

A Post-development Critique of Chinese Development Discourse

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Abstract

This paper looks at how China's domestic development discourse creates and governs realities of objects, and subject. Using the works of Xi Jinping, the thesis uses the methods of governmentality by Mitchel Dean to analyze the data from the four analytical tools of *epistheme*, *visibility*, *technical aspect*, and *identity* to look at how the subject is positioned within collective mentalities, status of authority, means of rule, and constructed identity. The author also uses a post-development approach in the findings of the data within the frame of Boaventura de Sousa Santos' *sociologies of absences* to look at how monocultures of global neoliberal capitalism are identified in the development discourse. The analysis arrives at the following results: The Chinese development discourse creates a governmentality around a subject who see his or her belief in a scientific system of objective government. Forms of reproduction can be seen in the creation of a strong identity formation around cultural values, and belief in the political system. Furthermore, the analysis of *sociology of absences* made clear that all five counts of monocultures could be identified in the data, showing that Santos' idea of the globalized universal modernity also existed in the Chinese discourse.

Keywords: Governmentality, Post-development, Post-modernism, development discourse, international development

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On November 29th 2012, exactly two weeks after his inauguration as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping took to the stage at the newly opened exhibition titled “The Road of Rejuvenation: A New Era” (复兴之路), and delivered a speech which laid out the political slogans of his coming rule. In his speech, Xi positioned China in a new historical juncture, where the struggles going back for 170 years (referring to the opium wars) had finally come to the position where China could realize its dream (中国梦) of national rejuvenation (中华民族伟大复兴). Xi was confident, that by the 100th anniversary of the founding of the People’s republic in 2049, a moderately prosperous society (小康社会) would be realized for all of China. Looking back at the past, Xi stressed that China needs to remember that backwardness leads to oppression, and development is the only path towards a strong nation (Xi, 2014, p, 35 – 36).

Twenty years prior, Deng Xiaoping embarked on his southern tour of China’s Special Economic Zones to try and kickstart the reform and opening policies which had been in a position of stagnation and insecurity since the crackdown on the 1989 social movement (Jeffreys & Sigley, 2009, p. 8 – 11). During the following Fourteenth Party Congress of the CCP on October 12 in 1992, Jiang Zemin took advantage of the momentum created by Deng and declared that economic reform would from now on have the construction of a socialist market economy. The implication of his report was that China was beginning a path towards a social Darwinian view of the world, consisting of nation states competing internationally in the fields of economy, science and technology. In the same report, China was urged to embrace global capital and solely focus on economic growth unless they wanted to fall behind the rest of the world (p. 10).

One of the main goals of reform and opening, was the realization of the “the four modernizations”¹, promulgated by Deng Xiaoping, which held a Western path towards modernity in mind (Tiejun, 2007, p .22 – 23). However, by the middle of the first decade of the 21st century, the dream of a Western model of modernization had apparently waned within the party, and the more realistic goal of achieving a moderately prosperous society emerged. By

¹ Modernization in agriculture, industry, national defense, and science & technology.

2004, the stress lay on a people centered approach of development, with circular development and a new industrialization path with sustainable, instead of vulgar growth; a new path different from blind advocacy of consumerism (p. 24). But how neutral and how scientific can the term development be, and what does it actually imply?

Western development in the Global South tended to be seen as a driving force of capital expansion and democratization since the end of the second world war, and its underlying goal of removing poverty, creating equal opportunity for all people to access basic needs is still professed today. However, the term development, progress, or modernization, are controversial terms which have been scrutinized to reveal a dominant discourse of what is considered true and false, right and wrong, progressive and backward. Critical theory on Western civilization, development, and modernity came to be categorized under post-development to act as a counterbalance to the hegemonic discourse of modern science which spearheads development and sees Western modernization as the only alternative towards the future.

Today, the position of the North as the economic stage of the world is slowly shifting towards the South, and with it, the models of replication as well (Pieterse, 2010, p. 206 – 209). The East Asian model with the emerging economies of the Asian tigers² and more recently China has been an inspiration for developing nations since the 1980's, and their say in economic policies of the world is starting to challenge the hegemonic discourse (p. 203 – 204). China especially, with projects such as the Belt and Road Initiative³, are seen as new main drivers of international development, which brings us to the questions of this thesis.

This study applies a post-development critique to the latest iteration of Chinese development discourse under Xi Jinping, analyzing how it has been used to govern China's domestic population. The hypothesis of this study is that the Chinese development discourse is used as a tool of governance and control which uses modernization's hegemony of scientific truth to create, inform and shape subjects. The purpose of this thesis is to deconstruct the Chinese development discourse to show how truth is constructed around problematized objects of development.

The research questions and sub-questions are formulated as follows;

² Referred to as South Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan.

³ A global development strategy, which involves investment and infrastructure projects in almost 70 different countries. www.worldbank.org/en/topic/regional-integration/brief/belt-and-road-initiative

1. How is development given meaning in the Chinese development discourse?
 - 1.1. How are truths of development constructed in the discourse?
2. How does the discourse create a subject of development?
 - 2.1. How can the subject reproduce the constructed truths?

1.1 Significance and academic contribution

In the last twenty years, there has been an mutual understanding of the emergence of a “China model”, or “Beijing consensus” of economic development, which supposedly offers an alternative, more successful path towards economic development and poverty alleviation than the neoliberal⁴ project of development. This new model was also contemporary with the downfall of the “Washington consensus”, and the following disbelief in that system. With the contemporary much debated “rise of China”, our understanding of the Chinese development discourse becomes increasingly important to understand with the increasing presence of Chinese investments and development projects abroad, and developing countries desire to replicate the model.

To the best of my knowledge, contemporary Chinese development discourse has not been critiqued from a post-development perspective in academic literature, probably because of Post-developments spatial restriction of Africa and South America, and the fact that East Asia is still seen as a historical miracle of development, even to the extent that it has been used to critique post-development. Arguably, Post-development’s critique of progress, modernity, and development as constructions of reality through hegemonic discourse, should be equally valid to apply to the case of China.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This part is focused on introducing the critique of development discourse known as post-development. This kind of critique has historically targeted development discourse in former

⁴ A neoliberal economic model sees the government as the reason for economic stagnation and wants to cut all public spending and investment. The fault with the Keynesian model was that the economic boost from government spending and investment were only a temporary solution which eventually led to a higher aggregate demand and a price increase, ending in high inflation, and going back to recession. The goal of neoliberalism was to make markets available, and flexible. What this meant was deregulation, easier access to markets for companies, removing legal barriers which made labour markets more flexible, and make the job market more efficient. Neoliberalism also had a political ideology, inherited from the enlightenment, which Milton Friedman wrote in *the Road to Serfdom*. Economic planning was a restraint on people’s freedom, and ultimately led to authoritarianism of the state, while true freedom of man is to be able to choose how to live, consume and produce without interference. - Halper, 2010, *The Beijing Consensus*, p. 49 – 55

colonial domains in the Global South, seeing development as a continuation of colonialism in order to impose a Western view on culture, science, and economic development.

Next we look at how post-development critique has changed to move away from the critique of only Western modernity, to critiquing the universal strive for Western modernity under global capitalism.

After that, a historical perspective of China's path to modernity will be covered, together with its meaning in a Chinese context. Then finally, the contested history of key concepts in Chinese development discourse will be discussed and presented.

2.1 Post-development

Development is the idea that raising people's living standards and income levels will lead to improved health, education, and personal autonomy (Rapley, 2004). Post-development is the claim that development is a meta-narrative which uses the Western tradition of modernization to impose a Western hegemony of thought and control over developing countries. According to post-development, development's goal is to absorb traditional societies in networks of power under the nation-state. Post-development suggest that the real goal of development is domination and human control, and human improvement is epiphenomenal (Rapley, p. 350 – 353).

The idea of modernity was born during the Enlightenment and was carried on after the middle ages. The view of the world switched from being explained by the existence of god, to the belief in empirical knowledge, technological progress, and human dominance over nature. Science became the natural progression from barbarianism, waste of economic resources, and ignorance, to civilization, efficiency, and rationality. With the dominance of progress, it became possible to order the world according to these criteria with the European model at its center. Around the 1990's, scholars influenced by post-structuralism and post-modernism started to analyze modern development as a continuation of these ideas being imposed on the Global South. Instead of solving the world's problems, they claimed the opposite had occurred. Under-development, poverty, environmental destruction, repression, and exploitation were the new reality (Sidaway, 2014, p. 147 – 148). Furthermore, social consciousness had been obliterated by international agreements of development and market integration, and had changed the perception of real needs to fit the language of bureaucratic institutions who dominate the imagination of potential customers (Illich, 1971, p. 94 – 98).

According to Pieterse, a post-development perspective entails three main critiques of the development discourse: The creation of the poor as something that needs to be saved, or necessary to be absorbed into the formal economy; development as Westernization, and cultural imperialism; and the critique of modernization, seeing science and technological progress as more important than human development (Pieterse, 2010, p. 111 – 114).

Arturo Escobar, one of the early proponents of post-development, draws up a picture of how these hegemonic economic and political theories shaped development. For Escobar, development follows a hegemonic discourse which creates a Eurocentric position of progress which becomes reality for governments and aid agencies trying to solve constructed issues in the Global South (Escobar, 1994, p. 39 – 44). Development discourse is the construction of Western modernization in the Global South, and it sees the social world as something separable into functional spheres of economics, politics, and culture. In this way, development discourse builds on an assumption that the world and its populations can be universally ordered according to economic theory from the 19th century and onward. Escobar traces the economic history from neoclassical economics up until 1939, then focuses on the Keynesianism's⁵ definition and the Bretton Woods agreement in 1944⁶ which shaped the economic world in the post-war period (Escobar, p. 63 – 73, 77 – 85). Many of the concepts from economic theory became fundamental truths about developing countries. For example, Industrialization was a way of getting nations to stop producing the wrong things and focus on higher exchange value; and grand institutions such as labour, exploitation, and the rational economic subject have always had a hegemonic position. Since development also became a concept after the second world war and the rebuilding of the world; development discourse structured the subject according to this new economic discourse. This string of produced knowledge saw the underdeveloped world as needed to be saved (Escobar, p. 86 - 89). The issue with economic theory in development discourse is that it sees its science as a cultural discourse with a neutral and universal representation of the world. The discourse of economics is a preconstructed form of looking at the economy of a society. One

⁵ The economic order established after the Bretton Woods agreement, or Keynesianism, meant a break with classical economics. The invisible forces of supply and demand were seen as unable to correct itself in times of crisis and offer full employment and thus increase private spending and investment. To stimulate the economy the state was to use public spending and investment to ensure purchasing power and employment. After the oil price shock in 1970's, and the following recession, showed that the combined rise of unemployment and inflation was something the Keynesian model was not able to handle. Unemployment would mean increased spending, but the rising commodity and oil prices of the time suggested spending should be reduced. - Halper, 2010, *The Beijing Consensus*, p. 49 – 55.

⁶ The system made sure the core capitalist nations would stick together to avoid the spread of communism, invest surplus capital abroad, and secure natural resources and keep markets open to meet world competition with a global network of unchallenged military power – Escobar, 63 – 73.

reality that occurred from this idea of society, was the creation of the poor.

The idea of mass poverty that has been, and still is, one of the main objects of development, was first crystallized with the spread of market economy to third world countries during the cold war. This spread deprived people's access to land and resources in traditional society and the consolidation of capitalism broke down communities (Escobar, p. 20 – 23). According to Escobar (1995, 35 – 39), the construction of the poor, usually defined as villagers, came to be measured from a scientific view of population control. Populations needed to be managed in a certain way, with control and inclusion in the economic sector. The new, by then called “third world”, became a playing ground for economists wanting to apply western mature capitalist economic systems on “poor” developing ones. Lawson (2014, p. 4) calls it authoritative poverty knowledge, which means the poor are created as an object to be freely ordered around and have their fate decided by poverty reduction policies. This construction comes from defining poor people as strictly rational actors whose material well-being only can be measured in income and integration in the market. The poor are seen as unable to lift themselves out of poverty, and if said policies fail it is usually because of bad governance, corruption, or cultural reasons that interfered with the empirical presumptions of the market.

The belief in science and technology as a mark of modern civilization stemming from the 19th century, where machines were the pinnacle of progress (Escobar, p. 36). Technology it was believed, would lower the cost of progress, by being implemented in poor areas together with capital to create a higher efficiency and transform third world countries' social and economic problems. These problems were to be solved according to produced knowledge which had objective scientific research behind them, and the same methods of relying on empirical data of classifying developed/un-developed, modern/traditional, rich/poor, were to be generated by creating academic institutions capable of doing so (Escobar, p. 36 – 39).

This all fits well into the idea that development is Western control, established in giving power to local modernizing elites (Rapley, p. 351).

2.1.1 Critique of post-development

Kiely's lengthy critique charges that post-development thinkers and their rejection of development has created a subaltern resistance movement of scholars opposite of the equally generalized West. The oppressed other of development discourse is also seen as a passive docile

entity, and the critics of development discourse ignores how development has been contested, reorganized, and carried out in different local areas (Kiely, 1999, p. 30 – 49). Furthermore, since development is inherently power by discourse, post-development scholars claim any sort of progress assumed by it can be discarded, but they do not hesitate to use it when said indicators can prove a negative trend. Kiely particularly bases her critique on cultural relativism, and the problem with Foucault's concept of power as existing equally in both ideology and truth. Foucault does not distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable forms of power, which is mirrored in post-development thinker's resistance struggle over Western domination of universal values. The consequence Kiely sees is when positive local issues of for example empowerment becomes alienated for their closeness to anything classified as being related to global issues and universal struggles.

Pieterse points out other flaws with post-development. First of all, it is a narrow view saying that modernization is directly related to a western model, since the worship of progress through development can be found externally of the West as in for example East Asia. All development projects cannot be consistently considered negative trends, using East Asia as an example again. Also, looking at the victims of development, it is naïve to believe that they all share the same impressions of development as something completely negative, while in reality there are many different voices both for and against it on the local level (p. 206 – 214).

However, post-development is not all what it used to be. Arturo Escobar has changed gears together with other post-development thinkers such as Boaventura de Sousa Santos to see modernity and development enshrined in the current age of globalization (Escobar, 2004, p. 207 - 211). Globalization is the universality of modernity in our current time, with belief in modern institutions such as the nation state, and the logic of development, in never-ending improvement and overcoming. According to Santos, this age of modernity is led by a neoliberal capitalist global order which sees the market as a perfect institution who's utopia lies in the denial of any possible other utopias (Santos, 2007, p. 191 – 194). Non-existence, the paramount ideological hegemony in neoliberal modernity, decides what is credible and what is not in what Santos calls the *Sociology of Absences*. This framework of identifying a hegemonic discourse is useful to establish not only a construction of truth in the chosen data, but also makes the data fit into a larger global critique of modernity. Santos identifies five modes of production of non-existence:

Monoculture of knowledge takes high culture and modern science as the only criterions

for aesthetic quality and truth. What is not recognized within this definition, such as ignorance and lack of culture is declared non-existent. *Monoculture of linear time* is the idea that time is linear, and that the core countries of the world system construct what is considered forward, and produces non-existence in the backward (underdeveloped, or pre-modern). *Monoculture of classification* is the naturalisation of differences, which focuses on removing and distributing populations according to categories which naturalise hierarchy. *Monoculture of the universal and global* is the enforcement of different realities to conform with the global trend. Non-existence is produced as the local or different, making them incapable of being alternatives. *Monoculture of criteria of capitalist productivity and efficiency* sees growth through market forces as the pinnacle of productivity and efficiency. Non-existence is produced around non-productivity, laziness, professional disqualifications, and lack of skills, or “discardable populations”. This applies to both nature and labour (Santos, p. 195 – 196).

Escobar showed his position have changed from seeing US neoliberal hegemony as the universal modernity (Escobar, 2004, p. 207 – 208), to post-development being the creation of a new pluriverse within and outside modernity. Holding a somewhat opposite position, Gustavo (in their discussion) is content with seeing modernity as in a transitional period, or on the verge of a collapse, and the future looks bright in a society where the needs offered by the state and market forces cease to exist (Escobar, Gustavo, 2017, p. 2565 – 2567), and where we have realized that we face modern problems without modern solutions.

My point of this thesis is not to imagine a post-development pluriverse existing in Chinese development discourse, like Gibson-Graham has shown could arise in migrating labour economies in the Philippines outside the capitalist market (Gibson-Graham, 2005, p. 4 – 24), or similar community based informal economies in Eastern Indonesia which Carnegie writes about (Carnegie, 2008, p. 355 – 366). I am interested in the fact that development discourse is never neutral but is used as a means of control for specific political and social interests. Of course, if the Chinese development discourse leads to the findings of contesting views of modernity it should be pointed out. Santos’ framework is a good extension of the original critique of Escobar’s focus on “Western” domination of the South. By linking universal modernity to neoliberal capitalism, the critique becomes neutral in its space of contention.

2.2 Modernity in China

According to Tong (1994, p. 1 – 4), modernization has existed as an academic term since the 1950's in Europe, by Western thinkers who made interpretation of modern Western society in terms of progress, development, and the enlightenment. Chinese intellectuals have been using the term modernization (现代化) since the 1930's, and it has consistently been a political goal of creating a wealthy, powerful, democratic, and civilized nation. The term modernity (现代性), occurs according Fan Lee (2001, p. 142 – 143) in the late 19th century where intellectuals were disappointed with the states failure to act in times of crisis, which led it to being seen as “a nation afflicted with spiritual disease”⁷. Modernity in Chinese literature was an iconoclastic revolt against tradition, with a quest for intellectual new solutions. As we will see in the following section, the Chinese idea of modernity is contested within academic circles, but the goal of modernization has remained the same.

2.2.1 Imperial, socialist, and neoliberal China

The end of the 19th century saw the emergence of the idea of reform in China both from Qing intellectuals and radical nationalists. The many military defeats led to opposing forces questioning the current state of China in the world which led to a need of modernization or catching up with the west. Sun Yat-sen's socialist ideas, derived from the work of Henry George (focusing on social progress through land-taxation), stood next to the rising belief in Marxism which both Mao and the Kuomintang at the time saw as a more suitable path to modernity. After the 1949 communist takeover, the twin policies of socialization of agriculture and a state backed industrial sector would set the future standard on how to achieve development (Spence, 1990, p. 143 – 147, p. 165 – 180, p. 294 – 300, p. 519). Already then, knowledge was taken from the West and used as a model in China.

Thornton and Xie affirms this idea (2016, p. 1 – 13) and point out that prominent scholars who had studied abroad, saw the unwillingness to change in Chinese society and political tradition as the main failure of not being able to resist foreign powers' imperialism. This vision of embracing Western modernity, together with discarding traditional Confucianism thinking of statehood and social science as the main intellectual strand, was mainly sprung out of the May

⁷ Lee, 2001 p. 142

Fourth Movement⁸, and its focus on natural sciences, progress, and non-traditionalism. The Communist Party of China (CPC) see their main ideas born out of the movement and after 1949 they were the main party concerned with economic and technological development, which came to be apparent in the coming 5-year plans and events such as the Great Leap Forward.

However, Wang Hui rejects the idea of Chinese modernity simply being an extension of the Western model of moving the economy from rural to urban with technical assistance (Wang, 1997, p. 148 – 149). While European modernization was a goal of implementing the institutions of enlightenment through capitalist production, Chinese Marxism, or Mao’s socialism, was a critique of its necessity to achieve modernity. Mao was trying to side-step the problems occurring when; capitalism transforms into imperialism, the alienation of social classes in capitalist society, and avoiding the segregation between “three differences” (peasants & workers, manual & mental labour, town & county) (Wang, 1998, 12 – 17). To do this he created strong bureaucratic state, a system which he destroyed during the Cultural Revolution; he established collectives and people’s communes to boost national economic development, but also implemented policies of social distribution to avoid capitalist modernization; he nationalized the economy to achieve said modernization, removing any political autonomy for individuals, but was horrified to see the state apparatus oppression of the masses. The vision of socialist utopias was deeply ingrained in Chinese Marxist anti-capitalist thinking of equality and were not abandoned until after the death of Mao. This led to the development of a new ideological path towards modernization. This new force of statesmen and intellectuals surfaced under Deng Xiaoping’s rise to power, which meant the concept of capitalism had to be removed from negative connotations and be embraced as a necessary tool for socialist development and modernity.

the end of the 1970’s in China saw the rise of the “Liberation of Free Thinking” movement, which would later become the “New Enlightenment Movement” in China during the 1980’s. The goal of this movement was similar to the May Fourth Movement, in the sense that they criticized the old orders’ way of ruling and wanted to accept a Western path of economic and political freedom towards modernization (Xu, 2000, p. 176 – 181). The end of the 1980’s

⁸ The May Fourth Movement can both be seen both as the small scale student demonstration which started at Beijing university on May 4th 1919; and the larger social movement which followed that tried to reinterpret what it meant to be Chinese, and redefine Chinese culture in the modern world. Spence, 1990, p. 310 – 313.

signaled liberal thinkers having influence both in academic circles and in the state apparatus. The social movement in 1989⁹ was according to Wang (2004, p. 78 – 82), not as much a natural process of these new ideas of thinking about state and society, but rather as another failure of radicalism in Chinese history within student movements, who held a superficial understanding of democracy. Those officials who considered themselves reformers, were opposed to democracy at the local level, and held it to be reserved for the elite. These neoconservatives (or neoliberals) reversed their radical political ideas after 1989 to only focus on constitutional change of right to private property and making legal the expropriation of public property.

According to Xu (p. 182 – 186), This was the first rift of the long decade of Chinese academic history starting from the 1990's. The second rift appeared after Deng Xiaoping's South China tour, which saw the continuation of further market reform and global capitalism. The immediate academic response was on one side, the embracement of capitalist secular prosperity achieved by said reforms, and on the other a more critical conservative cultural group of scholars, mostly based in Shanghai where the rapid modernization project was being noticed and achieved, who pointed to the issues of cultural destruction. The third rift and final, saw the ever-growing popularity of liberal reforms reach a climax with the Chinese translation of Friedrich Hayek's "The Road to Serfdom" and "The Constitution of Liberty", became the new vision of liberal thinkers to achieve an inclusive democratic society which would allow free speech, legal rights, and property rights. This would establish the intellectual strand today known as "Liberals" in contemporary China. The opposite this time came to be called "The New Left", and their critique shifted from cultural critique of capitalism to socioeconomic critique of society. Their new way of thinking would be focused on an alternative path to modernity transcending socialism and capitalism.

Chun (2013, p. 198 – 202) seem to confirm the victory of the liberals, seeing the latest political battlefield between neoliberal globalization, and a socialist welfare state, decided in the fall of Bo Xilai, and the victory of the "Guangdong model"¹⁰. Future strategies such as "the new 36 directives" and "China 2030" aimed for breaking up State owned enterprises (SOE) to allow private companies to operate in previous state monopolies and diversifying ownership. However,

⁹ Which ended with the Tiananmen Square Massacre on July 4th and the following persecutions.

¹⁰ Bo Xilai was the Communist Party Secretary of Chongqing between 2007 to 2012. His Chongqing model of state directed development through SOEs, with heavy investment in social welfare and living security for migrant workers, stood in opposition with the Guangdong model of Wang Yang.

Chun notes that the ousting of Bo could not entirely remove the socialist values and connection between the party and the people he established, and since focus have been put on reconnecting the two. In the end, Chun confirms that even what seemed to be an alternative, was indeed much of the same:

“[...] Chongqing has pursued a program largely in line with the national agenda of promoting foreign capital, export, and market integration. It has not questioned the teleology of modernization in terms of industrialization and urbanization. Nor has it offered a vision that transcends capitalist globalization.” (Chun, p. 202)

In conclusion, this summary of the Chinese modernization progress has unfolded China's path towards a neoliberal hegemony taking part in the age of global capitalism. In accordance with the writings of Santos, this is a continuation of universal modernity of neoliberal capitalism through development.

2.3 Development concepts in China

Escobar and other critical development theorists have shown that development acts as an articulation of power and knowledge which creates a social reality (Escobar, p. 73 – 83). Social life is transformed to fit the realities imagined by the hegemonic discourse. To deconstruct the discourse in the present, I think it is important to give a broader understanding of what these concepts can signify both for the producer and consumer of the discourse.

2.3.1 Culture (文化)

Development discourse governs social life and creates a new culture around it (Nandy, 1987, p. 170 – 174). Development discourse creates its own dominant culture of progress.

The question of culture is significant in Chinese development discourse for its bearing on development and the Chinese state. Fen Ping (2014) sees contemporary Chinese culture as containing three paths to modernity which have intertwined to shape one version of multiple modernities today. Traditional Chinese culture embodies spiritual self-improvement, and

harmonious group relations, but stands in stark contrast with the modern Western path of individualism, belief in science & technology, democracy, and personal freedom, which already has been absorbed in contemporary China. The third path is socialism, shaped from Marx's belief of an egalitarian post-modern society that is critical of the alienation created from market capitalism, and the material inequality at birth. The consensus is that all these three cultures have had both essential and disastrous consequences for Chinese society, but they have also inspired countless discussions and visions of a realized modernity. Development of the human being is the essential goal of a Confucian ideal to a cultural modernity, and socialism becomes the solution to adapt capitalist society in a search for modernization. The western ideals of modernization lay the foundation for a neoliberal perspective of individual freedom and rule of law, which in turn is criticized for its consumer-driven, ecologically unsustainable development, and secular decadence by Confucian values. At the same time, embraced concepts such as freedom are furthermore criticized from a Marxist point of view as "will without interference", and as a bourgeois freedom based on material capacity, or as the authors state themselves, "freedom constrained by harmony". The focus of human development is echoed among other authors such as Jin Chongji (2013), and Yuanliang Wu (2008), who in many ways define "Socialism with Chinese characteristics" in accordance with these lines of development, very much focused on a laissez-faire market economy. Most of these Chinese authors seem to be on the same page when it comes to traditions' importance in modern Chinese society. Like many others, Wen Junren (2013) draws the parallel between Max Weber's book on Protestantism's affinity for capitalism with Chinese culture's importance for China's development.

All these authors seem to echo the importance of Chinese traditional culture in contemporary Chinese Society. Kubat (2018) explains that the use of traditional Chinese culture, or "Excellent traditional culture" (优秀传统文化), has become a legitimacy for the CCP rule, and a political asset. Xi Jinping's tenure has seen this recent revival of the correct moral behaviour that traditional culture brings with it as a way of connecting the party and the people. Furthermore, she sees traditional culture and moral behaviour as a mobilizing force to serve national interest and the common good.

What is interesting to look at in the development discourse becomes the behavioural conformity placed upon the populations according to these cultural values. How is cultural behaviour defined in the development discourse in terms of economic life, science & technology,

and modernization?

2.3.2 Science and technology (科技)

According to Tong (1994, p. 169), the beginning of the 20th century in China saw science & democracy as the only paths which could lead to Chinese modernization. Western science would be able to remove the archaic social conditions and superstition which had halted China's progress. Chinese Marxism became the flagship of the scientific ideals that arose and eventually cemented as Mao Zedong Thought (p. 181). According to Mao (1940), Natural science is the tool for understanding nature and the people's dominance over it, and social science is used to change society, and carry out social revolution in the search for freedom. As for what constitutes science, Mao believes that social scientific experiments are the only way towards truth, and the way there is through *practice*¹¹, only by discovering, and developing. However, Mao also says that eventual failure of a social struggle can end in defeat for the "advanced class" because of unequal access to power (1964). However, the struggle for truth does not end:

"Often correct knowledge can be arrived at only after many repetitions of the process leading from a matter of consciousness and then back to matter, that is, leading from practice to knowledge and then back to practice. Such is the Marxist theory of knowledge, the dialectical materialist theory of knowledge." – Mao Zedong, 1963, p.3

Even though Mao has a significant focus on democratic freedom, science was eventually put in the forefront while democracy became unimaginable compared to an enlightened dictatorship which would put issues of modernization that could be scientifically solved first on the agenda (such as industrialization, rural mobilization, and scientific socialism) (Tong, p. 175 – 176).

To uphold this, Deng Xiaoping saw Marxism as a science (like Mao), and that which was scientific, was in turn true. In the 1984 Party's congress, he gave a formal definition of Mao Zedong Thought, namely for it to be a scientific system created by Mao. However, since some of

¹¹ Practice (实践), a quite famous concept promoted by Mao in his article "On Practice (实践论)" where he criticized scholars overly concerned with theoretical Marxism. Mao, *On Practice*, 1937.

the ideas of Mao in his late life had been rejected in the public discourse, they had to be removed from Mao Zedong Thought as they couldn't be considered true anymore and thus not science either (p. 182).

The idea that science constitutes truth in Chinese political discourse is also shown in the promotion of “scientific development” under the Hu Jintao administration up to 2012 (Wu, 2011, p. 18 – 32). The time following economic reform and opening up had led to great economic prosperity in China up to the Hu Jintao era, however many people felt the ecological impacts, and the wide disparity in relative poverty as well. According to the CPC (Wu, p. 18 – 32), scientific development and technological innovation was the remedy for this issue, however the actual meaning was to promote the “correct” next step of development, and science had nothing to do with it. The term scientific here merely meant the proved truth of an economic model which would be used in the coming years.

2.3.3 Poverty alleviation (扶贫/脱贫)

Poverty alleviation has always been the major goal of international development (Thirlwall, 2014, p. 25 – 26), and this tradition continues to this day¹². Development studies stresses the multidimensionality of poverty, seeing as measuring income isn't the only indicator of well-being. Education, environmental quality, spiritual freedom, and political freedom can all be indicators for poverty and in some cases the preferred developing goal of the group of people in question (White, 2014, p. 60 – 61). Measuring poverty is an issue in itself, and many different frameworks exists to do so. First and foremost, one must differentiate between absolute and relative poverty, which measures the total amount of people defined under certain measures of poverty, versus the changing social aspect of inequality (White, 2014, p. 60 – 62). Usually global poverty indicators are measured according to the consumptions of households, which itself is problematic since it ignores within household dynamics and assumes that consumption is the best way of assessing poverty when some of it fall outside where consumption can be measured (p. 62).

Then there is the question of which kind of economic strategy is the best at alleviating

¹² UN 2030 development goals, having “No poverty” as their first listed goal.
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

poverty. Post-modern critique, the rejection of the essentialization of third world inhabitants as homogenous economic entities, (and negative progress in some of the third world countries) has led to the view of development solely focused on economic growth to be discarded as the best solution to poverty (Schuurman, 2014, p. 21 – 24). Economic growth is still considered a necessity for development, but development has just like poverty been shifted to include several other factors to be taken into account.

What seems to be the case in poverty alleviation around the world is that China is leading the fight (White, p. 66), and has managed to pull down the initial amount of 165 million people living in poverty to 35 million in 2017. Xi Jinping had also made it his goal to eradicate regional poverty by 2020.

As mentioned in the introduction, and argued by Xu (2009, p. 44 – 47), the early 2000 embarked a shift if policies of economic growth to focus on achieving the moderately prosperous society. During this time, social scientists in China started publishing reports on increasing income disparities and dissatisfaction of the reform programme. The shift towards realizing a “harmonious society” (和谐社会), started incorporating social and political indicators of growth to solve social problems. Measurements of poverty such as GINI¹³ and the human development index¹⁴ became new standards for statisticians.

2.3.4 Rule of/by law (依法治国)

According to Trubek and Santos, law initially served as a tool to bring about development (2006, p. 9 – 11). They classify law in three different moments in time with different meaning of law in development. The first moment was in the developmental state of developing countries, where law was used as a form of control to plan society to achieve self-sustaining growth by changing economic behavior and remove traditional barriers (p. 4 – 6). The second moment was the development movement of neoliberalism, and its focus on private law to protect property and put limits on state intervention (p. 5 – 6). The judiciary was supposed to make foreign capital available equally, and an independent judiciary would create a precise universal model for

¹³ The Gini index (GINI) is a statistical measure of income distribution, which measures poverty according to relative poverty.

¹⁴ The human development index (HDI), sees development in the indicators of life expectancy, mean years of schooling, expected years of schooling, and Gross National Income per capita (Potter, 2014, p. 57).

economic development. The third moment is the current understanding that markets can fail, and that some state intervention is necessary. Because of this law has shifted from a formalist to a consequentialist path together with the need to change development strategies into the social sphere, which deemphasizes the economic necessity of development (p. 9-12). It has also opened for more critical approaches, usually found in Critical Legal Theory (CLT).

CLT claims that a legal system is not an objective reality secluded from social and political morals of governance, but rather a construction of different voices of legal ideologies (Lucarello, 2010, p. 619 – 647). Thus, law is politics, and since there is no way of creating a universal objective legal system, they should all be considered subjective and focus should be placed in analyzing how politics are involved in their creation. As for law and development, I see the critique of efficiency as one of these subjective constructions, and one which is similar to post-development's view of science. Critique of efficiency implies that the term efficiency holds a status of rationality and neutrality which creates a singular solution for economic affairs within law to reach a political goal, which is also seen as developed. (Trubek and Santos, 16, Newton, p. 199 – 200).

Trevaskes (2018, p. 251 – 255) explains that rule of law came out of the party administration in the reform era of Deng Xiaoping to counteract the previously focus of “rule by man” during the Mao administration. Jiang Zemin sought to consolidate this new understanding of “governing the nation in accordance with law”, which meant institutionalization of law-base governance in every area of the state. The term is ambiguous, which makes it ideal for political leverage, but the Jiang era did not use this new concept as a tool of governance to the same extent that it is used today. Under Xi Jinping, Rule of/by Law has become an apparatus of domination to secure all political power and decision making to rest in the party's hands. The party must be responsible to the people, and it is necessary for the party to enjoy a wider leverage on government institutions to ensure moral governance and accountability. The basic idea is that for the party to successfully exercise leadership successfully, they need to control and stand above the institutions that administer the law, to represent the people.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

In this chapter I will go over the theoretical framework that guides the analysis. My ontological and epistemological assumptions will be explained and positioned together with post-modernism

as a tool of text deconstruction. Lastly, I will explain and motivate the selection of Foucault's and Dean's theory of governmentality.

3.1 Ontological and epistemological assumptions

My thesis draws on constructivism, which presumes that the world in the way individuals understand it is created within a set of rules and knowledge that are constantly contested and restructured (Creswell, 2007, p. 20 – 21). If constructivism outlines the ontological assumptions, then interpretivism fits well as the epistemological approach. Interpretivism assumes that our interpretations of reality need to be put into context of history and culture. For social research, this means that we cannot look at causal effects of externalities to explain human behavior, or as Bryman explains it (Bryman, 2016, p. 34), we are interested in getting an empathic understanding of human behavior instead of strictly seeing how different forces are supposed to affect it.

3.2 Post-modernism

Post-modernism tries to both grasp the nature of modern culture and society by looking at how different narratives try to claim their knowledge in a contested representation. As such, post-modernism believes findings or meta-narratives are constructed external realities (Bryman, p. 377). Postmodernism is concerned with power relations, meaning that all meaning is constructed to serve the interest of particular groups and thus the methods of construction can't be trusted. Because of this, finding a true definition of reality is impossible. Post-modern textual analysis is critical of a homogenous reality, claiming that wherever there is consensus there must also exist suppressed realities (Simon, 2016 p. 143 – 145). Opposite to the modern world, which sees the world as being able to be explained by universal truths linked to positivist scientific methodology and neoclassical economy, focus should be placed on giving credence to both the dominant and the subordinate, the central and the marginal.

3.2.1 Regimes of truth and power

According to Foucault, each society has their own universal truths, or general politics, which includes types of discourses that are accepted because of the status given to those charged with stating what counts as true or false (Foucault, 1976, p. 130 – 133). These *regimes of truth* are

reproduced, distributed, and regulated statements that are created by, and further exercises discursive power. Power isn't strictly a force or ability to dominate, coerce, and prohibit, but is actually discourse, institutions, and norms which work in relational structures to induce its subjects to conform, produce, and act in a certain way. Power is the name of the strategic situation in a society, which can act as a positive, and productive force (Foucault, 1984, p. 298 – 301).

General politics in a society is thus understood as a contested representation about how to govern society according to the interest in various stakeholders. Society is governed by the *regimes of truth* created and set up by powerful institutions which engage in a continuous negotiation of what may qualify as it.

3.3 Governmentality

Originally, Foucault's idea of governmentality is a theory of how power is exercised in a liberal society through institutions of power (such as prisons, hospitals, universities, the military etc.). As a theory it is generally used to look at how those in power perceive the object of their government and how the subjects who are meant to be governed should conform.

The general meaning of governmentality is how we think about governing with different rationalities and mentalities. The historical meaning, according to Foucault, occurs in the early modern period when social and human sciences become an integral part of the state government (Dean, 2010 p. 28). The introduction of the economy into the political practice, meant the governance and welfare of individual households (Foucault, p. 207-208). Dean summarizes it as a regime of government taking the population as its object with the emergence of political economy. Since the government is concerned with achieving happiness, health, prosperity, and welfare for its entire population, it is necessary to govern through the economy (Dean, p. 28 – 29).

Traditionally, the important relations of power within governmentality is discipline, and sovereignty. Sovereignty is concerned with exercising authority over subjects within a defined territory and creating deductive practices for tax collection and punishment (Dean, p. 29). Discipline concerns the regulation of the people within that territory in institutions of power such as schooling, military, or organizations of work.

The modern rule of government is to regard these subjects as members of a population, or

identity, and to foster their resource capacities as living individuals capable of be optimized in the economic and social sphere.

Lastly it frames the population under *apparatuses of security*, which is the use of police forces, armies, diplomatic resources to ensure the optimal functioning of social and economic processes within a population (Dean, p. 29 – 30). For Foucault, these apparatuses would also include any practice or institution that would ensure proper and optimal engagement in economic, or social processes, and thus also include welfare, education system, and health.

The data used for this thesis does not allow of a analysis of power relation in between two or more dominant discourses, but rather the looks to the formation of consensus around a governed object. Post-modernism is concerned with the creation of an object, what is considered an instance of it, and what should be excluded from the created reality. In governmentality, a created object is a negotiated truth about society by institutions of knowledge which work for the optimization of a subject's welfare and productivity.

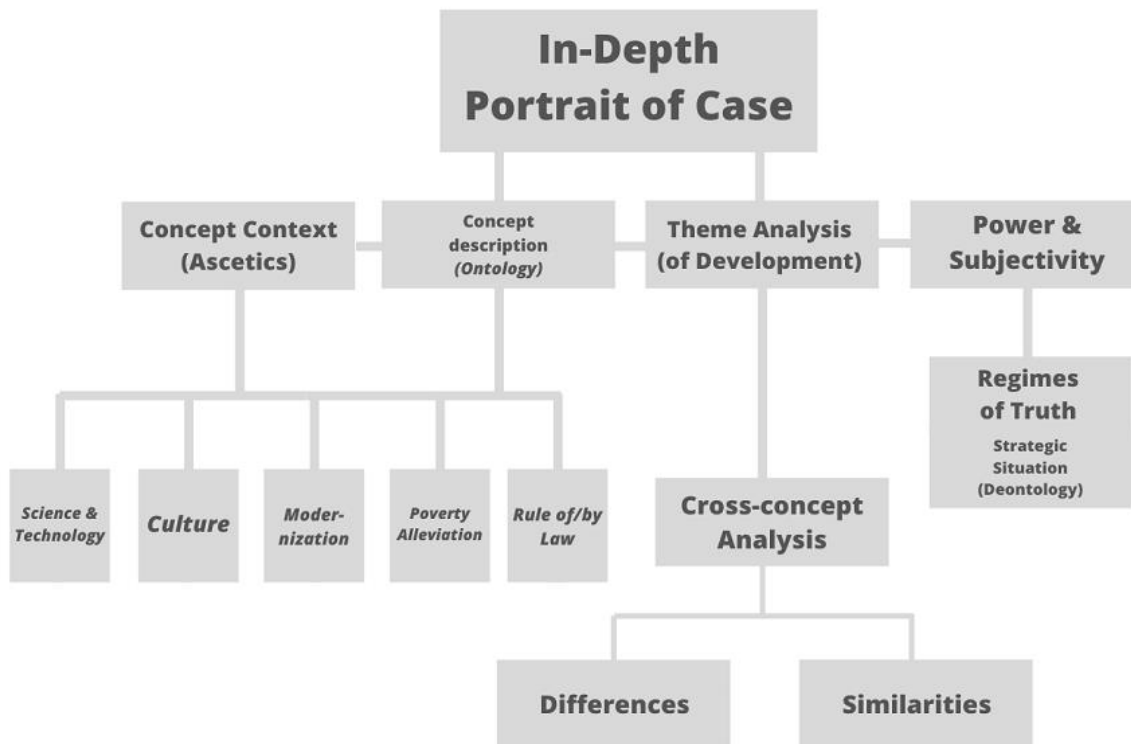
As an example, we can look at the concept of danger shown by David Campbell (1998, p. 349). Danger does not exist independently of an object, rather it is considered a possibility to those who it might become a threat. In insurance, risk (or danger) is a representation of rationality made up by the calculations of probabilities. Danger is the treatment of events that could end up happening to individuals, and depending on how one analyzes it, anything could become a danger. For governmentality, this kind of assessment of what constitutes an object of governance can create consensus of what is the correct way of dealing with something as an individual dependent on the rationalities behind it (which could include, welfare, health, or security).

Chapter 4: Methodology

The methods chapter aims to explain the coding process and analysis which was carried out during the data collection. A framework of how codes were classified is presented and follows with an explanation of Mitchell Dean's steps of governmentality analysis. A chapter on how critiques of development are structured follows, with a corpus of statements of the chosen concepts of analysis. Lastly, the data collection process and limitation are laid out and followed by an overview of my own positionality towards the data, and the research process.

4.1 Coding

The process of coding is usually the first step when doing qualitative data analysis, and how we code the data may have important outcomes for our analysis (Bryman, p. 581). Since I have chosen to have a deductive approach it would be suitable to create a coding template in similar vein with Creswell (p. 172) to give a better understanding of the coding process.



Creswell uses a multiple case study to illustrate his precode specification, however this template is focused on only one case with cross-concepts analysis instead of cross-case analysis. The idea is to create an understanding of the concepts followed by a critical look at the regimes of truth constituted around them (which may or may not see power as a positive force of conformity) to come to conclusive definitions under the three stages of analysis of governmentality.

4.2 Governmentality

I have chosen the framework on governmentality proposed by Mitchell Dean, which is divided into understanding an object in four layers of regimes of government (SAGE, 2010).

Ontology, the field of what needs to be governed (in his example health issues); **Ascetics**, deals with how the field is meant to be governed (in his example the self-regulation of health and encouragement to healthy lifestyles); **Deontology**, which looks at what the subject becomes when governed (following his example healthy productive self-responsible individuals); **Teleology**, is concerning why the reason for such a governance of the individual is necessary, mainly looking at the impact in society (in Dean's case saving of healthcare expense, and activation of production forces).

However, the author have decided not to include the teleology part of analysis because the main focus of this thesis is to look at how development discourse create truths about constructed objects and how individuals are supposed to conform with these rationalities.

The basic premise when analyzing strategies of government is to look at the instances in which something is perceived as not right, and the way of how to govern it needs to be changed. (Dean, 2010, p. 38). Different societies have different rationalities of government, which Dean calls mentalities of government. They are made up of a combination of rational and emotional standards in the self-exercising subject, or the ethical government of the self (p. 24 – 25). Rational standards embody systematic reasoning, thinking, calculating, and responding to a problem drawing on bodies of knowledge or expertise; while emotional standards try to create imagery from stories and myth to create strong emotional resonance, especially in time of crisis. The ability to govern someone is called subjectification and is performed when the combination of rational and emotional standards is used to *problematize* or call into question an object being governed. The analysis of government starts out from four analytical perspectives how to get an understanding of the regimes of government mentioned before (ontology, ascetics, deontology).

Visibility: The illumination of certain objects, and the dimming of others. What makes it possible to picture what needs to be governed, how different agents are related to each other, and how authority is constituted in space.

Technical aspect: By what means, tactics, technologies, and vocabularies is rule accomplished? Governments try to create manifestations of ideologies, worldviews, and values.

Epistheme: What form of thought, expertise, rationality, and strategies are used when governing?

Identity: What kind of person is presupposed by different practices of government and how are they supposed to be transformed? What status and capacities are found in those

exercising authority? How are individuals made to identify with certain groups, to become active, virtuous citizens? Which conducts are problematized?

According to Dean (p. 33), the four dimensions of analysis are all co-present in each regime of government, but from Deans readings, I believe *epistheme* should be focused in the *ascetics* section since it looks at how thought tries to transform practices (Dean, p. 42), by which means of calculations, expertise, and rationality. Furthermore, *technical aspects* and *identity* should mainly be reserved for *deontology* since it looks at how authority is constituted, and which specific practices and programs try to form in collective identities (Dean, p. 43). As for *visibility*, I think it can be useful in every regime of government.

4.3 Post-development and concepts

Gudyunas writes that a post-development critique enables us to identify the main drivers of a development project. Development takes certain assumptions for granted when the question as of how to improve the social condition of a population appears. Economic growth becomes the main driver for social, political, and cultural progress, and defends the desirable version of modernization (Gudyunas, 2018, p. 85). This study is what Gudyunas calls a level zero study of development, which takes the form of a critique of known concepts. It is a very abstract way of doing such an analysis, but which could also open up for further research in the more concrete levels (such as on the ground development projects, NGOs, even smaller concepts) how development discourse constructs reality.

The chosen sub-concepts of development are modernization, science and technology, poverty alleviation, culture, and rule of law. The four first listed concepts are derived from the post-development theory discussed in the literature review. Rule of law is derived directly from the data, seeing it as coming up frequently in relation to development, and in relation to the political slogans which create the frameworks of China's national development. I have included a discussion of the significance of law as a tool of development in the literature review.

4.4 Data collection and data sampling

Xi Jinping's *The Governance of China* volume one and two (谈治国理政, *tanzhiguolizheng*) are about the current new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics under his new era of governance (Xi, 2014,2017, publisher's note). It is a collection of speeches that deal with a

variety of issues ranging from economics, to political philosophy, technology, and the environment. The second volume is also concerned with broadening the international understanding of China's development model¹⁵. Both versions were translated to numerous languages, with the intent to be read by domestic and international consumers alike. The volumes were chosen mainly because they can be seen as the current main representation of how the development discourse governs populations in China, and furthermore how China's path of development situates itself on an international scale. There are a number of other texts published during Xi Jinping's rule (2015, 2016, 2019) dealing with development and governance, but the two volumes already amount to a large set of data that needs to be limited down and divided into the 5 concepts.

The first and second of volume of *The Governance of China* are state published books under the foreign ministry press in China translated into most major languages. The volumes are also available to read online at the Organization Department of the Communist Party Central Committee's website 12371.cn. According to Bryman (2016, p. 552 – 555), the data would be qualified as official documents derived from the state. When dealing with such documents, we need to look at the four criteria when asserting such document, namely *Authenticity*, *Representativeness*, *Credibility*, and *Meaning*. *Authenticity* deals with whether the data's origin can be questioned. *Representativeness* looks at if the data represents what other similar documents from the same source would say. *Credibility* asks if the data is free from error or distortion. *Meaning* looks exactly that of meaning, if it is comprehensible and clear (Bryman, p. 546). I see no direct issues with the data concerning *Meaning*, *Authenticity*, and *Representativeness*, however as Bryman writes *Credibility* can be compromised, and documents might reveal biases to the reader, which is one reason their content may be interesting in the first place. Bryman continues with what to keep in mind when assessing documents. It is necessary to keep in mind who the document is written for, by who and for what purpose (Bryman, p. 560 – 561).

The coded themes were collected by purposive sampling, mainly done by word searches, meaning the sample size of the data is supposed to help answer the research questions (Bryman, 408). Five major concepts have been chosen to act as overarching guidelines what to search for in the data and to be analyzed. Once the concepts have been coded, it will be described in

¹⁵ www.china.org.cn/china/2014-10/23/content_33849816.htm

context, and be cross-case analyzed (Creswell, p. 150 – 157).

The amount of data extracted for analysis needs to be limited, especially since these two volumes contain too many instances of the concepts being deconstructed. Depending on the amount of data, several issues tend to arrive; if the range of data is too small, it becomes harder to make claims and generalize about the data analysed. If the amount is too large, the workload is too heavy and the in-depth relation between researcher and data can be lost (Bryman, p. 417).

Bryman points out that in the end the most important part of any data sampling is being able to create your own sample size and justify it (p. 418). My data is retrieved through word searches in the software NVivo, and further explored through the Word Tree option to find the most common words used together with them. The resulting segments which would seem most relevant to my theories was then be coded. I have set the number of twenty references (as counted in NVivo) to each concept as my minimum, judging it as a good amount for a master thesis.

4.5 Limitations, ethical considerations, and reflexivity

Research is not done in a moral vacuum, and personal values always affect the process and outcome of the research process (Bryman, p. 141). The position of the researcher determines everything from the data chosen, to the theories and methods, and in which way the thesis is written. Researchers are prone to take sides or engage in politics where their own worldview shapes opinion or try to improve their situation.

Since this thesis is using officially published data from the Chinese government, issues of consent are not relevant, and neither does it present any harm to any individuals (Bryman, p. 126 – 129). Ethical considerations become mostly concerned with the issue of quality, and the researcher's capability should focus on transparency of the research process, and the quality of the research (Bryman, p. 134).

Language is an important part of this thesis' ethical considerations since the author has took it upon himself to personally translate the chosen data. The American Council of Learned Societies (ACL) claims that text generally used for social science research such as official documents cannot be directly translated by machine translation since they may impose social, cultural, and political contexts (ACL, 2006 p. 3). Furthermore, social science discourse tends to communicate through known concepts that are shared as technical terms, but they may also be

culture specific (ACL, p. 4). I am aware that even though the process of data search and translation has been able to be progressed in an effective manner, there may still be concepts or words that have been misunderstood or misinterpreted.

4.5.1 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the process of acknowledging your location in time and social space as a researcher (Bryman, p. 388), This means the researcher need to take care of how his personal biases and values may interact in the creation of knowledge around the data. Since my theories are concerned with how narratives create meaning from constructed objects and mentalities, it is also important to realize the mentalities constructed in oneself. As a Swedish born citizen the researcher is already positioned in a space and time where I am constantly influenced what Western media writes and proclaims about China, and which norms and values I should identify myself with in accordance with my position as a Western subject. Furthermore, I should be careful not to use my power as a researchers to conform with an homogenous reality, while at the same time try to keep my personal political beliefs from representing the conclusions derived upon from the data.

Chapter 5: Empirical Data and Findings

5.1 Culture (文化)

5.1.1 Ontology

Governing China's culture is about nurturing good behavior under traditional moral and Marxist socialist culture.¹⁶ Behavior should also mimic the people's interest, and socialism needs to adapt to traditional Chinese culture if China wants to succeed in continuing their historical line from their thousand year history.¹⁷ Arts & literature needs to be governed and understood with the people in mind,¹⁸ and domestic culture should be seized from domestic thought and morals.¹⁹ The governance of culture also implies the governance of the thought of development.²⁰

¹⁶ Xi, 2014, 谈治理政, p. 170, 181, 158, 164.

¹⁷ Xi, 2014, 谈治理政, p. 170, 181; Xi, 2017, 谈治理政, p. 299, 300.

¹⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 180.

¹⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 163.

²⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 170.

5.1.2 Ascetics

In *Governing China*, culture is made up of values, and values are presented as slogans under socialist core values and Chinese traditional values. The two constantly overlap and give meaning to each other.

The socialist core values consists of; Prosperity (富强), democracy (民主), civilization (文明), harmony (和谐), freedom (自由), equality (平等), justice (公正), rule of law (法治), discipline (敬业), honesty (诚信), patriotism (爱国), and friendliness (友善).²¹ They all create forms of identity in government constructed worldviews of society and uses the expertise (*epitheme*) of ancient sages' wisdom and previous martyrs who hold a high status of authority,²² and argues that, provided you are Chinese, you should consciously nurture and foster these values.²³

Since socialist theories of modernization have been scientifically proven right, they should be the spiritual force of the people.²⁴ The spiritual is constructed from the expertise proven by the party's rule and the science of Marxism. The current political system of consultative democracy (协商民主) is thus also a rational choice of government where people should handle their own affairs, and be consulted only when something concerns them personally.²⁵

In a way, the socialist core values come out as more vague than the traditional ones, where if we think about what adhering to these core values means, the only real visibility is socialist modernization by development. According to Nandy (1989), development discourse governs social life, and in the text the combination of traditional and socialist values is used to draw an historical line towards development.

The traditional elements can be deeper analysed because of their selection. On the question of hierarchy, it seems like the hierarchy goes core socialist values first, and then fitting traditionalist values into them.²⁶

Many overarching ideas are spelled out, usually together with Chinese proverbs.²⁷

²¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 181.

²² Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 164.

²³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 160.

²⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 58.

²⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 57 – 58.

²⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 163, 170.

²⁷ Ibid.

Generally, they focus on wisdom by following morals such as the honouring of old people, helping the poor, harmony in difference, honesty, fairness, importance of the people, and achieving *datong*²⁸ (大同).²⁹ There are also some proverbs and values which seem to promote the idea of progress and development within both traditional and socialist morals. Moral capacity in those people who are assumed to hold lofty (高尚; 仁人志士) ideals³⁰ creates an exemplary character. Some examples: Constant personal improvement (自强不息)³¹, Out with the old, in with the new³² (推陈出新)³³, forward progress no matter the state of the world³⁴ (天行健, 君子以自强不息)³⁵. However, there are many other proverbs that occur which would state the opposite of creating a monoculture of linear time, like “man is an integral part of nature” (天人合一)³⁶, “a gentleman puts focus on moral and ethics, children put focus on profit” (君子喻于义, 小人喻于利)³⁷. Moral rule and governance are continuously promoted through the idea of the party as inheritor and continuer of traditional culture to develop the nation forward. The party is placed together with the status of authority given to the traditional morals, which places the party in the position to govern traditional culture, or as the data puts it, that the current situation is the naturally developed reality.³⁸ The selection of certain traditional values or proverbs does signify a plurality of ethics but in the end, I see it rather as asserting a high culture of progress and making different voices invisible.

The core values of socialism are presented as a preferable rational unifying model for anybody who wants to be identified as Chinese (*epistheme*). The culture of individualism which Ping (2014) sees as already embraced in Chinese society is downplayed and socialist group harmony and moral governance takes the front stage. There is one reference which seems to criticize the previous path to socialist modernization with the Cultural Revolution (文革) under

²⁸ 大同, from the *book of rites*, translated as Grand Unity. The idea of a perfect society without hierarchies, borders, and where people lived in unity with nature. In modern China, Mao and his successors claimed Marxism would be the only way of achieving *datong*. – Smith, C, 2019, *Datong and Xiaokang in Afterlives of Chinese Communism*, p. 63 – 66.

²⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 164, 170.

³⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 158.

³¹ From *Book of Songs* (诗经).

³² Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 170.

³³ From *The note on Liangxi: Zhangwenqian's diary on porridge* (梁溪漫志, 张文潜粥记)

³⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 170.

³⁵ From *Book of Changes* (易经).

³⁶ From *Zhuangzi* (庄子).

³⁷ From *The Analects* (论语) of Confucius.

³⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 180, 52.

Mao³⁹; but here the negative aspects of a “leftist wrong” (左的错误) is that large scale industrialization wasn’t able to continue smoothly. Culture is rationally tied to these values by science, and it is interesting to note how traditional morals are fixed, and a work in progress, and we need to wait and see how they relate to the morals of today. Let us put this into the concept of Rule by Law (依法治国), which place morals as its natural predecessor. Does this mean that law is the ultimate interpretation of correct morals in a socialist system? I would assume so.

5.1.3 Deontology

The ascetics section outlined an *epistheme* of rational values which corresponds to what it means to be Chinese. One of the main features of this is to tell China’s story well (讲好中国故事),⁴⁰ Emotional language (*technical aspect*) referring to body and soul such as continuing the people and party’s blood relation (血肉联系)⁴¹ and spiritual bloodline (精神命脉)⁴², and overall realizing the model citizen in oneself by aforementioned values in order to keep order and continue to material prosperity to continue.⁴³ This *technical aspect* suggests an inducement of conformity and self-governance. There are some individuals whose conduct act as guiding towards this reproduction. Lenin is used to explain how arts & literature have the masses as their foundation, which needs to be an essential part of consumption and production.⁴⁴ Mao is the other historical person quoted to share his visions of the mission for Chinese people, namely setting their minds at ease (as mentioned in the ascetics part in the modernization section) and striving for achieving modern industry, modern agriculture, modern science, and a modern army.⁴⁵ Inspiration also comes from everyday people, such as Gong Quanzhen (龚全珍), who went back to her home village to help with the local hardships the peasants face, something she continued to do for more than half a century.⁴⁶ All these examples hint at an *identity*

³⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 280.

⁴⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 299.

⁴¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 59.

⁴² Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 164.

⁴³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 158 – 163.

⁴⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 300.

⁴⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 236.

⁴⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 159.

She would later receive numerous awards for her moral behavior, such as the 2013 *the fourth award for national moral model* (第四届全国道德模范称号).

- <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E9%BE%9A%E5%85%A8%E7%8F%8D>

transformation towards a nationalist productive subject. The lives of modern everyday people are valued, including Olympic Champions, Great scientific scholars (大科学家), and astronauts (航天英雄).⁴⁷

For all these people included in the broad term of the masses, there seems to be a naturalisation of hierarchies by placing of those who chose to abide by socialist culture and continue its production of telling China's story, and those who don't work against the fabric of Chinese prosperity. Then the most interesting thing to ponder becomes who really represents the masses. From what we read the party is the natural representation of the masses and their engagement with the masses are concerned with the fostering of superior moral culture that they have inherited and which legitimizes their place at the top of the leadership (*epistheme*). Working in the interest of the people is a powerful tool of excluding and including different groups of people. The problematization of culture I read from the data is that "individualistic" culture is actually in the position of hampering the party's right to rule and thus also (which is embedded in the historical language of the socialist struggle) the possibility for future material development. Socialism with Chinese characteristics is the dominant development culture, quite different from the individualistic liberating one absorbed from the West. Socialist culture enters the heart and soul of the people, establish powerful institutions of family, and nation to be respected and honored. Father figures such as Mao and Lenin are shown as driving forces for development and placing importance with the masses, while women like Gong Quanzhen is praised for their arduous work in the village, the very historical home of the China and the communist party. Lastly, the modern individuals praised in society saw Olympic champions, astronauts, and scientists to be the first mentioned (before two other examples of model workers, and young volunteers). As I see it, they all have connection of a race towards something, being possible through scientific progress, and expert education. Isn't the journey into space the highest form of development, to leave the world behind?

5.2 Poverty alleviation (脱贫/扶贫)

5.2.1 Ontology

⁴⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 181.

Eliminating poverty is one of the essentials of achieving a moderately prosperous society (小康社会)⁴⁸ and together with improving people's lives and realizing common prosperity it makes up the essential demands of socialism.⁴⁹ Poverty alleviation is currently the continuation of 37 years of reform an opening up where over 700 million impoverished villagers were pulled out of poverty.⁵⁰ The final goal was to win the battle against poverty by 2020. There are some political slogans to encapsulate the process of relieving poverty, such as the "one batch of five"⁵¹ (五个一批), and the "three guarantees and two securities"⁵² (两不愁, 三保障).⁵³

5.2.2 Ascetics

The ascetics section is not concerned with how to govern poverty alleviation, but rather how to govern the poor. The formulated strategies bring light on the position of the poor who needs to be (as Lawson would put it) saved.

Poverty alleviation has five steps within the one batch of five strategy to try and remove poverty by 2020. The steps are, developing production out of poverty by utilizing the people who can rely on the work of their two hands (靠自己的双手)⁵⁴; moving people out of poverty by relocation from impoverished areas or ecologically dangerous areas⁵⁵; ecologically compensate for poverty alleviation by increasing ecological preservation and transform spending in important ecological areas,⁵⁶ poverty alleviation of education by promoting basic and work education⁵⁷; increase the social philanthropic aspect of poverty alleviation towards the lowest income levels, and focus on regional development.⁵⁸ The goal of "three guarantees and two securities" (两不愁, 三保障) is ensuring that impoverished people can earn their own living and won't have to worry about food and clothing, secure housing, basic medical treatment and compulsory education.⁵⁹

⁴⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 88.

⁴⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 189.

⁵⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 88.

⁵¹ Own translation.

⁵² Own translation, two securities translated from "the two things that don't have to be worried about" (两不愁).

⁵³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 89 – 92.

⁵⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 89.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 89.

⁵⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 90.

⁵⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 90.

⁵⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 87.

This is the goal for the 70 million Chinese people living in poverty.⁶⁰ Furthermore, there also exists more than 85 million disabled urban and rural people. Where the majority of these people lives seems to be in old revolutionary areas (革命老区), ethnic areas (民族地区), border areas (边疆地区), and generally impoverished areas.⁶¹ The biggest way of lifting people out of poverty is investing in human capital and making sure that capable cadres are sent to these areas and carry out these strategies well,⁶² in an attempt to fasten development. The discourse creates an universal model of rational steps, which is proven by measures of success, as to how remove oneself from poverty (*epistheme*).

The policies and their areas of implementation seem to take for granted the inability of the impoverished to develop or utilize their local areas of future possible growth. Furthermore, it un-professionalizes both their local knowledge in favor of a modern scientific expertise (*epistheme*) of nature spearheaded by the party.

The cadres and the party hold a superior position in how to realize a more prosperous society, and the problematization of the impoverished becomes the need of them to become active citizens and instead of relying on free welfare they should strive to be arduous workers like the cadres.⁶³ This mindset is accompanied by referring to Chinese traditional virtues of filial piety, respect for the elders, and household responsibilities, promoting a self-sufficient subject.⁶⁴ The cadres are painted in a picture of virtuous hardworking arms of the party, and even to the extent that there is a surplus of good intention which works as a deterrent for the impoverished to help themselves.⁶⁵ This makes *visible* only the positive achievements of cadres and the negative inability of the poor. The current attitude of the impoverished seems to be degenerate (落后),⁶⁶ and have a “cadres keep working, the masses look on” (干部干, 群众看), “cadres worry, the masses don’t” (干部着急, 群众不急), “resting against the wall, gazing in the sun, waiting for someone else to bring the moderately prosperous society” (靠着墙根晒太阳, 等着别人送小康) mindset.⁶⁷ The *epistheme* seems to bind values of self-sufficiency and welfare through work, as

⁶⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 38.

⁶¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 84.

⁶² Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 96; 2014, p. 190.

⁶³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 95 – 96.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 91.

⁶⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 95.

seen in the hard working party official.

The governance of the poor seems to paint a picture of the party being the only reasonable way out of poverty and its historical success is even mentioned as a way of showing the truthful effects of the progress over the last soon to be 40 years. The most interesting aspect of helping the poor (according to me) is how the 85 million disabled (残疾) group is brought up together with the 70 million impoverished, without it being further explained as of how they should achieve their sustenance. They are simply made invisible, or rather, their non-productivity is made non-existent in comparison with those who may engage in capitalist production.

5.2.3 Deontology

The most important step for the impoverished if they wish to achieve prosperity doesn't lie in aid, or policies, but rather in their way of thinking.

As recollected by Xi Jinping in his travels the last two years to poor areas,⁶⁸ achieving prosperity is a common goal (渴望幸福生活). Xi speaks about how the “weak birds fly first” (弱鸟先飞), and that impoverished masses need to have the mindset of “flying” (飞) and act in “flying first” (先飞) to lift themselves out of poverty.⁶⁹ The problem lies in realizing the willingness of the impoverished to “fly”. If you are not willing to fly, then the fundamental problems of poverty cannot be solved (“[...] 没有内在动力, 仅靠外部帮扶, 帮扶再多, 你不愿意“飞”, 也不能从根本上解决问题”).⁷⁰ The vocabularies of this *technical aspect* see the poor's enthusiasm, innovation, and initiative needs to be mobilized to change their personal ability to improve and develop. Instead of simply giving poor relief, cattle, and material resources, help should come in work and production subsidies.⁷¹ The overall goal is to help the impoverished use their own arduous work to realize prosperity (脱贫致富).

Before summarizing, I want to clarify the different meaning of *tuopin* (脱贫) and *fupin* (扶贫). *Tuopin* means to lift oneself out of poverty⁷², while *fupin* would imply aiding of the

⁶⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 38.

⁶⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 95.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 95.

⁷² *Tuo 脱*, to cast of something, or escape.

poor.⁷³ There are some examples in the text where certain ways of alleviating poverty is placed with *fu* and *tuo* to imply if the action is based on individual behaviour, or the assist of the party. The party and cadres together with poverty alleviation (扶贫) bring with them (*fu*) positive aspects such as development,⁷⁴ how to use technical knowledge about poverty alleviation,⁷⁵ and most notably wisdom and ideals (*technical aspect*).⁷⁶ As for *tuo*, poverty alleviation is constantly placed within individuals' tasks such as work,⁷⁷ according to local situations,⁷⁸ and as said before fostering a correct mindset. According to the data, eliminating poverty is to eliminate ignorance and backwardness, and to alleviating poverty (*fu*, 扶贫) we first need to foster wisdom (治贫先治愚⁷⁹, 扶贫先扶智).⁸⁰

The *identity* shows the opposite of what it means to become and active citizen and the poor's position is problematized as being un-productive, uneducated, backward, passive, and even lazy. The poor's only way of being saved from poverty is by identifying with the cadres and partake in neoliberal development project ranging from learning finance capital investment and engaging in markets.

5.3 Modernization (现代化)

5.3.1 Ontology

Modernization according to the text is the creation of a socialist modern society.⁸¹ Modernization is framed within the three major political ideologies of China dream (中国梦), national rejuvenation (中华民族伟大复兴), and moderately prosperous society (小康社会).⁸² These political ideologies functions through other historical ideologies to achieve modernization through the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics (中国特色社会主义).⁸³

⁷³ *Fu* 扶, to help, aide, or support.

⁷⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 88.

⁷⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 98.

⁷⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 90.

⁷⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 89.

⁷⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 90, 93.

⁷⁹ 治愚 (*zhiyu*), meaning eliminating un-scientific, un-cultural ignorant and backward conditions.

- Pleco Chinese dictionary.

⁸⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 90.

⁸¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 9.

⁸² Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 49 – 50, 12, 44, 136, 402 – 403; 2017, p. 43.

⁸³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 43, 58.

5.3.2 Ascetics

The three political ideologies are imposed by historical continuity of realization of previous ones and the promotion of ones who have been nurtured in the current regime. They are The four comprehensives (四个全面)⁸⁴; the five in one general strategy (五位一体)^{85 86}; the Two Centenaries (两个一百年)^{87 88}; and the two doubles” (两个翻番)⁸⁹.

In the current stage of Chinese modernization, there seems to be an impasse where the capacity of development reaching the goals of achieving a moderately prosperous society is in danger. The sustainment of forward progress depends on the currents system ability to change according to times and be able to reform itself.⁹⁰

In the data, Socialism with Chinese characteristics becomes a continuation of Marxists theory and a scientific body to achieve the Chinese Dream with.⁹¹ The rhetoric creates an *epistheme* around the continuous economic growth as a universal remedy for ensuring people’s spiritual and material prosperity. Socialism with Chinese characteristics is a leading scientific theory which can only be progressing forward, not backward.⁹² The Chinese Dream thus cannot be seen as an individual inclusive one, but rather an established correct path of modernization with China having a monoculture of linear time.

That is not to say that economic development isn’t problematized, but rather it is starting to exist as the new normal (新常态) which is in need of structural, qualitative, and technological upgrade to achieve higher equality among the people.⁹³ Income equality,⁹⁴ the two doubles, and urbanization from villages⁹⁵ are necessary to achieve otherwise it would mean conflicts and creation of new problems. Here seems to be a kind of nostalgic attest to a “let some get rich

⁸⁴ The four points are: Build a moderately prosperous society, deepen reform, govern the nation according to law, and strictly govern the party. - <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E5%9B%9B%E4%B8%AA%E5%85%A8%E9%9D%A2/16391989>

⁸⁵ The five in one point are: Economic development, political development, social development, and developing an ecological civilization. - <https://bit.ly/3eIPsAQ>

⁸⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 61, 45.

⁸⁷ The Two Centenaries is the goal of achieving socialist modernization by 100th birthday of the communist party. The strategy has two steps, the first being achieving a moderately prosperous society by 2020, and the second to achieve socialist modernization by 2035. An additional step of 2050 is set as the last target to consolidate socialist modernization. -

<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%B8%A4%E4%B8%AA%E4%B8%80%E7%99%BE%E5%B9%B4>

⁸⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 402; 2017, p. 44.

⁸⁹ Thea goal to double GDP growth between the two periods of 1978 – 2010, and 2010 – 2020.

- <https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E4%B8%A4%E4%B8%AA%E7%BF%BB%E7%95%AA>

⁹⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 75 – 76.

⁹¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 56, 49.

⁹² Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 43, 76; 2014, p. 93.

⁹³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 238.

⁹⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 56; 2017, p. 77.

⁹⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 232.

first”⁹⁶ view of economic growth which also see non-productivity outside the formal economy as something dangerous

The new normal (新常态) is framed as an objective state and doesn't downplay the necessity of development, rather creates an *epistheme* as to how China's development path has been resilient, shown latent capacity and leeway when approached with downturn risks.⁹⁷ It seems to promote a worldview of economic development as the absolute principle in this current general trend, and the belief is that any modern problems that could arise can indeed be solved by modern solutions.

Socialism with Chinese characteristics becomes the only way of achieving socialist modernization,⁹⁸ and it is also seen as the most current iteration of Marxist theory.⁹⁹ We can then assume that the current path of development is based on Marxist theory of what constitutes truth according to rational methods of practice and theory decided by the party.

To counter the eventual questioning of how Marxist theory's idea of modernization could have been incorrect in the past, we get a portrayal of The Cultural Revolution (again) as an obstacle to industrialization and thus also development;¹⁰⁰ while at the same time rectifying that the knowledge of socialist development simply was not deep enough. These kinds of objections of modernizations are mirrored in the way the inner party officials are positioned as leaders of a certain way of progressing forward freely but at the same time orderly and transparent within certain boundaries (though ambiguous).¹⁰¹ The rhetoric is quick to differentiate between something that is done the old way, and the new, and how China is fundamentally following their own path of and objective reality of achieving modernization,¹⁰² compared to others who chose subjective views of history, ignoring the direct judgement from its people.¹⁰³ Looking at the objective reality of China's history of modernization then becomes how it is scientifically understood in the subject's mind. It follows that the success of modernization is dependent on people's subjective judgement of it. It would seem that the entity of the people is used to justify

⁹⁶ During the South China tour, a summary of several speeches.
- www.economist.com/asia/2001/05/31/to-each-according-to-his-abilities

⁹⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 239.

⁹⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 9.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 236.

¹⁰¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 93, 402.

¹⁰² Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 170.

¹⁰³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 44.

the objective truth of socialism with Chinese characteristics when evaluating success and failure. We get a sense of how any alternative realities of Chinese modernity have been tested and ultimately failed, and today's paradigm of capitalist growth through the new normal has shaped a monoculture of knowledge which claims to have a universal understanding behind it.

5.3.3 Deontology

The modern subject is one directed by his or her faith in the scientific truth of the newest iteration of Sinified Marxism to serve the majority of the population; or one could say, someone who acknowledges the means of calculus (*epistheme*) behind seeing the party as the representation of the people. Furthermore, it is someone who strives for higher income, and urban life away from any labeled degenerate way of life.

To add to this, we can read that Marxist Leninist thought & Mao Zedong theory (both parts of socialism with Chinese characteristics) are the upholders of the relation between development, inheritance, and innovation. If they were to be lost, China would also lose its foundation.¹⁰⁴ I interpret this as *identity* formation around the inherited historical importance of development.

The economic subject is positioned within affluent market space, human capital, and great development potential,¹⁰⁵ whose object is to create benefit for the people by active partaking in local economic and social development.¹⁰⁶ The liberalization of the economy is echoed in the need to free and develop society's productive forces,¹⁰⁷ and the need to modernize agriculture in order to open up national market space.¹⁰⁸ The economic subject is a capable person with useful skills moving for the urban areas to the city and increase consumption if real estate and further expansion of the cities.¹⁰⁹ Development here seems to create a high culture of the urban subject who is lauded by being placed in centers of capital and production. The uncapable constitutes the left behind naturalized subject.

This new working class (工人阶级)¹¹⁰ find their new *identity* in their possibility to

¹⁰⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 9.

¹⁰⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 76.

¹⁰⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, P. 391.

¹⁰⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 92.

¹⁰⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 232 – 233.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 44.

engage in the free market as credited to the party's ability to emancipate the mind (解放思想) of its subjects from previous tragedies such as the Cultural Revolution.¹¹¹ The *technical aspect* of the emancipation of the mind (解放思想) is credited to enable values which free thoughts and increase productive forces.¹¹² The emancipation of the mind seems to conform with what Wang (2004) wrote about the hegemony thinking of gradual reform over radical engagement. The data places anything seen as too extreme in relation to The Cultural Revolution,¹¹³ and seems to have become a sort of negative representation of radical change that one should not try to identify with. Even though modernization in China seems to be at an impasse, its subjects should think twice before challenging the status quo.

The development of a modern army is also carrying with it the people as the centre of power and identity. The development of an innovate economy is placed next to the importance of a modernized army,¹¹⁴ in which the people and the army are to be integrated in the process.¹¹⁵ Every ethnicity should strive to serve the good tradition of the army's love for the people.¹¹⁶ "The army defeats its enemies, and the people rely on a mountain"¹¹⁷ (a strong force which keeps away evils), "军队打胜仗，人民是靠山". This relation applies both to the party and the people, and the army holds a special political superiority.

The *technical aspects* of the army, much like the party seems to function as second home in which the subject can identify himself as enjoying, and being a part of the *apparatus of security* which provides material well-being together with development. Marxism or socialism with Chinese characteristics also becomes an *apparatus of security* in providing material well-being when referred to the only guarantee of development, and the only scientific (read true) solution to achieving these ends.

The modernization discourse seems to conform with what Illich (1971) claims, that the development discourse tries to create new social belonging in the market while breaking up traditional society. The sense of *identity* lies in the liberated economic subjects conforming to the goals of economic development under the new normal.

¹¹¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 92.

¹¹² Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 12.

¹¹³ Also seen in the culture and poverty alleviation sections.

¹¹⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 391.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, 391 – 392.

¹¹⁷ Own translation

5.4 Rule of/by Law (依法治国)

5.4.1 Ontology

The object of study is the law as the highest form of ethics and authority in contemporary Chinese society.¹¹⁸ Rule by Law (依法治国) is focused on creating the lawful citizen, who volunteer to carry out their obligations and uses the law to protect their right's in society.¹¹⁹ Of great importance for the governed object is the further implementation of China's constitution on a personal and national level¹²⁰

5.4.2 Ascetics

The use of the law seems to be concerned with what Trevaskes (2018) mentioned as a tool of development. Law is pictured as an enabler of progress and development, and the necessity to reform national institutions according to law lay in the interest to increase government capacity to increase efficiency.¹²¹ One can read it as the party's need to institutionalize concepts of science and democracy (which are recurring goals of development) to control the people only through the party's guidance. The party is the carrier of rule by law (依法治国), and this concept is what in reality shapes and controls the discourse around which regimes of truth have scientific evidence behind them. Furthermore, the law as an *epistheme* is used with said before goals, efficiency, and the natural connection between the people and the law to create the mentality of rule by law (依法治国).

The data paints a picture of the people as the main proponents to establish law in society with a socialist form of governance,¹²² with the constant idea of law as a continuation of societal norms. The government is shown as the enactor of people's will, which holds a majority in decision making, and this strategy of linking people's power to actual authority can be seen regarding law, morals, and the constitution.¹²³

The implied superiority of socialism with Chinese characteristics is a recurring theme,¹²⁴

¹¹⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 116.

¹¹⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 113.

¹²⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 138 – 140.

¹²¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 92.

¹²² Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 113.

¹²³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 138; 2017, p. 113, 114.

¹²⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 139; 2017, p. 113.

and when it comes to the law the text makes visible the positive outcomes of harmony, unity and progress in implementing in after a certain set of criteria. The values paired with the positive aspects of implementing law are traditional morals, science, and progress.¹²⁵ Progress is seen as the continuation of the opening and reform act of 1978 together with the constitution,¹²⁶ and the problematized issue of our times is how the constitution has failed to be implemented on each level of the population.¹²⁷ It seems the constitution becomes a golden standard of how the aforementioned values and behaviour can be mainstreamed to the entire Chinese population. These rights and obligations are formulated in a behavioural sense of identity which are non-separable from each other and can be used as authority when someone is following the constitution and those who may not be.¹²⁸

One of the less abstract technical implementations in as to how to govern rule by law (依法治国) is the implementation of legal supervision of all state institutions, party, and the people.¹²⁹ The idea lies in how to govern power, and the abuse of power needs to be able to be legally prosecuted, in this case it is necessary to supervise every part of the nation to guarantee that the power entrusted by the people always benefits the people.¹³⁰

The law itself becomes a vessel of expertise and rationality from the evolution of people's morals (*episteme*), which justifies control and supervision framing it as an *apparatus of security*, which can be turned to benefit a chose group of people, or make non-existent one considered different.

5.4.3 Deontology

The law is a powerful instrument of inclusion and exclusion which positions individuals according to certain socialist and traditional moral values.

Law is supposed to arise from the norms in society,¹³¹ but the norms have already been set either by the party or from previous leaders. How the law is supposed to engage the population concerns two paths; the first is that of emotional engagement of the masses to throw

¹²⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 114, 116, 118, 121.

¹²⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 136.

¹²⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 138.

¹²⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 141.

¹²⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 113.

¹³⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 142, 140.

¹³¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 145.

themselves into becoming loyal advocates and conscious protectors of socialist rule of law,¹³² and as constitutional subjects. The other is that of laws made up from norms in society needs supplementation, or rather, law and morals needs to guide each other how to achieve an enlightened education.¹³³ The actual necessary morals to be transferred into practice of law however are barely mentioned and are summed up as mirroring rational moral ideals, humanistic care, and creating a good cultural environment for rule by law (依法治国).¹³⁴ This makes *identity* formation around the law limited to how the law is made visible in society. If law can be seen as a vessel of security, then morals and norms presumed to make up the laws are more likely to be linked to chosen exemplary subject and the opposite made visible in the public (*technical aspect*). This is furthermore clearly a strategy for creating political leverage similar to what Trevaskes (2018) wrote, and with the monopoly of the party in interpretation of the law, it can direct and distort legal procedures for its own political goals.

The opponents to the progressive development of law is concentrated in a small clique of cadres who still insist on governing according to their own rules, often by coercive measures. These officials stand in the way of realizing rule by law (依法治国).¹³⁵ This seems to be a creation of an opposite *identity* which refuse to give power to the party, and thus also the people. The fact that they stand against the law also positions them against law as a tool of development which in turn sees them as un-productive, and as a sterile entity.

If the CPC manage to position rule by law as a scientific theory, which has undergone practice by its implementation of the people's morals, then rule by law will become and immensely powerful institution for control and direction of their population, whether it is for identify formation, prosecution, development projects, or property acquisition.

¹³² Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 149; 2017, p. 113.

¹³³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 114.

¹³⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 115.

¹³⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 114.

5.5 Science and technology (科技)

5.5.1 Ontology

Science and technology are broad concepts, and while much work has been placed in the meaning of science in previous sections, here the focus is less on scientific governance, or Marxist scientific truth, and more on scientific research in technological and innovative development.¹³⁶ It also includes the importance of the environment in sustainable (or green) development,¹³⁷ fostering innovation and talent in science and technology,¹³⁸ preserving resources and change inefficient energy consumption behaviour,¹³⁹ and creating an personal culture around innovation and personal talent. When it comes to the ecological impact of development and its relation to innovation technology, The data sees China as in the process creating an ecological civilization (生态文化) which use the slogan “green rivers and mountains are mountains of gold and silver”¹⁴⁰ (绿水青山就是金山银山), to make the people appreciate the value of nature over money.

5.5.2 Ascetics

China stands at a developmental bottleneck, where the problem lies in an inability to keep up with the changing environment of technological innovation and development.¹⁴¹ According to the data, technology (技术), which is mostly referred to as science and technology (科技), is what nations rely on to be prosperous, what people rely on to live a good life, and how the planet can be protected.¹⁴² Technology is created as an *epistheme*, strategies of governing mentalities around the imagination of progress as overcoming any coming disaster.

In the data, technology becomes the opposite of nature. Technology hold features of efficiency, production, and the only way forward to create economic safety, while nature is a passive entity, which only exists as a goal of technology, or rather, as the next step, or the next need to be satisfied for the consumer of development.

¹³⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 194, 260 – 261.

¹³⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 207, 208 – 209; 2017, p. 260 – 263, p. 368.

¹³⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 120 – 121.

¹³⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 210, 208 – 209, 211; 2017, p. 365.

¹⁴⁰ Own translation

¹⁴¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 193, 256.

¹⁴² Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 257.

Problematization of China's current position is metaphoric with how the Qing officials handled new knowledge in the early 18th century.¹⁴³ Foreign knowledge did enter China but were kept behind shut doors while Western visitors brought back what they found in China for the public to see. Here lies an historical red line up until today where we don't see any interlinkage in production sectors of innovation and transformation,¹⁴⁴ which is one of the major reasons that the move towards a high end technological society has been halted. However, China has the magic weapon (法宝),¹⁴⁵ of their political system, which is argued as perfect for the expansion and distribution of technology. It seems science and technology are governed around nationalistic fervour and fear of falling behind and missing opportunities to develop much like Xi's statement in the introduction. The need to integrate technological advancement in every social sector is quite frankly put as the only way to become the leader on an international stage of development.¹⁴⁶ China apparently already has the technology according to the data, but it is more important to seize the opportunity (虽有智慧, 不如乘势)^{147, 148} and not to repeat old mistakes. Technology in itself has no negative connotations and is seen as the only alternative in a global search for answers in precarious times. We have a constructed *epistheme* of China being in a perfect position by their political system and existing prerequisites to embrace a mentality of belief in technological progress, if such a form of thought can be accepted.

Technologies of the future such as information technology, bio-technology and new energy technology has according to the data led to a technological revolution described as green, and intelligent.¹⁴⁹ Unfortunately the information on how such technologies are to be governed is limited, but in the case of the information technology, we get the some information about how the party should act as a guiding beam towards the many issues that people may not understand and correct them accordingly.¹⁵⁰ The internet is the "common people" (草野) of today,¹⁵¹ which refers to the saying "Those who know the house is leaking sits inside it, but those who wants to

¹⁴³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 125.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 126.

¹⁴⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 120 – 122; 2017, p. 257.

¹⁴⁷ From *Gong Sunchou* (公孙丑), disciple of Confucius.

¹⁴⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 257.

¹⁴⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 119.

¹⁵⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 319.

¹⁵¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 318.

understand the impact of policies must go outside (to meet the *people, caoye, 草野*)”¹⁵² (知屋漏者在宇下, 知政失者在草野). I see this as containing two relevant meanings, the first would be a closer connection with party and people, which can act as a platform for public correction and also discipline, which becomes even stronger following another source that says “the people need to be able to hold new technology in their own hands to truly grasp the initiative of competition and development”.¹⁵³ This would make able the continuous creation of correct values and worldviews disseminated through the whole population which easily controls what is allowed visible, and who gets to speak on which matters (expert knowledge), and which identity people should aspire to see as their own image.

Development discourse see un-used natural resources as wasted and in need of marketization, but in the data, there is still a large address at the issues that have arisen with endless development. The data acknowledges that hard measures need to be taken to reinvigorate ecological systems,¹⁵⁴ the recurring complaints from regular people (老百姓),¹⁵⁵ and the main issues of air, soil, and water pollution¹⁵⁶ needs to be solved to create a beautiful China with green grass, blue skies, and clear water.¹⁵⁷

The developmental path up until now is seen as a necessity to ensure food production, and now it is only natural to make environmental protection the number one issue.¹⁵⁸ Development needs to change from short term destruction to long continuous healthy development.¹⁵⁹ This is because protecting the environment is protecting production capacity, and China needs to create new low carbon development, and circular economic development.¹⁶⁰ This shows an example of what Escobar would say the impressive ability of development discourse creating development itself as the only alternative to its shortcomings. Instead of criticizing development as the cause, positive words are added to extend the reach of the term development.

The environmental concerns are mainly connected with what I would call an subjective

¹⁵² Own translation

¹⁵³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 122.

¹⁵⁴ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 365.

¹⁵⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 369.

¹⁵⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 209; 2017, p. 365.

¹⁵⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 211; 2017, p. 370.

¹⁵⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 368.

¹⁵⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 370 – 371.

¹⁶⁰ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 209.

view of the ecology, that is the main *visibility* lies in what people are faced with in their everyday lives, in this case clear skies, and clear waters, which may have arisen from popular complaints mentioned before.

5.5.3 Deontology

China needs to create an active subject, innovating, practicing and motivating others towards mobilizing scientific and technological spirit.¹⁶¹ Nurturing innovation talent is an emotional quest which needs knowledge, love, interest, and discipline for creating a good research environment.¹⁶² Becoming an expert in science and technology should come with authority as to where funding and resources should be spent in the future.¹⁶³ Technological and innovative culture is linked to expert knowledge and it also closes out any other form of knowledge towards solving the current situation while non-existence is made of ignorance and low cultures. There is apparently an unreleased capacity of millions of people who are yet to realize their innovative capacity. This *technical aspect* is a very inclusive emotional rhetoric which presupposes the *identity* of subjects wanting to achieve expert status. The people described as constituting authority are identified as experts.

The major way the developmental subject is shaped in the science and technology discourse can be seen in the creation of a culture of innovation, and talent (人才). The developmental subject should see technology and innovation as something neutral and beneficial similar to what Escobar shows in his studies. Innovation and green development are also trying to create ethics of a higher purpose by using symbolic messages of a green China being healthy (*technical aspect*) compared to the necessary progress which ensured basic needs up until now. Technology and innovation are also bound to educational knowledge, to the extent that there is a cultural deficit in China as to implement innovation. A recurring idea is that China's people are behind and is in need of a new cultural development, which is the mainstream high culture of modern science, progress, and development.

The green subject of development goes very much back to the voluntary tree planting

¹⁶¹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 265 – 266.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 266.

started in 1984¹⁶⁴,¹⁶⁵ and thanks to this movement, the people's consciousness of loving green has apparently been strengthened. To further create a green subject, it is necessary to strengthen ecological education, public knowledge and promoting consumption patterns which save resources.¹⁶⁶ This knowledge seems to. One of the main recurring deficits is forests and greens (缺林少绿),¹⁶⁷ and there should be increased legislation of environmental protection, and the effect of voluntary tree planting should continuously expand over a larger part of the population.¹⁶⁸ The most notable example is in Saihaiba (塞罕坝), which 55 years ago heeded the party's call, and created a human miracle of green groves from barren deserts.¹⁶⁹ The subject is supposed to identify with the Saihaiba workers love and commitment to make China green again, and the *technical aspect* of individual responsibility to create values of volunteerism. The party has enabled its citizens to exist in a pleasant situation where they now are obliged themselves to deal with the necessary consequences.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, modern governmentality positions subjects as members of a populations which should be optimized in the social and economic sphere. Within the five concepts of analysis, the author has identified problematizations in need of correction according to *visibilities* of what is seen as issues, solutions, and proper behavior; and *identities* that need to be transformed according to presuppositions of what makes up moral authority. Furthermore, *technical aspects* have shown which values and worldviews have been created, and by what means, such as use of vocabularies, and tactics (emotional or rational), have been employed to accomplish rule. It has also been shown what kind of knowledge, or *epistheme*, such as rationality, expertise, strategies, and means of calculation have been used to construct and create collective mentalities. Lastly, it has also identified *apparatuses of security* which create security for the subjects social and economic functions.

Culture is governed by the *epistheme* of socialist values and traditional morals being the

¹⁶⁴ <http://www.asianlii.org/cn/legis/cen/laws/flotproc408/>

¹⁶⁵ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 207.

¹⁶⁶ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 210.

¹⁶⁷ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 126

¹⁶⁸ Xi, 谈治理政, 2014, p. 207.

¹⁶⁹ Xi, 谈治理政, 2017, p. 373.

natural continuation of party governance. This positions the party in an expert position of both socialist and traditional morals since they are both under the current process of scientific practice and implementation. What this means is that the culture's final interpretation lies with the party. The subject becomes someone who enjoys personal freedom in the economic sphere, and trusts in the socialist government to make decisions that ensure harmony. The *identity* problematized is the individualistic culture who has forgotten his socialist heritage, and the correction needs to be done in political engagement of self-governance to tell China's story well. The *technical aspect* creates technologies of progress solely in the party and relates personal *identity* with social conformity in socialist consumption and production. The subject outside culture, or believed holding a low form of culture, is classified as working against the masses.

The alleviation of the poor is only possible with the guidance of the party. This *episteme* puts the poor in a position of being below the poverty level, and thus is a strictly economic means of calculation which created the government strategies behind their need to be saved. The poor subject is one unable to imagine an alternative to being poor. The *technical aspect* creates a neoliberal value of economic freedom, and welfare placed with willingness to work. The correct *identity* comes in the shape of the hard-working party member, opposite to the lazy, un-productive, and backwards poor. Who isn't constituted as poor are the disabled, and since their situation cannot be measured by productivity, they are made invisible, and authority of their welfare is removed from the party's concern, and ends up presumably, in the private sector

The road to modernization in China is socialism with Chinese characteristics, which creates an *episteme* of successive economic growth to inform the mentality of the system's superiority. Governing modernization thus becomes about focusing on economic growth as a measurement of the masses' understanding of successful modernization. Naturally then the modern subject is someone who partakes in the generation of economic growth by moving to the city and *identify* as a new working class. However, this new class is separate from the *technical aspect* of radical formation of social classes and seems to emancipate the subject only within the market.

Governing law is creating an *episteme* about the necessity for further economic development which arrived with modernization. The law is also built on the rationality that it originates from and serves the people. If the law can achieve the status of being a scientific result of practice with the people, then its power in society will also constitute a hegemonic truth. How

the subject is created within law was hard to establish, but we can assume that those who prefer being excluded from law are considered enemies to the party, and thus also economic development.

Science and technologies needs to be governed as an *epistheme* in itself, which means that it needs to be seen as the creation of a strategy that will solve both issues of natural disasters and economical stagnation. The question then becomes more of governing these two objects. Nature is seen as a sterile object which becomes a problem only when the notion of progress is lead to a halt. The economy is the real danger of this stagnation, seeing as the ecology works as an insurer of prosperity. The subject is thus formed by the truths of the current political system which has ensured continuous growth to be made possible. *Identity* is created with the power and status technology brings to those embracing it, with the *technical aspect* of it leading to international status as well as domestic.

The three major regimes of truth that imposes power of subordination and production in the discourse seems to; be appealing to the masses, science as an objective state of truth, and socialist and traditional values under the party, as a neutral interpretation of ethics. We can see rule by law as a *regime of truth* in ongoing negotiation over the values and morals in Chinese culture, and how the problematization implies there is an interest in this case to create law as a tool of control defined as an objective state of truth. The Chinese governmentality seems to create a political subject under Chinese Marxism who see his or her belief in the system based on the scientific practice defined by mistakes and ultimately the creation of an objective rule of government. The optimization of in the social sphere occurs in the strong identity formation around Chinese traditional culture and values, and the reproduction of practices. The economic optimization sees the engagement in market relations as a total freedom of production and consumption, and furthermore social welfare is related to the possibility to work.

However, we still need to address the constructed objects from the perspective of post-development critique, or rather the object and the belief in the global neoliberal project which characterizes neoliberal capitalism as the current universal view of modernity.

The discourse has shown that there exists a *monoculture of knowledge* in the Chinese development discourse which sees modern science as the only quality for truth. Furthermore, I argue that the party embody a high culture of what it means to be Chinese within construction and selection of traditional morals and socialist values of identity. Non-existence is seen in those

who strain too far from the principle of social harmony and pursue a far to individualistic agenda. A *monoculture of linear time* is clearly visible in the way the Chinese development discourse sees technological innovation, development, and progress as forward in their pursuit of becoming one of the new core countries of the world, while at the same time looking at political turmoil in the past as a backwards step which hindered development. Furthermore, poor subjects are seen as backwards or underdeveloped, and an obstacle to achieving the goal of a modern society. *Monoculture of classification* exists around the concept of social harmony, the masses, and rule of law to naturalise hierarchies of those not considered as working for the goal of telling China's story well, or not wanting to move to centers of capital. This is further incorporated into the *monoculture of criteria of capitalist productivity and efficiency*, which also exists within the discourse. This monoculture has been found in the produced non-existence in the non-productivity of the disabled population and the assumed lazy poor receiving poverty alleviation from the party. The discourse sees the integration of the poor in the market, and the market in general as a beacon of efficiency and productivity. Lastly, the *monoculture of the universal and global* has been shown to exist in the rejection, or rather hegemonic discourse of modern problems being solvable by modern solutions. Alternative visions of modernizations have been non-existent since local situations have generally been named un-productive, or degenerate.

The application of Santos' model to the five concepts of development chosen from the critique of Escobar has helped show how development discourse in China, deconstructed from a perspective of governmentality, creates polarizing descriptions of developed and backward, science and ignorance, productivity and laziness. I believe, that with the continuous emergence of China in the realm of international development, the development discourse deconstructed here will become more relevant outside the borders of China for the rest of the world as Chinese investment abroad, through projects such as the Belt and Road initiative and the creation of special economic zones, increases.

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*I used a PDF of the second volume in NVivo and it did not come with page numbers. The set page numbers are automatically generated from a PDF Viewer. Thus, page 1 starts from the very first page of the document.

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