but also the lifestyle. They speak Mandarin in school and work place, even some youths do not speak Uyghur well and use Mandarin at home (Zang, 2007:28). They dress like Han and spend both *Gu'erbang Day* and Spring Festival. From another side, WDP and bilingual language policy have also placed a good outside conditions for local ethnic minorities. Affirmative action points have been added to Min Kao Han students when they take university entrance examination. Government has paid lots of attention on cultivate local ethnic minority cadres. These people from ethnic minority groups have enjoyed preferences and opportunities provided by the development policies. The development policies have brought not only working and education opportunities, but also made the competition fiercer. This “changing circumstance” has placed ethnic identity of minority competitors in a risk position.

## 1.2 Purpose and research question

The purpose of this study is to explore both positive influences and negative implications of development policies brought to local ethnic minorities in urban Xinjiang. For the first aim of positive influences, the thesis would dedicate to find out the preferential treatments regulated by development policies that would improve their standings and competence in labor market.

For the second aim of negative implications, the ethnic identity would be focused. Whether these development actions would place any challenges against minority ethnic

identity reproduction? If yes, how they identify themselves and how they are identified by others along with implementation of development policies. Because of the development policies, more education and working opportunities were created for local residents (both Han and non-Han). Language is the basic requirement from the company side in labor market. Thus, Han applicants have language advantage. Furthermore, Han culture has been labeled as advance civilization. Combined with these two criteria, ethnic minority groups are placed in disadvantaged groups in social and economic arena. In order to improve the standing and competence of ethnic minorities in urban labor market, mastery of Mandarin and approach to Han culture is requested. However, learning Mandarin and advanced Han civilization would risk the vulnerability of ethnic minorities' identity and it is therefore an additional theme of inquiry in this thesis.

Based on the above two aim of this thesis, the main research question is how do development policies influence ethnic minorities in urban Xinjiang and where are the limitations? Followed with several sub-questions, since this is a case study, some sub-questions would be related to the case: What are the development policies? What is current situation of ethnic minorities (e.g. being recruited, participate in decision-making, being paid and promoted)? How do ethnic minorities benefit from the development policies? How do development policies influence the ethnic identity reproduction process? How ethnic minorities view themselves and how they be viewed?

### 1.3 Previous research

Previous research related to ethnic identity is mainly hold two attitudes. National determinism believes that the ethnic identity is inherent which can not be changed by the will (Mortimer and Fine, 2009:118). No matter what kind of subjective feeling, the person belongs to a certain ethnic group determined by the destiny. Other scholars think, ethnic and national identities are constantly transforming, and are continually being renewed, reinterpreted and renegotiated according to changing circumstances and interests (Petersoo, 2007:118). The ethnic identity “transforming” trend under

Xinjiang's social and economic context plays in two ways. Some scholars, such as Dr. Schluessel, believed that according to development steps and more frequent communication with Han majority, Uyghurs identity would construct largely in opposition to that of Han Chinese (Schluessel, 2007:269), and strong ethnic consciousness would be lifted up. From another side, because of the implementation of many preferential policies and health social and economic development in urban Xinjiang, there would be a group of min kao han Uyghur people being assimilated and turns into the "fourteenth minority" (Clothey, 2005).

From the government side, the aim of implement WDP is to minimize the discrepancy between the developed eastern area and the central and western under-developed areas. Xinjiang province takes 1/6 of China's territory, maintains abundant of natural resources and places in a strategic geographical location. Some scholars have done in-depth research on Xinjiang and Uyghur people. Dr. Gladney has published lots of articles on Xinjiang and local ethnic minorities which provided a general overlook of my research setting and of the target group. Many other scholars have introduced demographics and development situation in Xinjiang, such as Stanly Toops and Frederick Starr. Joanne Smith and Yee put lots of attention on the relationship between Han majority and local ethnic minorities. As a local scholar, Dr. Yao from Xinjiang Normal University<sup>2</sup> made an analysis of the social attitude of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang and development studies in this region after the adoption of WDP in her recent book<sup>3</sup>. She used lots of questionnaires in her research, a method that made the final results reliable. Because of Xinjiang's strategic location, old and new Silk Road have been discussed in academic area, some researchers thought it is Beijing's tactic of "peaceful rise" (Clarke, 2008) and the irrational exploitation of natural resources being criticized (Zhao, 2001). The positive influence brought by WDP has also been mentioned by domestic scholars, financial subsidy, economic changes and working opportunity are the mainly focused (Ma, 2006).

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<sup>2</sup> Xinjiang Normal University <http://www.xjnu.edu.cn/>

<sup>3</sup> *Xinjiang Shaoshu Minzu Shehui Xintai yu Minzu Diqu Fazhan Yanjiu* (Social Attitude of Xinjiang Minorities and Development Studies of Minority Region).

WDP has provided growing chances in urban labor market in Xinjiang, while it also intensifies the competence among the job seekers from different ethnic groups. Mastery of Mandarin became to be the basic requirement to the success (Clothey, 2005; Dywer, 2005; Schluessel, 2007; Zang, 2007; etc.). Dywer gives a whole picture of the development process of language policy in China and the discussion focused on the relationship between language policy and ethnic identity. Language is nearly always central to ethnic identity (Dywer, 2005: 59). The language policy would indeed have great influence towards the reproduction of ethnic identity. Over half-century, the Chinese language has been all but institutionalized in the spheres that matter: education, work and regional administration (Smith, 2002:158). A report *The Challenges of Bilingual Education in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region People's Republic of China* provides the basic knowledge of what the bilingual language education is and how it works in Xinjiang. Some researches on previous system and regulations also set as a background for this thesis, such as Hukou system<sup>4</sup>, one-child policy and *guanxi*<sup>5</sup> network. When development policies meet with these old system and regulation, the situation of social disadvantaged ethnic minority groups would be worsen.

#### 1.4 Theoretical framework

Development policies would bring investment for urban Xinjiang for the infrastructure construction, and growing projects generated many working opportunities in urban labor market. Development policies would bring labor force for the construction and development of urban Xinjiang, however local ethnic minorities may face upgraded competence in labor market. Development policies would bring preferential treatment for ethnic minorities which guarantee more chances of study that would improve their standings in labor market. However, the most influential impact brought by the development policies is on the local minorities' ethnic identity. The theme of this thesis

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<sup>4</sup> Hukou system also could be called as registered resident permission system. With local urban Hukou, citizen could enjoy all kind of social welfare including medical insurance, housing allowance, unemployment compensation and so on. There are two category of Hukou in China, agricultural Hukou and non-agricultural (permanent urban)Hukou.

<sup>5</sup> A special social network in China and popular among Han Chinese. It will be discussed in detail in the following section.

focused on ethnic identity, discussing how development policies influenced the identity reproduction.

According to Stuart Hall, “Ethnic identity refers to the individual level of identification with a culturally defined collectivity... Ethnic identity is characterized by proximity to others within a shared social space” (Heberer, 2008:99). To elaborate it further, Jerkins believed that the ethnic identity could be view from both internal and external definition. The internal definition is: “members of a group signal to fellow group members or others a self-definition of who they are, their identity” (Jerkins, 2008: 55). And from other side, the external definition is: “other-directed processes, during which one person or set of persons defines the other(s) as ‘X’, ‘Y’, or whatever” (Ibid: 55).

Previous research indicated that ethnic and national identities are constantly transforming, and are continually being renewed, reinterpreted and renegotiated according to changing circumstances and interests (Petersoo, 2007:118). “Changing circumstance” could be viewed from overall policies and authority regulated system and rules. Hukou system, one-child policy, *guanxi* issue, WDP and bilingual language policy would be discussed as the “changing circumstance” towards the renegotiated ethnic identity in this thesis. For ethnic minorities in urban Xinjiang labor market, Hukou system, one-child policy and *guanxi* issue have made them is a disadvantaged group. To elaborate it further, most of ethnic minority applicants are migrates from south rural area. Since they do not have local resident permission, many companies and posts are not opened to them. One-child policy has no restriction to minority family. Generally, the ethnic minority family would have more than one child which means the woman in this family would shoulder more family burden compared with Han. It is Han ethnic group traditionally use of *guanxi* network and take advantage from it.

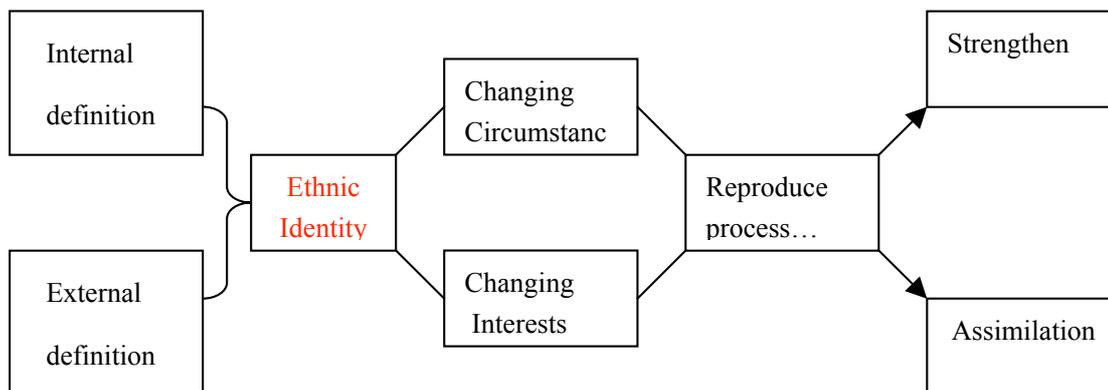
All of the previous policies and regulation put ethnic minority group in a social disadvantaged position, and the adoption of WDP and bilingual language policy further

confirmed the position and push forward of the reproduction of ethnic identity. Great number of immigration flow makes upgraded severe competition in urban labor market. Since the ethnic minority group has already been labeled as disadvantaged group, the situation would be worsen when the number of advantaged Han ethnic group is in growing tendency in the competition of urban labor market. Some scholar argues that is Han people benefit most from WDP not the local ethnic minority group. With abundant nature resources, Xinjiang could achieve high speed economic development by trading resources. Although WDP has put environment protection as at second high priority, environment degradation is still on going. The local residents are victimized of the WDP processing. Language plays as one of the most important and obvious markers of ethnic identity. A wide spread definition of ethnic nationality by Joseph Stalin is: a combination of shared history, language, economic life, common territory, and culture (Clothey, 2005:393). That is the reason why the language we speak is thus crucial to our identity to the degree by which we define ourselves by it (Ibid: 393). Uyghurs in Xinjiang have their shared history, agricultural-based economic life, originated resident area and same Islamic culture, as well as Turkish-originated Uyghur language. Thus, the promotion of bilingual language policy which changed using Uyghur as the language of instruction into Mandarin would risk the ethnic identity as a Uyghur.

“Interests” can be discussed from both government and individual. First of all, for a multi-ethnic state, most of authorities would preserve national unity and social stability by building national identity. “Great Western Development” in ethnic minority areas, it nonetheless maintains that this will be done on the basis of preserving “national unity” and “social stability” with the dominant ethnic group – the Han – as the leading agents of modernization (Clarke, 2007: 339). Language policy in different state may hold different purpose. Single ethnic nation-state would face little challenges that brought by language policy compared with the multi-ethnic group state. As Han-dominated authoritarian regime, Chinese language policies mainly purposed on nation unity and stability through national identity build.

Secondly, for individual interests, the name of “disadvantaged group” constrains the individual development. WDP has brought many attractive working opportunities. People from ethnic minority groups could improve their standings in labor market by obtain high personal quality. Bilingual language policy has place the chance for personal improvement for ethnic minorities. The selected national language comes to be associated with “modernity” and “progress,” while minority languages come to be associated with tradition and obsolescence. (Clothey, 2005:392) By learning and using the “selected national language”-Mandarin, ethnic minority could strengthen the social and economic competence and get easier access to labor market.

**Figure 1. Flow Chart of Ethnic Identity and Process of Reproduction**



Generally speaking, there would be two main trends after the reproduction of ethnic identity based on the “changing circumstances and interests”. One trend would be the strengthening of minorities’ ethnic identity. Uyghurs have interpreted recent language policies—which include the expansion of Chinese language domains in education and the media as well as a reduction of minority-language domains—as a direct assault on Uyghur culture (Dywer, 2005:2). That would strengthen the ethnic consciousness. Another trend is the process of assimilation. Both because of the policies’ implementation and the individual interests, some members from disadvantaged groups learnt and assimilated with advance group. Agreed with Dr. Rebecca Clothey’s point of view of “the fourteenth minority in Xinjiang” (Clothey, 2005: 403). Someone’s education has necessitated their interaction and assimilation with the Han majority, are

neither entirely Uyghur nor entirely Han (ibid:403).

## 1.5 Method and selection

### *1.5.1 Case study*

According to Yin, types of research questions will lead to the different choice of strategies for doing a research. In general, case studies are the preferred strategy when “how” or “why” questions are to be posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context. (Yin, 2003: 1). Due to my research questions I choose a case study carried out in Liudaowan Mining Company that is state-owned and Hongda Company, especially its branch company Saibote Auto car Company, which is private-owned. Both are located in urban Xinjiang. By using the case analysis to illustrate what is the present situation of ethnic minorities and how development policies influence the local ethnic minorities in labor market. Yin also mentioned that case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2003:13). The aim of this thesis is to find out the “real life” situation of ethnic minority workers in the above mentioned companies and, on an additional level, in urban Xinjiang’s labor market.

“Case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system” (Creswell, 2007:73). One state-owned mining company and one private-owned car sales company were chosen to be two comparative cases in this thesis. With the development of China, agricultural takes smaller and smaller percentage of total GDP and heavy industry takes the biggest perception, while the service industry shows a growing tendency. Liudaowan Mining Company belongs to the heavy industry, while Saibote Auto Car Company belongs to the service industry. Also on an additional level, I would like to use these two companies to be as the representatives and find out the influence brought by the development policies towards their staff in and outside the company.

### *1.5.2 Methods of selection*

Qualitative approach has been chosen as the main method of this paper. “Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”(Creswell, 2007:36). Since my research topic is about the ethnic identity in urban Xinjiang, the natural setting was in capital city of Xinjiang and the target group is the local ethnic minority. “Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multi-bounded system (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information ” (Creswell, 2007:73). Two companies were chosen to be two comparative cases in this thesis. An additional interesting aspect is that the recruitment procedures and treatments are different between state-owned and private-owned. Ethnic minorities may receive different treatments under these different policies and regulations. This state-owned company has over 50 years’ history and indeed has made great contribution to economic development of Xinjiang. Minority staff in the company makes up 56% of the total, which means it is easy to find enough respondents and the leadership group is combined with one Uyghur and three Han staff. The choice of respondents follows the snowball principle. Each company has one contact person, who is working in the human resource division. When the author newly arrived at the company, the first interview was made with the contact person. The contact person gave general introduction of the company and introduced other informants. Also, during the fieldwork in the company, the contact person helped author solving different problems.

### *1.5.3 Data collection*

The major data collection method in this thesis is semi-structured interviews. A questionnaire was designed in the original research plan, but was finally given up. The questionnaire would probably have covered relatively great number of people. The author would have to ask permission from the local government or have to go through

certain formalities before starting doing the questionnaire survey. Clearly, it would have taken a lot of time, which was not allowed because of the limited time for fieldwork. Secondly, many ethnic minorities could not read and write Mandarin or they prefer to answer questionnaires in their native language. Thus, there would have a language barrier.

However, semi-structured interview have its advantages. An interview guideline was designed before the interviews, different interviewees would be asked by different questions in different talking surroundings. For instance, a high level leader in the company was interviewed in his/her office. While a dialogue with an employee with ethnic minority origin while in a lower position in the company was arranged in a small coffee shop where it is quiet and safe. They were asked different interview questions because of their different working and education background. The interview guideline was sometimes modified, since the former interviews may provide new ideas related to the study. For example, when I talked with one Han staff in the mining company, he told me my previous interviewee's father was the former leader of the company (Interview with LZ, 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009). This led me to think about the special social network in China, we call it *guanxi* and it has a great influence during the recruitment process. So I decided to check whether my next interviewees have some background in the company, and ask the related question during the interview.

#### *1.5.4 Reliability, validity and ethical considerations*

To establish trust is very important during the data collection process. I would firstly tell the interviewees about my background, as a master student in Lund University. And the interviews would only aim at collecting first hand materials for master graduation thesis writing and has not any political purpose. The author always stays in a third person's point of view, brought up neutral questions that would hopefully not mislead the respondents. Choosing a suitable conversational environment has also been taken into consideration. A quiet and private space would encourage the interviewees to speak and even touch upon some personal topics. Since the author was born in Xinjiang,

it was easy for the interviewees to feel that the author “belongs” to their group, so the trustiness was built up. Showing respect is especially necessary when talking with ethnic minorities. In order to protect the interviewees, pseudonym has been used in the thesis. After first draft was finished, a re-visit to most of the interviewees was conducted. And also telephone interviews were continuously processed, only if there come out more questions related to thesis during the paper writing period.

**Table 1. Interviewees’ List of Liudaowan Mining Company**

Name	Age	Ethnicity	Sex	Hukou	Education background	Position	Remarks
A	52	Uyghur	Male	Local	College graduate	CCP leader	Leadership group member
M	49	Hui	Male	Local	Secondary school	officer	Father is former leader
XX	29	Han	Female	Migrate	College graduate	Accountant	Her uncle helped
LX	55	Han	Male	Local	Secondary school	HR Officer	<b>Contact person</b>
K	33	Uyghur	Male	Migrate	Primary school	Guard	Not fluent Han
S	41	Uyghur	Male	Migrate	Primary school(not finished)	Worker	
LZ	48	Han	Male	Migrate	Primary school(not finished)	Worker	
G	36	Uyghur	Female	Migrate	Primary school(not finished)	Cleaner	Wife of S

As the above form has showed, the informants from Liudaowan Mining Company combined with 5 ethnic minorities (4 Uyghur and 1 Hui) and 3 Han staff. Besides 3 local residents the other 5 migrate staff were coming from north or south Xinjiang, areas of poor economic status. Only two of them have college education. In addition, a group interview was arranged by the contact person in Liudaowan Mining Company at the end of February 2009. In order to let them speak and discuss without any anxiety the participants in the discussion are kept anonymous.

**Table 2. Interviewees’ List of Hongda Group**

Name	Age	Ethnicity	Sex	Hukou	Education background	Position	Remarks
XY	44	Han	Male	Migrate	College graduate	Vice director	from group company
L	32	Han	Female	Local	University graduate	Vice manager	
Y	31	Uyghur	Male	Migrate	University graduate	Department manager	
XQ	28	Hui	Female	Local	University graduate	Admin Assistant	
GL	33	Han	Male	Local	College graduate	HR manager	<b>Contact person</b>
J	21	Uyghur	Male	Migrate	n/a	Security guard	Not fluent Han

The first informant is working in Hongda Group Company as vice director and other interviewees are working in Saibote Auto Car Company, which is one of its many branch companies. 3 ethnic minorities (2 Uyghur and 1 Hui) and 3 Han people were chosen to be the interviewees. Almost gender balance situation of this company, because service industry is not strongly male preference. Migrant staff could be divided into two groups, one migrant group was coming from poor areas of Xinjiang and another migrant group was from other parts of China. Three of them has gained university education and only one informant do not have college and above education.

#### *1.5.5 Limitations*

Several limitations are important to point out in this thesis. Firstly, one state-owned company and one private company were chosen as representatives of buyers in urban Xinjiang's labor market. However, there are thousands of companies in the city of Urumqi, and different company run a variety of businesses. Therefore, the choice to carry out interviews in two companies in the city of Urumqi may not present the whole picture. Secondly, qualitative approach is the main tool of this study, limited interviews were conducted which does not cover the thoughts of every ethnic minority person in urban Xinjiang. Thirdly, because of the different education background, some of the interviewees could not speak fluent Mandarin, only with "yes" or "no" answers. In other words, this thesis aims to provide a limited case study and may not be used for larger generalizations.

#### 1.6 Disposition of the thesis

The above section of introduction has discussed the research problem, methodology framework and the limitation of this study. The following part of the thesis is divided into three sections. Part 2 lists the present situation in Xinjiang and some influential policies and regulations. Part 3 briefly presents the realities from the fieldwork interviews and observations. Part 4 explores the positive influence and limitations of the development policies in Xinjiang. The cases study of Liudaowan Mining Company

and Hongda Group was using as the examples to illustrate how ethnic minorities both benefit from and influenced by the development policies. Last part finally arrives at conclusions and also gives some possible suggestions on how to solve the awkward situation ethnic minorities has faced in urban Xinjiang labor market along with the development policies' implementation.

## **2. BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

### **2.1 Xinjiang province and Uyghur ethnic minority**

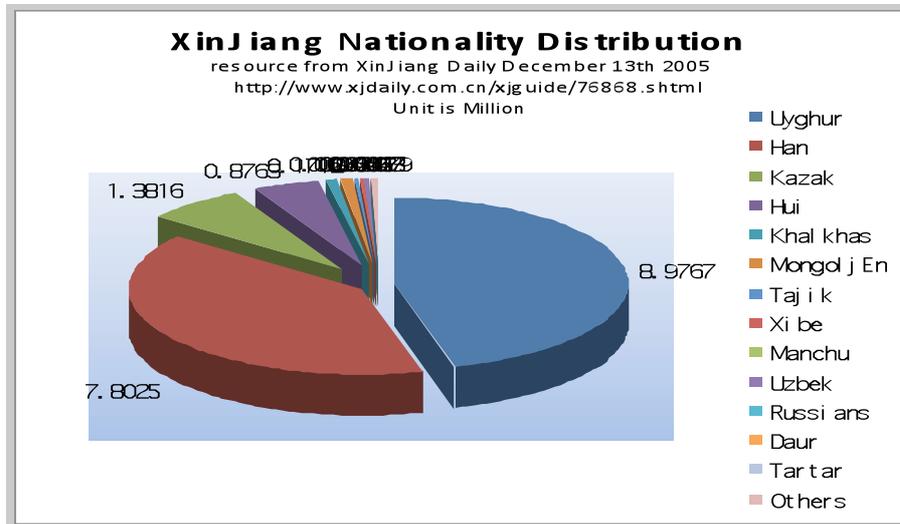
Xinjiang locates in northwest of China. It bordered with 8 countries<sup>6</sup> and plays continuously strategic geographical position in China. As a pioneer in Inner Asian studies Owen Lattimore has depicted that Xinjiang and the Inner Asian frontiers of China and Russia as the 'pivot of Asia', a pivot around which revolved international politics, power and the future of humankind (Zhao, 2001:197). New Silk Road-- Eurasian railroad again offers good opportunity to develop Xinjiang. "The Chinese government made massive infrastructure, economic, and capital investments in Xinjiang throughout the 1980s and 1990s to modernize and revitalize the region" (Layne and Liang, 2008:6). Great improvements have been achieved along with the development policies adopted in Xinjiang. And the local residents have experienced social stability and economic development in their everyday lives.

Total population in Xinjiang is over 19.63 million at the end of 2005 (Internet source: Xinjiang Daily). Xinjiang is ethnic minority groups' diversified region where over 60% of total population is from ethnic minority groups. However, from the view of overall China: "the majority nationality is the Han; the 55 minority nationalities consist of 8.4% of China's total population" (Zang, 2007:2342).

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<sup>6</sup> Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India

**Figure 2. Pie Chart of Xinjiang Ethnic Groups' Distribution<sup>7</sup>**



It is clear that “the largest ethnic group in the province is the Uyghur, who comprise 45% of the province population” (Layne and Liang, 2008:6). Traced back to the history of Uyghur, one Uyghur official from Chinese International Travel Service said: “The Uighur people are the descendants of a high civilization of Central Asian nomadic people who has a kingdom based here in Turfan” (Gladney, 1990:2). The important symbols of ethnic identity are religious and language. Uyghur people use Uyghur language which is Turkish-based language system belonging to Altaic family. And the Uyghurs believe Islam, so they are being called Muslim Chinese.

## 2.2 Hukou system and One Child Policy

In 1951, the Hukou system was started to implement in China. The two types of *hukou*, namely, urban and rural, pertain to urban and rural population, respectively (Liu, 2005:135). This policy was generated within the centrally planned economic system (Wang and Moffatt, 2008: 3). With the emerging of market economy, government has started to loosen the population control which motivates the growing number of migrant labor flow. But, different entitlement towards rural and urban *hukou* holder has not change. In addition, an urban *hukou* entitles its holders to the subsidized education

<sup>7</sup> The chart was made by the author, the data resource is from Xinjiang Daily.

system, welfare programs, and community cultural activities (Liu, 2005:136). Furthermore, many local governments continue to require business firms, both state-owned and privately-owned, to hire only local residents (Liu, 2005:137). In Xinjiang, according to statistic report by NRCSTD<sup>8</sup> and Fato AIS<sup>9</sup>, there is 17.9% of Uyghur ethnic minority hold urban *hukou* by the middle of 2006.

China began its One Child Policy (OCP) in 1979 along with the Opening-up reform. Under this policy, each family is allowed to have only one child. In rural area, it is allowed to have a second child if the first child is female because of the needs for male labor. However, there is no strict restriction towards the ethnic minority family.

### 2.3 Western Development Policy

Western Development Policy (WDP from here after, and also could be called as Great Western Development Strategy, GWDS) was adopted by central government on year 1999, covering one province-level municipality and 11 provinces and autonomous regions: Chongqing, Gansu, Guangxi, Guizhou, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Sichuan, Tibet, Xinjiang, and Yunnan (Gelb and Chen, online resource). According to Xinhua News Agency, the total area that WDP covered takes 6.85 million square kilometers that is 71.4% of country's territory. The population in this region is 367 million that represents 28.8% of the population of China at the end of year 2002; however the GDP of this region only took 16.8% of the total (Internet source: Xinhua).

The main purpose of WDP is to eliminate poverty in the western provinces and significantly reduce the development disparity between the east and the west by the middle of this century (Gelb and Chen, online resource). The major principles of WDP which stated by the general Party secretary Jiang Zemin are: speed up the economy development in Western region should combine maintaining present stable social and political circumstances, with keeping national solidarity. State Council has proposed

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<sup>8</sup> National Research Center of Science and Technology Development (中国科学技术促进发展研究中心)

<sup>9</sup> Norway Fato AIS research center (挪威Fato 应用国际研究所)

several tasks for WDP in 1999:

1. speed up the construction of infrastructure;
2. strengthen ecological and environmental protection and preservation;
3. adjust industrial structure;
4. develop science, technology and education, and train skilled workers; and
5. deepen reform and opening (Zhao, 2001: 203)

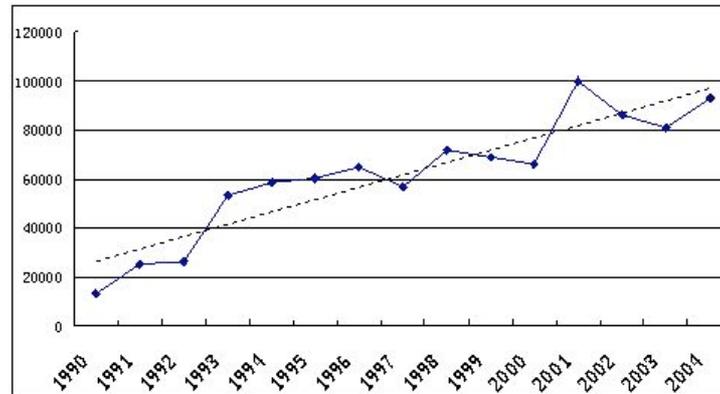
What is the role of Xinjiang under the WDP adoption and with its implementation? Task 1, 4 and 5 are directly relevant to this thesis. For “speed up the construction of infrastructure”, great number of financial subsidy was provided by the government. Meanwhile, loosen local resident control would encourage the immigration flow which could assure the abundant labor force. It could be found from the Figure 3 that a large migrant flow was happened from late 2000 to middle 2001 which were right after the adoption of WDP. For “science, technology and education, and train skilled worker”, it would be reflected from the discussion of bilingual language policy. For “deepen reform and opening”, the geopolitical position of Xinjiang is “centrality and intermediate position in Eurasia” between the great the “sedentary homelands” of Europe, Iran, India and China (Clarke, 2008:91). The stability and economic development of Xinjiang would also contribute to China’s strategic position in international affairs particular in Central Asia. After the adoption of WDP, Xinjiang has started the high speed development. Xinjiang occupies 1/6 of country’s territory, with rich natural resources. In the Tarim basin<sup>10</sup> alone, it is estimated that there are reserves of 10.8 billion tons for oil and 8.39 trillion cubic metres for natural gas, accounting for one-seventh and one-fourth of China’s total oil and gas reserves respectively (Zhao, 2001: 212). It could be foreseeable that Xinjiang will grow into a strategic base for country development in this new century. Lots of projects are under the construction. For instance, to transport gas to the east coast, China is the process of implementing a 120 billion yuan (\$14.5 billion) plan to build a 4,200 kilometre (2,600 mile) gas pipeline linking Xinjiang and Shanghai (Ibid: 213). However, some local ethnic

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<sup>10</sup> World second largest desert, China’s largest one which is located in South Xinjiang.

minorities would think it from a negative aspect: the development of Xinjiang is at the expenses of its natural resource.

**Figure 3. Net Population Immigrate to XinJiang**



Resource from: the Population and Family planning commission of Xinjiang  
<http://www.xjpop.gov.cn/157.asp>

#### 2.4 Bilingual language policy

Right after the fundamental of the new country, China’ central government has started to put great attention on language policy. By recognition of Dr. A.W.Dwyer, the Early Language Planning during the period 1949–79 was keen to the establishment of official language policies that were both tolerant and promoted the languages of China (Dwyer, 2005:7). During this period of time, ethnic minority areas enjoy formal written policy which was promoting minority languages.

All languages, regardless of size and status, have legal guarantees; however, major minority languages in these Autonomous Regions are required to share space and resources with Standard Chinese in the domains of government administration, the courts, education, and the media (Dwyer, 2005:7).

Along with the Opening up reform in around 1980s, the preferential education policy<sup>11</sup> for minorities was made on 1984 which clarified the preferential university entrance requirements for minorities’ students. Minorities’ students did benefit from it substantially afterwards. In fact, over half-century, the Chinese language has been all but institutionalized in the spheres that matter: education, work and regional

<sup>11</sup> The Law on Regional Autonomy for Minority Nationalities. Resource from Dr. A.W.Dwyer.

administration (Smith, 2002:158).

Xinjiang Regional Education Bureau introduced a new bilingual education policy in 2002, requiring Mandarin to be used as a language of instruction, with mother tongue to be taught as a subject (Strawbridge, 2005:2). Since minority languages have widely been labeled insufficiently modern, it would constrain the development in peripheral minority concentrated areas. The purpose to extend the teaching of Mandarin in minority areas is the improvement in the ‘quality’ of minorities (Schluessel, 2007: 254). Present implementation status of bilingual language policy could be viewed from both schools and work places.

*Article 37 of the Law of the People’s Republic of China on Regional National Autonomy* which was adopted in May 1984 and amended in February 2001, states that “schools (classes and grades) and other institutions of education where most of the students come from minority nationalities shall, whenever possible, use textbooks in their own languages, and use their languages as the media of instruction...” (Dywer, 2005:35)

However, the reality is, today, Chinese instruction in Xinjiang begins in the first grade (Ibid, 2005:37). The same as Dr. Strawbridge has reported: “In 2005, the Regional Education Bureau directed all schools throughout Xinjiang to use Mandarin as the language of instruction in line with the policy requirements” (Strawbridge, 2005:2). And extra mark preferential policies also provided a strong driven force for minorities’ students learning Mandarin. “The ethnic difference is usually between 10 to 30 (or more), which makes difference since one point difference in a competitive college entrance examination rules out a large number of competitors” (Zang, 2007:2342).

In working places, central and local government put lots of attention to cultivate the minority cadres<sup>12</sup> with Mandarin as the official language. “Peiyang Shaoshuminzu Ganbu Shixing Fang’an” (The draft plan of cultivate minorities’ cadres for promotion)

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<sup>12</sup> Cadre must: do mental works; to be certain level of leader; shoulder management tasks. It has difference and connection between cadre and staff. Staff include cadres and workers. The difference between cadre and worker is one takes mental work and another takes physical work.

was issued by central government in year 1950. The adoption of WDP has provided more chances for minorities to join this plan and be trained as cadre. All kinds of trainings have been held using Mandarin as the only language of instruction. According to *Minzu Bao Zaixian*, there are 117,476 minority cadres in Xinjiang local governments at all levels, state-owned companies and group enterprises, which takes 28.94% of the total number of cadres in Xinjiang province. With the implementation of WDP and adoption and cultivate the minority cadres policy, there are 343,459 minority cadres in year 2007, which occupies 51.06% of total number of Xinjiang cadres (Minority Daily online, 2009).

Some achievements have been made after the adoption of bilingual language policy.

The deputy director Mr. Ma Wenhua from Education Bureau of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region says, “it has made remarkable progress of the bilingual language education, and it is a good way to strengthen the national solidarity since majority Han and minority students could better communicate from very beginning when they started to go to school” (Internet source: CRI online, 2007).

As ethnically diverse frontier region, there are 13 ethnic groups living together in Xinjiang. In fact, over 99.8% percent of Uyghur<sup>13</sup> population is located in Xinjiang (Starr, 2004:112). Based on Stalinist theory, language planning has been viewed as the ideological foundation and political tool for national unity in China. Politicians and planners have seen language planning and education in Xinjiang as crucial to regional stability (Schluessel, 2007:255). Bilingual education is widespread in Xinjiang. There can be no doubt that Mandarin is now given almost complete preference over minority mother languages in the Xinjiang school system (Schluessel, 2007: 258). Language policy could be seen as the external factor for minority students learn Mandarin. The marginalized position in labor market arouses the hope to move close to the advanced Han civilization and get rid of disadvantaged situation.

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<sup>13</sup> According to different authors, it could be written as “Uyghur” or “Uighur”, with different spelling but the same meaning.

### 3. A CASE STUDY OF TWO CHINESE COMPANIES

#### 3.1 Description of Liudaowan Mining Company and Hongda Group

Liudaowan Mining Company is an old and one of most influential state-owned company in Xinjiang. It keeps close connection with CCP and government leadership. Along with the WDP implementation, this company strictly followed with preferential policies towards the local ethnic minorities which is the model company maintains good ethnic-relationship among staff with different nationalities. With the adoption of development policies, Hongda group expend its business and settle new Auto Car Company named Saibote. This private-owned company has tightly connected with the market. They prefer to let the result “speaks” towards their employees and no preferential subsidy from the company side. These two different companies have different requirements towards the employees. It was try to collect more comprehensive first hand materials which would strengthen the reliability of the result.

During interview with contact person, the following general information of Liudaowan Mining Company was provided.<sup>14</sup> The general Wang Zhen led 5,000 liberation army came to this desolate and uninhabited *Gobi* oasis and pioneered Liudaowan Mining Group in July 1951. It was reported that the bank coal production is 35 million tons until the end of year 2006, already had made 2.6 billion Chinese Yuan profits.<sup>15</sup>

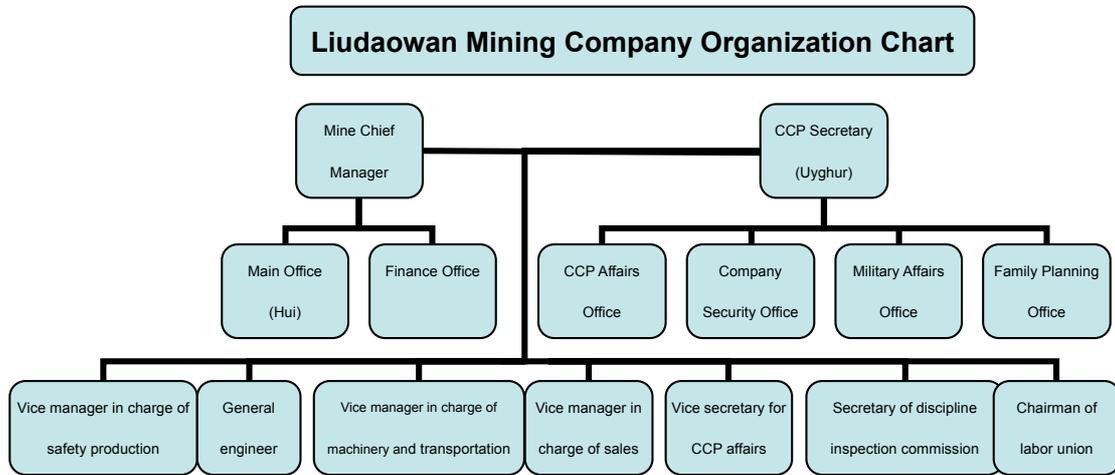
Liudaowan Mining Company is a state-owned company located in the capital city Urumqi. Liudaowan Mining Company is a large mining company shows great influence in urban labor market because they can offer many good working opportunities for local and migrated job seekers. There are 1,600 employees in the company and 56.6% of them are from ethnic minority groups.

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<sup>14</sup> He also sent me some E-documents, which provide an introduction of the company, however these “E-documents” have no author and have never been published. The present author has an E-version of these documents.

<sup>15</sup> 1 Chinese Yuan/RMB = 0.683 US dollar, the information is based on website <http://www.xe.com/>

**Figure 4. Tree Diagram of Liudaowan Mining Company**



Liudaowan Mining Company is famous for the nationalities solidification. Employees from 17 ethnic groups have worked together in the company. Being a state-owned enterprise, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) plays an important role. The general CCP secretary is in charge of the arrangement of CCP actions and development in the company. Several CCP officials are sent to the grass-roots units to unfold the CCP activities among the staff with different ethnicities. For example, responsibility area and the pioneer post.<sup>16</sup> The political theory study<sup>17</sup> is held once a month and every employee should attend no matter whether you are a CCP member or not. Liudaowan once had its own radio and TV station, which is mainly used for publicizing the CCP's ideas. Mr.LX said:

“In 1982, Liudaowan Mining Company, as a pioneer group, started to hold the activity named ‘Learning Month of National Solidarity’ which set the positive model for other companies in Xinjiang. Because of the continuous outstanding behaviors, Liudaowan Mining Company is recognized as the

<sup>16</sup> One CCP member may assign for certain area in the company, for instance CCP member X responses for department 1, then X becomes the supervisor to remind all staff in department 1 work hard, study political theory and safety production. Pioneer post means CCP officials should set good examples for common staff, always keep good image for Communist Party.

<sup>17</sup> The courses are all about political theory, such as Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Theory, Deng Xiaoping Theory and “Three Representatives”. The courses are aiming at making sure the attendants keep right political standpoint.

‘advanced group of national solidarity’ by the State Council.” (Interview notes, on Jan 19<sup>th</sup> 2009)

Submit to the government arrangement, Liudaowan Mining Company now facing a big reform and mineral exploitation will be moved eastwards to Turfan basin.

According to the introduction of the Mr.LX in Liudaowan Mining Company, the author made the organization chart above.<sup>18</sup> It could see from the chart that chief manager and the CCP secretary has the same power position in this company, however their focuses are different. Chief Manager is mainly in charge of the administration and the CCP general secretary works on the ideological and political work. Another important section of the company is the human resource division (HR for short), which is mainly responsible for recruiting new staff, staff training and promotion. HR division is under the leadership of the vice manager who is in charge of sales.<sup>19</sup> HR division plays as the company’s executive “buyer” in labor market.

In order to collect a comparatively comprehensive first hand material, I did the fieldwork in another company which is private-owned company. Hongda Group Corporation was founded in November 1985. After carrying out a pioneering enterprise with painstaking efforts for over 20 years, it has become one of the most influential private-owned corporations in Xinjiang. There are almost 1,400 employees in the company. Its branch company--Saibote Auto Car Company set up no more than 10 years and has made a distinctive contribution for Xinjiang’s development.<sup>20</sup> Ms.L said:

“Ethnic minorities in this company takes no more than 30% of the total, and only one of them takes management position and all the others are the workers at the production line, as sales, cleaner or security guard.” (Interview notes with Ms. L, on 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009)

The chart below has been made by the author and is based on information from the

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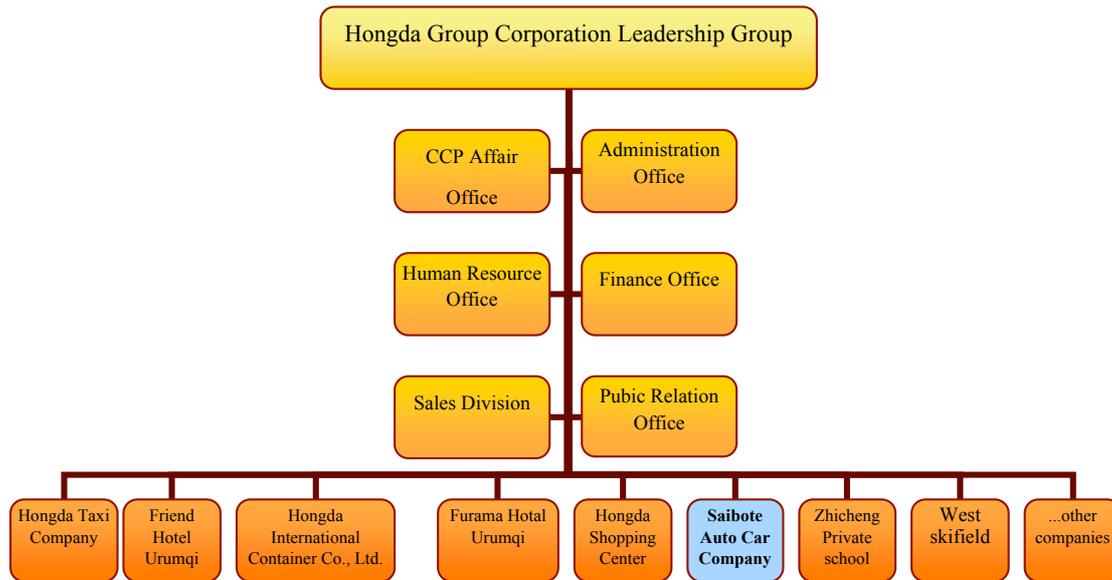
<sup>18</sup> The picture of original organization chart of Liudaowan has been attached as appendix. Only first three layers of the chart has been translated and represented in the paper.

<sup>19</sup> HR division was not presented on the chart, but could find from the appendix picture. Vice manager in charge of sales is in third layer and HR should be on fourth layer.

<sup>20</sup> The author has printed document which was provided by Mr.GL.

vice general director of Hongda group (Interview with XY, 5<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009). They do not have a clear chart as Liudaowan had. As the organization chart shows Hongda Group Corporation has developed into a large-scale private company with dozens of branch companies under the Group's central leadership.

**Figure 5. Tree Diagram of Hongda Group Corporation**



One branch company, Saibote Auto Car Company, was chosen for my fieldwork. Saibote Auto Car Company was founded in 2003 and has become one of the most famous car transaction markets in the country. It locates in the north of Urumqi city, covers 260 thousands square kilometers and the general property is 550 million Chinese Yuan. Saibote Auto Car Company has 87 employees, and 30% of them are from ethnic minority groups. 5 employees constitute the leadership group, 1 of them is female and none of them are from the ethnic minority groups. (Interview with Ms.L, 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009)

### 3.2 Requirements from company side

The HR division in the company is in charge of staff recruitment and dismissal, staff assessment, professional training and promotion. Different company would have different HR policies based on profession and development policies respectively. With WDP's implementation, these two companies enjoy good social and economic

atmosphere for the companies' expansion and further development generally because of enlargement of sales market and the government investments. Both of them have played actively as buyer in urban labor market, recruiting talents for company's development.

Fortunately, HR officers from both companies have accepted the interview. Since the HR policies are recognized as the confidential documents in the company, only interview conversations could be recorded as the first hand materials for further analysis. The materials are arranged in the following 4 sections:

### *3.2.1 Recruitment*

The basic requirement for recruitment of both companies is to be able to speak Mandarin. In Xinjiang, Mandarin is the only official working language no matter in private sector or government office in all levels. In addition, Hukou system would constrain some applications. Some important post such as accountant or higher leader positions are local residents requested. The local Hukou requirement would refuse some candidates without the local resident permission.

Besides the language and Hukou consideration, other requirements made by the state-owned company and the private-owned company are different. In my cases, since Liudaowan Mining Company is an old and large-scale state-owned enterprise (SOE), "under the so-called 'iron rice bowl' system, SOE employees enjoyed not only lifetime employment, but also a wide range of welfare benefits such as education, housing, health care and pension" (Girma and Gong, 2008:575). Some of them inherited the posts from their elder generations and some of them are transferred from other state-owned company according to government's overall arrangement. There are only small numbers of vacancies for recruiting new staff each year. The *guanxi* social network plays as a requirement in this small numbers of recruitments. The detailed discussion about *guanxi* social network would be conducted in following section. Personal competitive strengthen and working ability would also be taken into consideration

when recruiting take place, however not as vital as in private company.

It is different in private-owned Saibote Auto Car Company. People could always find the recruitment notices online posted by the company. The private company has more right of autonomy. All staff sign labor contract with the company for certain period of time. If both employee and employer satisfied, the contract could be extended. Otherwise if one side or both sides do not satisfied, the contract would be ended. Then, the company could recruit new staff from the labor market. This relatively flexible action probably brings more efficiency and profit to the company and the employees. Because of this flexibility, ethnic minority staff in private company could reflect the true situation of employees from ethnic minorities' group in labor market. HR officer GL from Saibote said:

“The most significant thing we recruit new staff is to see whether he/her fit for this position, which means the qualification is important no matter which nationality the candidate belongs to.” (Interview notes, 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009)

The word reflects this private-owned company kept strong tie with society and labor market. The job seekers face social competence and market selection. The rival is among all candidates from different ethnic groups. Thus, the qualification is the most important dimension for private company recruitment procedure.

Second, state-owned and private-owned company would pay different attention to the background of job applicants. The HR officer in Liudaowan Mining Company said:

“Applicants' professional background fits for the vacant position is also important, considering about the political performance and study results, outstanding university graduates would be the first choice” (Interview notes with Mr.LX, 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009).

While the HR officer in Saibote said that: “The working experience is decisive” (Interview notes with Mr.GL, 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009). What the private-owned company mostly cares about is the profits, so they would advertise in labor market and seek experienced,

even from other companies.

Third, industry and professional preference. In general, heavy industry prefers male worker and the service industry would be inclined to female applicants. For the same reason, some position also has that preference. Ms.L in Saibote said: “Security guard would welcome male applicants and the accountant or secretary post will be female preferred” (Interview notes, 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009).

### *3.2.2 Participation*

The economic and political participation in the company would be viewed from two aspects: one is leadership group structure and another is to see how common staff, including the minority staff, joining the company’s decision making process.

There is an unofficial but widely spread regulation that there should be at least one Uyghur in the leadership group. Each state-owned company or government organizations followed this submerged rule. Local minority cadres have certain connections with the minorities from the view of ethnicity, which would convenience for promotion of political ideas and implementation of development goals. There are totally 4 members in the leadership group of Liudaowan Mining Company, one of them is of Uyghur nationality. In the leadership group of Saibote, not following the unofficial regulation discussed above, there is no minority staff working in the leadership group. Only one Uyghur and one Hui staff are working in the middle level management positions.

How common staff expressing their comments is also different in the two companies. Labor Union was set up for collecting staff’s opinions in Liudaowan Mining Company. “Employees could come to labor union office and speak their ideas at their convenience. There are fixed staff working in this office.” said by Mr.LX (interview notes, 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009). Democratic Get-together would be held regularly in private-owned company Saibote. This Democratic Get-together could be a luxury dinner, or a hike, or a sports

game or a dancing competition. The get-together is a good opportunity that common staff and leadership group members could sit together and share the opinions and differences, trying to find out the best way to eliminate the discrepancies and adopting good opinions for the company's development. Employees from the Han majority and the different ethnic minorities experience almost the same treatment in state-owned or private-owned company.

### *3.2.3 Remuneration*

The payments are all followed with the contract, so no matter what is applicant's ethnic identity, he/she would get the same salary based on the job description and contract no matter in state-owned or private-owned company. There is a special allowance in Liudaowan Mining Company. It is interesting that the Han workers have to face an unequal treatment comparing with the staff from ethnic minorities' group. The HR officer said:

“Staff from ethnic minorities' group in Liudaowan Mining Company could enjoy the financial subsidy when purchasing house which staff with Han nationality could not have.” (Interview notes with Mr.LX, 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009)

### *3.2.4 Promotion*

In the state-owned company, promotion is always connected with both firmly ideology believe of CCP leadership and outstanding performance. It is different in the private-owned company where promotion is tied to individual achievements, which is the most convincible credential. HR officer Mr.LX said:

“Promotion is a complex process in our company, the leadership group may inspect the candidates from all aspects including political performance, contribution years in the company, prestige among the masses and so on.” (Interview notes, 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009)

HR officer Mr.GL said: “We may let the result and achievement speaks.” (Interview notes, 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009). A clear difference could be seen from the above statements by the

two HR officers. It is more or less like the “Recruitment” section has presented, language is the basic requirement for promotion. A relatively stable working atmosphere in the Liudaowan Mining Company makes little promotion opportunities. While severe competence existed in private-owned Saibote Auto Car Company. As Mr.GL has said, results and achievements were seen as the standard for promotion.

#### **4. RESEARCH OUTCOMES**

##### **4.1 Positive Influence**

First of all, WDP has adopted for ten years, lots of working opportunities have created along with its implementation. It has brought the unprecedented flourishing economy situation in urban Xinjiang. With the great attention from the government, Xinjiang has received abundant financial aids which are the main capital source for infrastructure construction. According to Dr. Ma Rong’s research, financial subsidy of Central Government in Xinjiang jumped from 2436.44 million RMB in 1990 into 21503.23 million RMB in 2002 (Ma, 2006:98). The main tasks of WDP indicated that the construction of infrastructure placed in top priority position. Eurasian railroad offers a rare opportunity to open up and develop the Xinjiang–Central Asian region (Zhao, 2001: 210). With the support of development policies and the easier transportation with outside world, large companies from development areas started their branch companies in urban Xinjiang and local enterprises expended their businesses. Hongda Group is an example, taking development policies conveniences, expend their business. Saibote Auto Car Company as one of its branch companies opened on 2001. lots of working opportunities were created.

Secondly, Migration flow provides not only the abundant labor force for infrastructure construction, but also migrate elites brings advanced technique and knowledge. The upgrade the communication and transportation system is still on the way. With the steps of infrastructure construction, the communication between Xinjiang and interior China turns easy. Adequate labor force may assure the economic take-off. The government loosens the control of labor migration and encourages them

to contribute for western development. XY from Hongda Group is the early migrated elites. He came to urban Xinjiang and also together with his knowledge and witness. As a member of management group of Hongda, he made his contribution for western development.

Thirdly, comprehensive and systematic training to local people from ethnic minority groups would strengthen their competences in intense competition in urban labor market. Bilingual language policy has been spread in China for a long time. With the social and economic development, the policy has gone through adjustment several times. While the min kao han students would enjoy encourage scores during the university entrance examination. That is to say, there would be more students from ethnic minority groups have chances to gain advanced knowledge in university and they would become a strong competitor in future labor market. The interviewee Y is a good example who is a typical min kao han student and won the competition in labor market after the graduation. Widespread use of Mandarin among ethnic minority groups would improve the competence in labor market against with Han whose language originally provides the advantage.

In addition, cultivate local minorities as cadres showed positive influence towards the social stability and economic development. Workers with ethnic minorities' identity would show more trust to cadres with the same nationalities. It is good for social stability. They are more familiar with local situation which may provide them sound knowledge for planning and adjusting the development process.

#### 4.2 Limitations

Development policies limitations towards the ethnic minority groups in urban Xinjiang labor market are in front of us. State's central planning and control are eroded by market forces (Zhao, 2001: 205). For people with minority ethnicity in urban labor market, the implementation of development policies bring them not only the education and working opportunities, but also side-effects.

In Xinjiang urban labor market, job seeker from ethnic minority groups is in marginalized position because of *hukou* status, OCP and *guanxi* issue. WDP has brought many working opportunities and made the competition fiercer. However, some scholar argued it is mainly Han group benefit from it, not local ethnic minority groups. Growing number of Han immigrates and rapid economic development made socially disadvantaged ethnic minority group in a worsen situation. Bilingual language policy offers them a way to get rid of disadvantaged situation. Job applicants from ethnic minority groups were facing a choice, whether or not to follow the encouragement by policy-maker to learn and use Mandarin as language of instruction. Accepting Mandarin and Han civilization is the first step for individual changing the disadvantaged situation and succeeding in job market. However, it should at the expense of their ethnic identity, since both “changing circumstances” and “interests” would drive the process of ethnic identity reproduction.

#### *4.2.1 Being disadvantaged group*

Migration influence:

Present Han residents in Xinjiang are mainly originated from the two big migration flows. The first is Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) in 1950s. The second migration flow was right after the adoption of WDP because of the government encouragement. Lots of Han people move to Xinjiang seeking better lives. Xinjiang’s Han population jumped from 4.1 per cent in 1953 to 38 per cent in the mid-1970s (Zhao, 2001:220). Now, as presented in previous part, Han population has over 40% of total number and became as the second largest ethnic group in Xinjiang. Dr. Connor contended that the Chinese government intentionally used migration tactics to weaken the strength of Xinjiang’s ethnic groups (Ibid: 219). I am not fully agree, since the Han migrants enrich the labor market in Xinjiang and also bring advanced technology and knowledge for its development.

Each job applicant has to face the market selection in urban labor market. The local

ethnic minorities have to compete with Han people. Because of bilingual language policy, Mandarin is the language of instruction in Xinjiang. No matter in schools, in labor market or in government office, the mastery of Mandarin plays as an important tool of communication. Under this circumstance, Han ethnic group takes language advantage when facing the market selection. Mr. GL said: “we have to assure that every shortlist candidate could communicate in Mandarin without barrier, then, inform them for next step face-to-face interview.” (Interview notes with Mr. GL, 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009)

Beside the language, *hukou* statues may play as a determinant during the market selection. The *hukou* system, local resident permission, in China has a long history and it has a great influence on Chinese people’s daily lives.<sup>21</sup> In urban Xingjiang, particular in capital city Urumqi, Han majority takes great number of population. Minority people, if they do not have local resident permission, would probably face a harder situation in finding a job.

Gender consideration:

Gender differences can be discussed from two aspects. One is the occupation preference and another is the different situation between minority Uyghur women and Han women. Based on my fieldwork, company belongs to the heavy industry prefers to hire male staff because of strength requested. On the other hand, the service industry is more likely to recruit female staff.

The OCP causes a different role between ethnic minority and Han female employees. According to this policy a Han family could have only one child but no strict restriction on ethnic minority family. Traditionally, women have had a dual role, which means that they have to earn money as well as take care of the family and children. From this aspect, a big difference exists between Han female employees and Uyghur female employees. “It is often noted that women belonging to national minorities have the

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<sup>21</sup> If a job searcher do not have local Hukou, he or she would not have chance to enjoy the equal rights of education, medical care, housing allowance and other social welfare.

highest illiteracy rates in China” (Hansen, 2001: 404). More children and large family burden makes ethnic minorities’ women have little time to study and learn, as a consequence most of them have little educational background. They are working as cleaner, security guard and cook, and get a low salary. Since they have no higher educational background, they seldom know how to make their voices heard in a right way. Therefore, they are often the silent staff in the company

Han women’s situation is relatively better. One reason comes from the one child policy as there ideally are two parents and four grandparents to take care of one child. The family burden of Han women is comparatively light. In addition, the Han women have no language barrier. And as result of these two factors, the role of them in working position is better than the female ethnic minorities. In order to approve the analysis above, I provide two examples generated from the fieldwork interviews. The first example is Ms. L who is the vice manager of Saibote Auto Car Company, she is 32 years old and has a university education background. She says:

“I come from Hami, the third largest city of Xinjiang. I have one daughter who is 4 year old. My daughter is in Hami taking care of by my parents. My husband works in the government. My husband and I are putting all attention to our jobs in order to earn enough money for my daughter’s future education. I want to send her study abroad when she grows up” (Interview with Ms. L, 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009).

The second example is Ms. G who is a cleaner in Liudaowan Mining Company. She is 36 years old and did not finish her primary school education. She says:

“I’m from south Xinjiang, I come to Urumqi to join my husband, he is a mine worker in Liudaowan Mine. We have 4 children who are all taken care by myself. With the help of labour union, I’m now working in company-run canteen. We have enough money to send my elder son (10 years old) go to school this coming September” (Interview with Ms.G, 12<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009).

*Guanxi* issue:

The word *guanxi* is created from Han Chinese and has a more complex meaning than “social relation or connection” in English. “The most pertinent definition of *guanxi* is Bian’s who says that, “*Guanxi* (or *Kuan-hsi*) refers to a dyadic, particular and sentimental tie that has the potential of facilitating favors exchanges between the parties connected by the tie” (Huang, 2008:468). One Chinese scholar has argued that China is a “relation-based” society (Ibid:468). And, Fei Xiaotong used the metaphor of “ripple formed from a rock thrown into a lake” to characterize this relation-based structure as a “differential mode of association (*chaxu geju*)” (Ibid:468). Some scholars have argued that *guanxi* ties are the building blocks of Chinese society. “Building and maintaining *guanxi* networks is a dynamic and lifelong process for every Chinese person” (Ibid:469).

In China’s job market, *guanxi* is an important factor. Traced back to Chinese history after the liberalization there are three employment institutions: hierarchy, market and networks. The hierarchy method dominated the pre-reform period, which was the under the control of plan economy. People could get job from central assignment and job transfer from the elder generations. The market method starts after the Opening-up reform. Job searchers have the freedom to find a job of their own preference, joining job fairs and attending interviews. Finally, they would get the work through reasonable competition. The “network method of job search refers to any activities in which personal assistance is obtained from others to help in the search and acquisition of jobs” (Huang, 2008: 471). In present Chinese society, these three methods coexist in the search for a job. However, Bian found “a growing proportion of job seekers relied on *guanxi* networks to secure employment opportunities during the 1990s” (Huang, 2008:471). Since *guanxi* network was handled well in Han Chinese social context, job seekers and job-holders from ethnic minorities would probably face extra challenges. Job seekers from ethnic minorities would have more difficulties in finding a job and job-holders from ethnic minorities’ group would face a larger risk of being resigned.

Putting the issue of *guanxi* into the urban Xinjiang labour market is also interesting.

With *guanxi* influence, nationality would not be a problem to the employers. A good *guanxi* would help a job seeker to secure the working opportunity and chances for promotion. This magic power acts on every company, social organization and official government. One of my interviewees, Ms.XX, is working in the finance office in Liudanwan Mining Company. She was born in south Xinjiang and graduated from Xinjiang Mining Technical College last year. She says:

“Lots of my classmates could not find works in city of Urumqi because of the economic crisis. My uncle is an old employee in Liudaowan. He has some acquaintance in the company. After spending money to buy presents and inviting some key persons for dinner I got this working opportunity as an accountant and obtained a local resident permit or *Hukou* in city of Urumqi” (Interview with Ms. XX, 6<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009).

Because of *guanxi* Ms. XX is able to jump over the interview process and competition with other applicants. This is particularly common in many governments and state-owned sectors. Han Chinese people are familiar with *guanxi*, and they take great advantages from using *guanxi*. Uyghur and other ethnic minorities have started to learn this in practice.

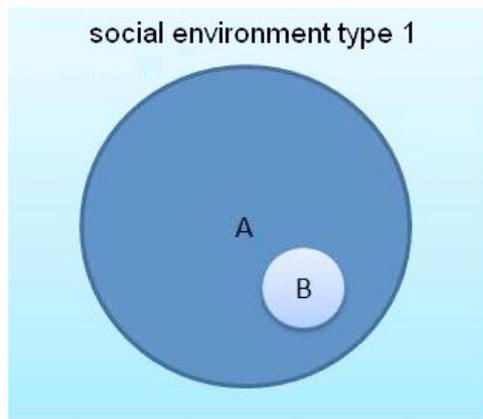
Sub conclusion:

All these three discussed factors made the ethnic minority being disadvantaged position in labor market. Han migrations compete with local ethnic minorities for accessing the work. Because of language and *hukou* issue, local resident Han talents keep in the top priority for being recruited and the migrated minority applicants would in lowest possibility. Gender consideration and long-term adopted one-child policy pushes the female minority into the low status in urban labor market. Particular *guanxi* issue turns the labor market even more complicated. Since more Han people well knows the mastery of *guanxi* connection, they benefits from it. This severe situation of ethnic minority group in labor market leads a further thinking of how they identify themselves and through which access they may change the disadvantaged social and economic situation in labor market, wins more opportunities for access and promotion,

make their voices to be heard by the public.

#### 4.2.2 How to identify themselves

**Figure 6. Self-definition Type 1**



Just as Billig has stated, if nationalism is an ideology of the first person plural, which tells “us” who “we” are, then it is also an ideology of the third person. There can be no “us” without “them” (Petersoo, 2007:118). This is a typical illustration of what ethnic identity is. People will identify who they are mainly based on who they communicate with and big social

environment. So the counterpart is important when one person processing the self-identification.

The above picture is made by the author, **A** refers to the majority group and **B** refers to minority. This picture could be used in a broad sense. For instance, a minority Uyghur Chinese **B** go abroad in United States to attend an international conference. He would identify himself as a Chinese since his counterpart **A** are all the foreigners. When came back to Beijing, sharing his experiences with Han colleagues, he may identify himself as a Uyghur. And when he is a group combined with Han and other ethnic group members who are all from Xinjiang to do a study visit in Shanghai, he would identify himself as a Xinjiangnese. What I was presented here is want to say, a person who represents a relatively small ethnic minority group, a strong identity consciousness would be raised up. He is a Chinese, differ with other attendees with foreign country nationality; he is Uyghur, differ with Han ethnicity, because he could speak Uyghur language and warship Islam; he is Xinjiangnese, differ with visited Shanghai people, because he was born and grew up in Xinjiang.

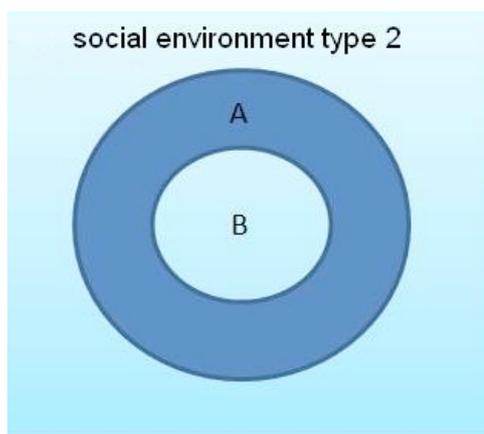
This could be also used in my case study of Saibote Company. Since this private-

owned company tightly follow up the market selection regulation in labor market, as the members of disadvantaged group, the minorities only takes limited number of total staff (no more than 30% in Saibote). And most of them work in the production line, as security guard or cleaner which not requested high level of Mandarin.

We are all security guard, we are all from south Xinjiang, we are Uyghurs, we have many common places. We are friends after the work sharing experiences and happiness together by using our native language (interview notes with J, 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009)

Because of the market selection, few of them would be recruited. This small group of minority staff would defined themselves when communicate with their counterpart-- Han colleagues or leaders, and consumers with Han nationality. It is the same in their ordinary lives. There is no “changing” influencing them to process the ethnic identity renewal, so the original ethnic identity is maintained. They would eat together with minority colleagues in Islamic restaurant. They communicate with their fellow ethnic groups members in their native language. These are the “signal” to fellow group members that they have defined themselves within the group boundary.

**Figure 7. Self-definition Type 2**



Differ with the above analysis, different situation would generate different conclusion with Type 1. The state-owned Liudaowan Mining Company would be a good example to illustrate Type 2 and could better understand how ethnic Uyghur identify themselves under this kind of social environment. It is the same that **A** refers to Han ethnic group and **B** refers to Uyghur and other ethnic minority groups. However, **A** does not have absolutely advantaged number under this circumstance.

According to my fieldwork observation, Liudaowan Mining Company locates in relative far distance from city center. School, hospital, canteens, entertainment center and living areas are standing all around the company building. This state-owned company is more like a small society. There are 1,600 employees in the company and staff from minority groups constitutes 56.6%. Based on the telephone interviews<sup>22</sup> with some of my interviewees (Uyghur, Hui, Han ethnicity interviewees are all included) during the fieldwork last spring, most of them identify themselves by using a non-ethnic identification as People from Xinjiang/Xinjiangnese (*Xinjiang Ren*). Why not identify themselves as Uyghur, Hui or other ethnic minority identity compared with their counterpart Han? According to my observations during the fieldwork, deeply influenced by the government development policies, the company put nationality consolidation in a high priority position. Highly promoted nationality solidarity and superior staff member would make ethnic minorities feel they are not belong to the disadvantaged group, but the same with Han colleagues. It could be further elaborate from the empirical materials listed below:

Four distinct symbols- food, dress, religious and language would be discussed one by one. First of all, there are two big canteens in the area of Liudaowan, one provides Han food and another provided Islamic food. No matter belongs to which ethnic group, staff could enjoy the food in Islamic canteen. I have once seen lots of Han staff eating in Islamic canteen together with Uyghur staff. I asked some of them randomly, they said that food is what Xinjiangnese most preferred. No doubt, eating together provides them good opportunity to share the happiness, communicate with each other. Secondly, how they dress themselves. In the daily working time, the uniform is requested to wear according to the company's regulation. I have once been invited to join a get-together before the Spring Festival held by the Youth League in the company. Both Han and Uyghur girls were dressed with traditional color silk, provided a Uyghur dancing show. The harmonious atmosphere and all ethnic groups' solidarity could be felt by every

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<sup>22</sup> The long distance telephone interviews were conducted during the last week of June and first week of July 2009, since there are some more questions popping up during the thesis writing.

attendee. Thirdly, the religious, Islam religious belief played as one of most important symbol for Muslim identity. However, as the state-owned company, PRC has kept strong ideology control. Apply for the membership of PRC being recognized as progressive behavior. According to the CCP's constitution, its members should believe in Marxism-Leninism, an atheistic and consequently anti-Islamic ideology (Mackerras, 1998:29). Last but not least, is the language difference. Bilingual language policy has showed great influence in Xinjiang. In Liudaowan, every employee from ethnic minority group could speak Mandarin and communicate with Han colleagues without language barrier. And the widespread using Mandarin also becomes the driving force to the ethnic identity modification which will be discussed in detail in last section.

In type 2, both Han people and the people from ethnic minority groups identify themselves as Xinjiangnese—people who were born/from/resident in Xinjiang area. This presents a process of interaction and multilateral influence, and to certain extent generate out particular “chemical reaction”. In Xinjiang, this “chemical reaction” refers to the rose of “the fourteenth minority”.

#### *4.2.3 The “Fourteenth Minority”*

Since ethnic and national identities are constantly transforming, and are continually being renewed, reinterpreted and renegotiated according to changing circumstances and interests (Petersoo, 2007:118), the following discussion would focus on these two aspects to find out who belongs to this group and how “the Fourteen Minority” be produced.

It is known that there are only thirteen ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang being recognized by the government, then, what is the “fourteen minority”? According to the explanation of Dr. Clothey about the “fourteenth minority”:

In Xinjiang the phrase “the fourteenth minority” has evolved to describe

min kao han Uyghurs<sup>23</sup> whose education has necessitated their interaction and assimilation with the Han majority, are neither entirely Uyghur nor entirely Han (Clothey, 2005: 403)

I agree with this description of “the fourteenth minority”, however I would like to argue not only the min kao han Uyghurs, but also the ethnic minority members who have received the secular Mandarin education which has necessitated their interaction and assimilation with the Han majority are belong to this group. Meanwhile the communication environment is also very important, since the constant interaction with Han majority during the work and in the daily life also drives forward the assimilation.

During the fieldwork interviews, there are two interviewees who typically fit for the idea of this “fourteenth minority”. CCP general secretary A in Liudaowan Mining Company is one of the distinctive people of example. He is a Uyghur cadre and one of the key leaders in Liudaowan. As a min kao han Uyghur, he graduated from Xinjiang Industry Technical College, which is using Mandarin as the language of instruction. With outstanding language skill and good education background, he was hired by the company after graduation.

Y is a mid-level division manager of Saibote Auto Car Company. He was born in southern Xinjiang. He is the youngest son of his family with two elder sisters and one elder brother. Also as a min kao han Uyghur, he graduated from Xinjiang University in 2003 with a bachelor degree majored in international commerce. Because of his mastery of mandarin and his university certification, he got a position in Saibote. And, because of his high education and corporation spirit, he quickly became a mid-level team leader. Now, he lives in the city of Urumqi. He has his own apartment and a private car and has recently married a Urumqi Uyghur lady. While, his brother and sisters, without such good educational background, still live together with his parents in hometown (interview notes with Y, 7<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009).

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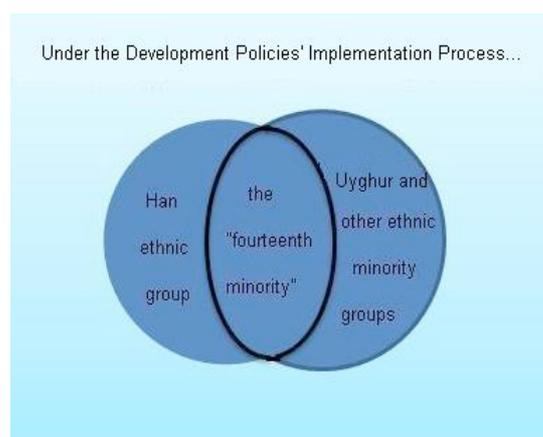
<sup>23</sup> The Uyghurs who use Mandarin as language of instruction during the schooling period, and also use Mandarin to answer the University Entrance Examination paper.

With the adoption of WDP, central government has paid a lot of attention to cultivate local minority cadres. “It is believed that the local minority colleagues have their native advantages, they originated from the minority autonomous region and they are the representatives of this region.” (Jin, 2006:363). The interviewee A always attends the cadre training together with Han majority. He could speak fluent Mandarin.

“I have attended cultivate minority cadre training several times in Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou and Yan’an, also some short time training in Xinjiang... I have two sons; one is now studying in Wuhan Industry University in Hubei province and another works in a private software company in Beijing.” (Interview notes with A, 23<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2009)

It is discovered not only he himself belongs to the “fourteenth minority” but also his children. Uyghur intellectuals hold that hope<sup>24</sup> lies in secular education and there is a strong desire among intellectuals that their children learn to compete successfully with Han children (Zang, 2007:28). We could see the growing tendency of the “fourteenth minority” group.

**Figure 8. Ethnic Identity Transforming**



The left side picture was made by the author. Generally speaking, it shows the emerging of “the fourteenth minority”. Under the development policies’ implementation, lots of education and working opportunities are created for local residents including Han and non-Han ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. Also because of the

WDP and government encouragement, there are great numbers of migrant people coming to Xinjiang and joining the competition in Xinjiang’s labor market. Previous

<sup>24</sup> The marginalized social and economic position could be changed.

system and regulations placed ethnic minority group in a disadvantage position as it has discussed in the above section. WDP brought the advanced knowledge and technology, also brought the fiercer competition for local residents. Government aimed at social stability and economic sustainable development from promoting the selected Mandarin language and implementing WDP. For individual side, Uyghur who want to find a better job or move upward in the social strata have no choice but to master the Chinese language (Yee, 2003: 436). According to the “changing circumstances” brought by the implementation of development policies which has illustrated above, and the interests from government side and individual, the typical ethnic minority identity are transforming into “the fourteenth minority”.

To elaborate the “interests” from government and individual further, The Party secretary of the Xinjiang UAR, Wang Lequan, state[d] that minority languages in Xinjiang contain only limited amounts of information, and cannot express some more advanced knowledge (Dywer, 2005:37). Although this is an untrue statement, all language, given proper language planning, are capable of complex expression (Ibid). The government started to adopt all kinds of language policy early in 1950s, and using Mandarin as language of instruction. The explicit goal of bilingual education is to promote Mandarin Chinese among non-native speakers (Schluessel, 2007: 257). The language is not only a means of communication, but also an expression of one’s cultural and ethnic affiliation (Clothey, 2005: 392). Xinjiang University was founded in 1949 as a bilingual institution (Dywer, 2005:40). In 2002, Xinjiang University was made to begin conducting its formerly bilingual programs entirely in Mandarin (Schluessel, 2007: 269). After discussing with a graduate (my interviewee Y) from Xinjiang University, only some linguistic based major subjects, such as Uyghur language study, Uyghur history and other minority subjects are taught in both native language and Mandarin. Computer science, and all the other technology based courses are all taught in Mandarin. And in elementary and middle school, using Mandarin has been viewed as key to breakthroughs in educational quality necessary for China’s socialist market economy (Ibid: 257). The goal of Party and government is to make

every non-Han high school graduate communicative in Mandarin (Ibid: 257). And the political purpose of bilingual language policy could be recognized as pushing force for the national identity construction which is positive for state unit and solidarities. From another side, being a member of marginalized and discriminated social and economic position of ethnic minority groups, some individual ethnic minority want to change the present situation. In schools, students learn that their nationality is economically and culturally backward and inferior to the Han culture (Heberer, 2008: 103). In order to get rid of this “backward and inferior” situation, everyone should work hard on learning advanced knowledge and technology by using Mandarin as language of instruction.

In fact, a sense of belonging within a particular group is facilitated by a comparison with outsiders (Clothey, 2005: 393). The picture presents the current situation in Xinjiang, the left side “Han ethnic group” and the right side “Uyghur and other ethnic minority groups” hold strong ethnic identity of their own group along with the growing chances of communications and competences with their counterparts. This ethnic consciousness and identity would turn stronger also because of the “changing circumstances and interests” brought by the development policies.

“...the ‘Great Opening Up of the West’ project, it is very threatening to the sense of cultural boundaries maintained by many Uyghurs, who often emphasize language as a distinguishing feature of their ethnic identity” (Schluessel, 2007: 260).

Some previous research revealed that it is Han ethnic group benefit from development policies not the minority ethnic group. They refuse to learn Mandarin and keep on learning their native language and culture. A clear boundary is between Han and Uyghur (and other ethnic minority groups).

In China, the two sides of the ‘civilized—barbarian distinction continuum’ are transferable since culture can be learned and taught (Ma, 2006: 88). Year by year, the central government is promoting the bilingual language policy, teaching the citizens

that the “advanced civilization” should help the “disadvantaged civilization”. Education is the important. In HR department, each position requested a certain degree of education. The Han civilization is seen as the most advanced civilization and Mandarin is the only official language in Chinese society. With this learning process, the ethnic minorities gradually internalized that their heritage and identity were “useless” and incompatible with “development” and “modernization” (Hansen, 2001: 423). Consequently, people from the ethnic minorities’ group have to abide the overall circumstance and regulations.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This thesis discusses the development policies’ influences towards the ethnic minorities in urban Xinjiang. Fieldwork focused on “access”, “participation”, “payment”, “promotion” in two companies, state-owned Liudaowan Mining Company and Hongda Group (especially its branch company Saibote Auto Car Company) that is private-owned. Therefore the objective of this study is not to provide generalized answers but to present these cases as examples.

The Opening-up reform enlarges the economic discrepancy between east developed areas and the undeveloped hinterlands. Xinjiang is ethnic minorities’ diversified region. Some old system and regulations have already placed people from ethnic minority groups in a disadvantaged position. Hukou system makes the rural-to-urban migrated minorities in an even worse situation. Considering from the gender aspect, female Uyghur and other female ethnic minorities would shoulder more burdens than female Han does because of OCP. The *guanxi* practice is popular all around the country. It seems that Han people contribute more from this informal network institution than do ethnic minorities.

The adoption of development policies at the cross of new century has brought opportunities and challenges for Xinjiang and local residents. Depend on the strategic geographic location and abundant natural resource, Xinjiang has experienced economic

take-off in recent years. Growing financial subsidy, FDI, human capital and migrant labor force has played as the fundament for economic development in urban Xinjiang. With process of infrastructure construction and deepen the reform, great numbers of working opportunities were created for the job seekers. However, the growing Han migrants made the competition more severe. With the steps of development science, technology and education, Mandarin as the language of instruction has highly promoted. However, language is not only a tool of communication but also plays as one of most important symbol of ethnic identity. By viewing the requirements from two companies, no matter “access”, “participation” or “promotion”, mastery of Mandarin is the basic criteria. Ethnic minorities have to face the language barriers which put them again in a disadvantage position.

Empirical data, interviews and participant observation brought up the concerns about the ethnic identity. Ethnic minority employees from Saibote Auto Car Company have kept the original ethnic consciousness. Since company is the private-owned, political purpose of implementing development policies has little influence towards it. Employees with minority ethnicity would view themselves and be viewed by other the same as their ordinary lives. No “changing circumstances and interests” implicates no ethnic identity renewed and reinterpreted. The situation was different in Liudaowan Mining Company. As a state-owned company, Liudaowan has to close rely on government preferential policy and aid. The employees from ethnic minority groups take largest number of total population which is uncommon in urban Xinjiang’s labor market. Highly promoted nationality solidarity and superior staff member would make ethnic minorities feel they are not belong to the disadvantaged group, but the same to Han colleagues. This “changing” would lead them self-defined as a non-ethnic identification Xinjiangnese.

The raise of “fourteenth minority” group is one trend of ethnic identity reproduction in urban Xinjiang. Being labeled as disadvantaged group and constrained by language barriers, A *minzu* has great difficulty finding a job in the city if he or she cannot speak

any Chinese (Yee, 2005: 39). Since Mandarin based education is of a high quality, some ethnic minorities willing to sacrifice their ethnic identity. The political aim of promoting Mandarin as selected national language is to realize social stability and meet with the periphery security concern. The “fourteenth minority” group is just satisfied with the government need. Min kao han students and the ethnic minority members who have received the secular Mandarin education which has necessitated their interaction and assimilation with the Han majority are belong to this group.

The second trend of minorities’ ethnic identity would be reproduced into stronger ethnic identity which is opposite to Han culture. Uyghurs believe that affirmative policy will reduce their quality and competitiveness in the long run (Yee, 2005: 48) and development policies are the tactic of assimilation. Previous research revealed that it is Han ethnic group benefit from development policies not the minority ethnic group. They refuse to learn Mandarin and keep on learning their native language and culture. A clear ethnic boundary is appeared.

## **6. CLOSING REMARK**

A conclusion can be generated from the examples that have been discussed in this thesis. There are more opportunities for the ethnic minorities with formal and thorough Mandarin education than those that do not have this skill. However, this state action of implementing these development policies threatened the minority language and identity. The possible solution would use Singapore as a source of reference. Singapore has adopted the general policy of cultural pluralism which is not challenge of state unity and security:

There has been vigorous, extensive promotion of (Mandarin) Chinese, Malay, Tamil, and English as fully equal languages of the state, and attempts at nation-building have been focused in the image of a multi-cultural, economically successful population with broadly shared ‘Asian’ values, rather than on the potential expansion of any single ethnic identity to encompass others in the state (Simpson, 2007: 7).

A solution could therefore be to use both Mandarin and Turkish-based Uyghur language as public working and education languages in Xinjiang. This would be the most functional way to protect the ethnic minorities' identity and culture in this region.

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## **APPENDIX 1—Interview Questions**

1. What is your educational background?
2. Where are you from? Local or migrant?
3. Previous working background?
4. How do you get access to the present job? Your advantages and shortcomings?
5. Your company's requirements to the applicants? Basic one and most decisive one?  
(For HR officer only)
6. How do you made your voice to be heard? Make suggestions to the company.
7. The promotion requirements?
8. Have you enjoy any preferential policies? From company/government?
9. Describe the relationship with Han colleagues/ Uyghur colleagues?
10. Who are you? Explain your reasons
11. Introduction of your company? History, contribution to development, staff distribution, etc.

APPENDIX 2-Entire Tree Diagram of Liudaowan Mining Company





