

FLOURISHING BORDERS, PROSPEROUS NATIONALITIES?
A HUMAN SECURITY APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING THE UNDERLYING
CAUSES OF ETHNIC CONFLICT IN CHINA

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By

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ABSTRACT

Why is ethnic conflict prevalent among some minorities in China but not others? Recent riots in Western China demonstrate the difficulties China faces integrating its ethnic minorities. China's strategy for assimilating minorities relies on improving living standards through economic development, but some, such as the Brookings Institution's Cheng Li, advocate for increased minority rights in China. Upon closer inspection, both strategies fail to fully address the causes of ethnic unrest in China. China's economic policies have improved the living standards of its citizens, yet some minorities are restive. China suppresses the political rights of its citizens, yet some minorities are peaceful. Instead, China's policy of suppressing the ethnic identity of some groups while promoting others may provide a more complete explanation. This project hypothesizes that threats to a group's ethnic identity are the most likely cause of minority unrest in China.

This study utilizes the most recent scholarship on Human Security to conduct an analysis of three ethnic minority groups in China. The dual intent is to both determine the validity of the human security approach to security studies, as well as, analyzing the underlying cause of ethnic unrest in China. The study depends on a wide selection of

data from official Chinese statistical sources, academic databases, International Governmental Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, and media sources.

This study finds that Human Security as a tool for scholarship is still an underdeveloped concept and requires more research before being a useful approach for academic study. Additionally, the results of the case studies provide an unclear picture of the true reasons behind the disparate levels of ethnic unrest in China. Ethnic identity does seem to play a large role in the likelihood for unrest from some groups, but does not adequately explain dissatisfaction among groups that enjoy more tolerance from the Chinese Communist Party.

The research and writing of this thesis is dedicated to those individuals and organizations that supported my studies at Georgetown University.

Many thanks,
JAMES W. BAKER

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In late June of 2009, two ethnic Uyghur workers were killed in a brawl with Han Chinese at a toy factory in the small city of Shaoguan in Guangdong province after rumors were anonymously posted on an Internet site claiming that Uyghur men had raped two Han women. Although this event initially received scant media attention, its true impact was felt over a week later almost 2000 miles away in Urumqi, the capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), when a demonstration by Uyghur students protesting the Chinese government's handling of the Shaoguan investigation erupted into a violent backlash against the city's Han residents.¹ In the days that followed, government security forces were deployed throughout Xinjiang to contain the unrest that threatened to spread throughout the region. The 2009 Xinjiang riots, that left almost 200 dead and over 1000 injured by official count, and the riots in Tibet the previous year, has made it all too clear that although widely perceived as a strong authoritarian state, China is not immune to ethnic conflict.

China's Minority Problem

Tibetans and, more recently, Uyghurs have received a great deal of international attention in the past few years, but it is safe to state that most outside observers are probably not as familiar with China's fifty-three other ethnic groups. Ethnic unrest in China is not limited to Tibetans and Uyghurs, but these groups do represent the largest and most violent examples. Other minorities, such as the Hui and the Mongols, have participated in protests and staged demonstrations that have occasionally devolved into

violent riots, but nowhere near the scale of their countrymen in Tibet and Xinjiang. Yet despite the obvious signs of ethnic unrest among some of China's minorities, many groups have remained peaceful and have had more success integrating into the Chinese system, most notably China's largest minority, the Zhuang.

Such disparity in minority reactions to China's policies begs the question: why is ethnic conflict prevalent among some minorities in China but not others? China's current strategy for assimilating minorities relies on improving living standards through economic development as demonstrated by two key Chinese Communist Party (CCP) development campaigns: the Great Western Development campaign of 1999 and the Flourishing Borders, Prosperous Nationalities campaign of 2000.² Some outside observers argue against this approach and instead advocate for increased minority rights in China. According to one such scholar, Cheng Li of the Brookings Institution, "To have a harmonious society, in my view, China should have a civil rights movement..."³ Yet, upon closer inspection, both strategies fail to explain the causes of ethnic unrest in China.

China's economic policies have undoubtedly improved the living standards of its citizens, yet some minorities are restive. China suppresses the political rights of all its citizens, yet some minorities are peaceful. For example, the Zhuang of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region (GZAR) and the Hui of the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (NHAR) both suffer various levels of political and economic inequality, but the overall material well-being of these groups, as well as the rest of China, has improved along with China's historic economic rise in the past thirty years. Yet ethnic conflict in

these regions has neither threatened CCP legitimacy nor has it been prevalent. To the CCP, success in these minority areas in particular suggest that its emphasis on economic development as a means to integrate minority populations is also appropriate for the Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

Instead of focusing on the traditional debate over economic versus political rights, China's policy of suppressing the ethnic identity of some groups while promoting or accommodating others may provide a more complete explanation. For example, in Xinjiang, severe restrictions on the practice of religion, strict control of school curricula, and efforts to limit the instruction and use of the Uyghur language have all been cited as evidence of the CCP assault on the Uyghur identity. In contrast, the CCP actively promotes Zhuang cultural heritage and imposes less limits on the practice of religion among the Hui, even though it still continues to limit the political freedoms of these two groups. This project will seek to determine whether or not threats to a group's ethnic identity are the most likely cause of minority unrest in China.

What is Human Security?

Since this paper relies on a "human security" approach to explain the underlying causes of ethnic violence in China, a brief explanation of the framework is required. As incidents of sub-state violence began to gain more scholarly attention after the end of the Cold War, a body of literature emerged that focused on examining the security of individuals and groups, rather than nation-states. Advocates for this approach believe that the transnational and non-state nature of modern security threats requires a concept that targets individuals and groups. One of the first serious attempts

to define human security was offered in the United Nations' (UN) 1994 Human Development Report that argued for nation-states to focus on protecting ordinary citizens from “the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression, and environmental hazards.⁴” The UN Commission on Human Security (CHS), an independent commission organized to further explore the concept of Human Security, defines the concept in the following manner:

to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment. Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms – freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people’s strengths and aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.⁵

Table 1 represents an attempt by the UN Commission on Human Security (CHS) to organize the broad concept into specific threat areas.

Table 1: Possible Types of Human Security Threats⁶

Type of Security	Examples of Main Threats
Economic Security	Persistent poverty, unemployment
Food Security	Hunger, famine
Health Security	Deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic health care
Environmental Security	Environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution
Personal Security	Physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence, child labor
Community Security	Inter-ethnic, religious and other identity based tensions
Political Security	Political repression, human rights abuses

Drawing on the UNDP 1994 report’s classification of human security, the CHS emphasized the significance of the concept to traditional notions of security:

*Human security and state security are mutually reinforcing and dependent on each other. Without human security, state security cannot be attained and vice versa.*⁷

This particular framework has gained little attention outside of UN literature but still offers a unique alternative to the perceived gap in current security studies approaches to intrastate conflict.

In the following sections, the human security framework will provide the analytical foundation for a series of selected case studies. First, the specific methodology and data sources used will be fully explained and the associated caveats will be identified. Before proceeding to the case studies, an overview of China's minority policies since 1949 will be presented in order to provide the reader with the proper background. This overview will be followed by a more specific discussion of the CCP's historical relationship with each of the case study ethnic groups. The next section will present each case study individually, followed by an analysis of the results and identification of possible endogenous causes of the analysis. The final sections of the paper will offer an assessment of the human security approach and the implications of the study for future unrest in China.

Chapter 2: Methodology and Data Sources

This chapter provides a discussion of the methods used to analyze the selected case studies and a brief explanation of the limits of that methodology. Additionally, this section identifies the data sources that provide the means for case study comparison. While the research did find a multitude of valuable resources that measure various aspects of human security, few of those sources provide adequate insight into sub-national indicators and, ultimately, had to be discounted. The overall impact of the limits on data resulted in an incomplete application of the methodology and hindered the final analysis of the cause of ethnic conflict in China.

Methodology

The primary method that was used to determine the validity of the hypothesis was a comparative case study of three ethnic minorities in China: the Zhuang, the Hui, and the Uyghurs. These groups were selected for the size of their populations, disparate levels of ethnic unrest, connections with transnational populations, and because each group has been granted a province-level autonomous region by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). All three groups have experienced various levels of economic inequality and political repression, but with much different incidence of ethnic unrest. What seems to separate the groups is the willingness of the CCP to allow expression of ethnic identity, which the UN identifies as the foundation of community security in its 1994 Human Development Report. The time period for this study is 2000 to the present. The

start point for this period was chosen because it coincides with a large CCP campaign to promote minority rights and push economic development into minority regions.

Each case study was evaluated in the seven categories of human security as outlined by the United Nations Committee on Human Security: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security.⁸ Across that spectrum, the needs of groups were assessed at the provincial level to determine the level of vulnerability in each category. Initially, these categories all represent potential independent variables, but the research revealed little or no difference between minorities in some areas (for example economic security), thus rendering those categories de facto control variables. Additionally, due to the unavailability of adequate sub-national data, some indicators could not be accurately assessed and ultimately were discounted (food and environment security). The remaining variables that demonstrated disparity across the examined minority groups were treated as independent. Finally, the dependent variable was recorded instances of ethnic unrest that include riots, protests, reported acts of terrorism, and ethnically related violence. In the instances when data for human security indicators was unreliable or incomplete, a qualitative assessment was made based on available information. Following the collection of data, all case studies were compared by human security indicator and then assigned a rank order (0=comparable, 1=most secure, 2=less secure, 3=least secure). The final goal was to establish a correlation between human security indicators and total number of riots, demonstrations, and other ethnic conflict

events. If the central argument of this paper proves valid, ethnic groups that have less community security should have a higher incidence of ethnic unrest.

Data Sources

The research for this paper suffered a number of difficulties with data selection, reliability, and availability. Due to the opacity of Chinese statistics, the lack of databases specific to the UN's analytical framework, and the unavailability of information broken down by minority group in China, a mixture of data sources was used to determine the level of human security for each category. When possible, quantitative data was used to provide a clearer understanding of the case studies' comparative levels of security. When quantitative data was unavailable or deemed unreliable, a qualitative assessment was made using a mixture of sources to provide a snapshot of the level of relative security at the national level, but those indicators ultimately were not included in the final analysis of the causes of ethnic conflict. Data sources and corresponding variables are presented below in Table 2:

Table 2 – Data Sources

Variable	Data Source(s)
Economic Security	PRC Statistical Yearbooks – National and by Province
Food Security	PRC Statistical Yearbooks – National and by Province
Health Security	PRC Statistical Yearbooks – National and by Province
Environment Security	PRC Statistical Yearbooks, Millennium Development Goal Program,
Personal Security	UN Office on Drugs and Crime, Human Rights Watch
Community Security	University of Maryland – Minorities at Risk Database
Political Security	University of Maryland – Minorities at Risk Database, Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) Political Prisoner Database
Ethnic Unrest	University of Maryland – Minorities at Risk Database, LexisNexis, International Crisis Group Reports

Reliability

As previously noted, finding reliable data was a challenge for this particular project. First and foremost, research for this paper was severely constrained by an unavoidable over reliance on official People’s Republic of China (PRC) statistical databases. Selection of data tended to favor official PRC sources because alternate international sources of this information rarely provide the provincial data necessary to perform an adequate comparison of the three case studies whereas the PRC provides an enormous amount of statistics at province level and below. Also, Chinese statistics are normally not considered reliable sources of data because the nature of China’s political system encourages over reporting of positive information and under reporting of negative information.⁹ As such, research for economic, and health security yielded a great deal of Chinese statistical data indicating general improvement in all areas, but

little to no information from PRC official sources could be found to measure the more sensitive areas of community and political security. Using international sources of data did provide some verification of the China's reported statistics, but mostly only at the national level. Second, in the examined areas where PRC data was not available, research relied on international sources that also have reliability limitations. For instance, politically sensitive human security indicators, such as community and political security, were examined using data from human rights and conflict-prevention non-governmental organizations that are in the business of identifying political and civil rights abuses. To mitigate bias in these areas and provide some semblance of verification of data from these sources, the choice was made to use reports from Chinese and international media outlets. Additionally, reliance on qualitative assessments for particular variables, though not ideal, provided an alternate means of evaluating the data and conducting the research, but due to the lack of sub-national data in some areas, these variables were not included in the final analysis of case studies. These limitations, in particular, are generally endemic to conducting research using a human security framework and will present future researchers with difficulties.

Chapter 3: Minority Policy in China

The riots in Tibet and Xinjiang have drawn the world's attention to China's difficulties in managing and integrating its minority populations in its continuing quest to realize the vision of a "harmonious society" as outlined by President Hu Jintao and ratified by the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2007.¹⁰

While the political and economic beliefs of China today bear little resemblance to the policies of Mao Zedong, its minority policies have changed little and are still based on concepts developed by Joseph Stalin. The recent examples of ethnic unrest in China suggest that the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) management of minority affairs, especially in Western China, is increasingly at odds with its primary political goals of economic development and domestic stability and, in light of its Stalinist approach, requires further research. By focusing on the historical development of China's minority policies, the past and future impact of those policies on China's political and economic goals, and the possible policy alternatives that the CCP may choose to address ethnic tensions while pursuing its goal of a "harmonious society," it may be possible to gain insight into the internal contradictions that could fuel future instability in this rising power.

Overview (1949-present)

While the size of China's population is often discussed by outside observers of the nation, less is understood about the ethnic diversity contained within the nation of 1.3 billion. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) officially recognizes 56 ethnicities,

which includes the largest group, the Han Chinese. When compared to the sheer amount of Han Chinese (approximately 1.2 billion), ethnic minorities represent a fairly small percentage of the overall population. Based on the last Chinese census in 2000, the remaining 55 ethnic groups comprise roughly 8-9% of the total Chinese population, the 18 largest of which represent populations of 1 to 16 million people.¹¹ These groups can be found all over China, but most of them are settled along China's international borders and in territory with low population density. As a result, there are areas in China, particularly in the Ethnic Autonomous Regions, where the local minorities sometimes vastly outnumber Han Chinese (See Table 3).

Table 3 – China's Five Provincial-Level Ethnic Autonomous Regions

NAME	CAPITAL	AREA (1000 sq km)	Total Provincial Population (millions)	Total Population of Ethnic Minority in Province (millions)	Ethnic Minority Percentage of Total Provincial Population (%)
Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region	Hohhot	1,183	23.9	5.2	21.6
Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region	Urumqi	1,650	20.1	12.1	60.4
Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region	Nanning	236	49.25	19.0	38.54
Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region	Yinchuan	66.4	5.96	2.1	35.98
Tibet Autonomous Region	Lhasa	1,228	2.75	2.6	93.48

Sources: Wang and Chen, *Minzu qiuyu zizhuzhidu de fazhan*, p. 227; *China Statistical Yearbook 2006*, Beijing: China Statistical Press, 2006, p. 45.

For the CCP, part of the difficulty in dealing with its minority populations lies not with the size of the ethnic groups, but rather where they are concentrated. When considering China's five Ethnic Autonomous Regions, two characteristics that cause concern to the CCP are immediately apparent. First, three of these regions (Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia) are the largest provincial-level territories in China. When combined with the smaller autonomous regions, these five territories comprise roughly 45% of China's total landmass. As Table 4 demonstrates, minority populations in these regions represent either a significant portion of the total population (as in Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, and Guangxi), or an outright majority of the total population. Second, four of these regions combine to make up a large portion of China's international borders (See Map 1). In total, China's ethnic autonomous regions border 12 other nations, all of which have ethnic counterparts to China's largest ethnic minorities and some of which are dealing with their own domestic instability and ethnic conflict.¹²

Map 1 – China’s Five Provincial-Level Ethnic Autonomous Regions



- 1 – Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) 2 – Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region (IMAR)
3 – Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) 4 – Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (NHAR)
5 – Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region (GZAR)

The foundation of the CCP’s strategy for dealing with its minority populations is the principle of Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities (RAEM). This principle, based on the minority policies of Joseph Stalin, legacy policies of imperial China, and the CCP’s strategies for defeating the Nationalists prior to 1949, has influenced and guided China’s minority policies for much of the PRC’s history.

Following the defeat of Chiang Kai-Shek’s Nationalists in 1949, the leadership of the CCP immediately focused on establishing its legitimacy as the sole authority in the newly formed PRC by solidifying territorial borders. Initially, the most contested

borders were in western territories, such as Xinjiang, that were geographically far from the CCP's power base in Yan'an, strategically important due to both vast borders and potential natural resources, and demographically dominated by ethnic minorities.¹³ With the CCP still relatively weak and preoccupied with laying down the political foundation of the PRC, the leadership relied on RAEM to promote peaceful co-existence with ethnic minorities by offering a measure of political and cultural autonomy. Between 1949 and 1965, the CCP established the five provincial level ethnic autonomous regions, as well as, a large number of autonomous prefectures and counties.¹⁴

After the PRC had made progress in consolidating power and the Great Leap Forward had begun, Mao Zedong abandoned the RAEM approach in favor of forced integration. Minority leaders who advocated for ethnic autonomy were quickly accused of being "anti-rightists" and persecuted. Brutal policies during this period resulted in a number of incidents of ethnic unrest that served only to strengthen the resolve of the CCP. The terror of the Great Leap was soon replaced by that of the Cultural Revolution during which ethnic minorities were brutally repressed as Mao's Red Guards targeted all expression of cultural and ethnic identity as counter-revolutionary.¹⁵

With the death of Mao and the subsequent elevation of Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970's, the PRC returned to a more moderate strategy of integrating ethnic minorities. Formal recognition of minority rights was ratified in the PRC's 1982 Constitution and the principle of RAEM was codified in the 1984 Regional Autonomy Law (REAL). These new provisions granted a broad set of legal mechanisms to China's ethnic minorities that were intended to protect them from religious and cultural

persecution.¹⁶ This approach to ethnic integration soon presented the CCP with problems as ethnic minorities began to use these new protections to advocate for more autonomy. The 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests and subsequent military crackdown signaled the end of the CCP's political strategy for assimilation and a new policy was adopted that severely limited ethnic minorities' political rights while focusing on integration through economic development. This remains China's minority policy to the present day.

The Zhuang

Although the PRC's minority policies have resulted in a number of high-profile incidents of ethnic unrest, the Zhuang of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region have largely accepted the rule of the CCP. This apparent success is at least partially related to how the Zhuang came to be. Prior to 1949, the Zhuang minority officially did not exist. It was not formally recognized by either the Nationalists or the CCP during the Chinese Civil War and, more significantly, the people of GZAR, did not refer to them as Zhuang. In fact, the largest ethnic group in the PRC was created by the CCP in the early 1950's as a means of facilitating interaction with the diverse people of Guangxi.¹⁷

As the PRC began to promote the RAEM principle in an effort to consolidate its control over the important frontier regions of China, it found itself with an unusual dilemma. The offer of autonomy to ethnic groups resulted in growing demands for recognition from the diverse minorities and small tribes of Guangxi. Rather than deal with these groups on a one-by-one basis, the CCP instead combined the diverse groups under one ethnic classification: the Zhuang. During this period before Mao opted to

forcibly integrate minorities and while other ethnic groups were resisting CCP rule, the newly created Zhuang people offered some resistance to the perceived arbitrary ethnic classification, but to a much lesser extent than other groups.

In the radical period that followed, the Zhuang again proved to be less of a threat to CCP rule than others. The anti-rightist campaigns and the policies of the Great Leap Forward resulted in open rebellion in Tibet and massive riots in Xinjiang. In Guangxi, villages that were collectivized as part of the Great Leap, soon fell to fighting against other villages in competition for dwindling resources.¹⁸ One scholar has suggested that during this period, the CCP stopped its policy of promoting Zhuang culture as part of its overall strategy of integrating minorities and, as a result, the newly formed Zhuang reverted back to clan and tribal identities and inter-ethnic conflict followed.¹⁹

Following the reversion to more moderate minority policies under Deng Xiaoping, the Zhuang identity, with renewed encouragement from the CCP, began to solidify. The legal efforts of the CCP to promote more minority rights in the 1980's resulted in an increase in activism among the Zhuang. Not long after the 1989 Tiananmen Crisis, the Zhuang Studies Association, formed by Zhuang intellectuals, began to advocate for bilingual education, increased autonomy, and affirmative action programs. Yet, despite the general political crackdown after Tiananmen, major incidents of ethnic unrest among the Zhuang did not materialize. Katherine Kaup, one of the only western scholars to study this group, observed:

The CCP officially recognized the Zhuang in an effort to integrate the diverse peoples of Guangxi and to improve their economic and political opportunities. Over the past fifty years, the policy has simultaneously increased Zhuang integration into a

unified nation-state while leading party-trained Zhuang elite to make greater demands for preferential treatment for the Zhuang. While minority policy clearly remains problematic in China's northwest, overall it has been a success in Guangxi.²⁰

By end of the 1990's, the CCP could lay claim to success in at least one aspect of its minority policy: creating the Zhuang.

The Hui

In contrast to the Zhuang, the Hui Muslim minority has a long history in China. A common misperception is that the Hui are simply Han Chinese that have converted to Islam. While converts do make up a small portion of the minority, the Hui have a much more diverse background. With roots that can be traced to Central Asian nomads, Mongol invaders, and Persian travelers along the Silk Road, the heritage of the Hui is one deeply rooted in Chinese history. Another unique facet to this minority is the dispersion of its population across China. From Beijing to Xinjiang and down to Yunnan and Hainan in the far south, the ancient routes of the Silk Road that cut through China left sizable populations of Hui in virtually every corner of China.

As a minority with a strong religious identification, the Hui have experienced more repression from the CCP than other groups, particularly the Zhuang. In 1958 the Hui were granted an autonomous region of their own, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (NHAR), but it was not long after the end of the Chinese Civil War before the fiercely atheist CCP began to target religion. The anti-rightist campaigns and the Great Leap Forward both targeted not only religion, but also commerce, which has traditionally been a Hui specialty. The vehicle for repression during this period was the Religious

System Reform of 1958. Through this reform, land and businesses that belonged to Hui Muslim communities were confiscated by the CCP and religious practice was severely restricted.²¹ Unfortunately, the abuses of this period were superseded in scope and brutality during the Cultural Revolution the followed.

In the late 1960's, Red Guards intent on closing mosques and burning Korans forcibly entered the small town of Shadian in southern Yunnan province, killed a small number of the residents, and eventually occupied the town mosque. In addition to the brutality displayed by the Red Guards, they also sought to humiliate the Hui by eating pork in the mosque and fouling the well that Muslims used to bathe themselves before prayer. A local Muslim responded by forming a militia and entering a standoff with the Red Guards as he tried to negotiate them out of the mosque. By 1975, the CCP had had enough and dispatched units from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to end the standoff. The outcome was the massacre of over 900 Hui and the razing of Shadian.²²

The death of Mao and the end of the Cultural Revolution signaled a dramatic reversal of the Hui minority's fortunes. During the trial of the Gang of Four, all those who resisted the PLA in the Shadian Incident were exonerated. The reform policies of Deng Xiaoping and the general moderation of minority policy that followed resulted in the reconstruction of mosques destroyed during the Cultural Revolution and an easing of restrictions on the practice of religion.²³

After Tiananmen and the Color Revolutions in the former Soviet Union, it was expected that the CCP would again target religious minorities in an effort to prevent unrest and maintain control. In fact, the CCP did increase control of religious groups

throughout China by supervising the training, and in some cases, the selection of religious readers, as well as, mandating registration of religious groups.²⁴ Yet, during this period, with increasing unrest in Xinjiang and the emerging perception of threat from the Falun Gong, Hui Muslims enjoyed fairly relaxed oversight of their religious activities. Surprisingly, the most dramatic incident of violence for the Hui in the 1990's was actually intra-ethnic when PRC security forces were dispatched to suppress conflict among rival Hui groups. Finally, when discussing the Hui minority, it is important to note that the group has not demonstrated any inclination towards separatism, it does not have a unique ethnic language, and it has co-existed, more or less peacefully, with Han Chinese for centuries.

The Uyghurs

Similarities between the Uyghurs and the Hui are abundant, but the respective histories of both groups are distinct in very significant ways. Like the Hui, the Uyghurs are predominately Muslim, have a long history with China that stretches back 15-20 centuries in the past, and share the heritage of the Silk Road. Beyond these parallels, the Uyghurs have had a vastly more adversarial relationship with the various iterations of Chinese rulers. The first and perhaps most important characteristic about Uyghurs is that they are the most ethnically dissimilar minority in China. The minority is classified as a Turkic ethnic group with roots in Central Asia and debate over that point is still a sensitive subject within China. Next, the Uyghurs long history with China involves back-and-forth conquest on the very geographical edge of what is now known as China. In fact, in the 8th and 9th centuries, the Uyghur Khaganate stretched from Central Asia to

Manchuria. Finally, the Uyghurs possess and regularly use a separate indigenous language with a distinct written system that is linguistically very different than Mandarin Chinese. This is significant because most minorities in China have dialects and separate languages that have similar linguistic roots to Mandarin, thus making it much easier to learn.

In 1949 when the CCP achieved victory over the Nationalists and claimed the modern mandate of heaven, the northern part of modern-day Xinjiang was not a part of China. Uyghurs in the early part of the 20th century waged a fairly constant resistance against first the Qing Empire and then the Nationalists, eventually gaining independence in 1944 with the backing of the Soviet Union. The East Turkestan Republic (ETR) was short-lived and eventually joined the PRC following a plane crash that killed most of the leadership of the ETR.²⁵ Like the other minority groups previously discussed, the CCP used the principle of RAEM to consolidate its control over Xinjiang. Although Uyghurs generally preferred separation and independence, the autonomy promised by Mao was considered acceptable as an alternative to the openly discriminatory policies of the Qing dynasty and later the Nationalists. Various cases of revolts were reported and promptly put down by the PLA, such as the Hotan Uprising of 1954, yet most Uyghurs were satisfied and this period was relatively peaceful.²⁶

As discussed earlier, the minority policies of the China took a dramatic turn towards repression during the anti-Rightist Campaigns and the Great Leap Forward and continued until the conclusion of the Cultural Revolution. During this 20-year span of time, the religion, language, and culture of most minorities became targets of

persecution, but the because of the dissimilarity of the Uyghurs, the perception that this group preferred independence, and its location in a strategically important area of modern China, the hammer of Chinese policies fell especially hard. In 1962, when faced with starvation under the collectivization policies of the Great Leap Forward, almost 60,000 Uyghurs and ethnic Kazakhs fled Xinjiang into the Soviet Union. Following this exodus, a pro-independence demonstration occurred in Yining, once the capital of the ETR and very close to the Sino-Soviet border. These demonstrations turned violent and resulted in violent reprisals by the PLA and the sealing of the border. Later, the East Turkistan People's Revolutionary Party became active, with some support from the Soviet Union, and was promptly crushed by the CCP.²⁷ It is important to note that these events also occurred during a period that saw worsening Sino-Soviet relations and the testing of China's first atomic weapon at Lop Nor, which is located in Xinjiang. Understanding of these events does illuminate the importance that Mao and the CCP leadership placed on keeping a firm hand in Xinjiang.

Later, once the Cultural Revolution had ended and Deng Xiaoping gained control the PRC, minority policies in China reverted back to the more moderate policies that were in effect in the decade following the end of the Chinese Civil War and the situation in Xinjiang did improve noticeably. Yet, unlike the two previously discussed ethnic groups, Uyghurs remained resistant to the PRC. The Iranian Revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan "awakened" the political aspirations of many Muslims throughout the world and the Uyghurs were not immune to the call. A series of student demonstrations occurred in Xinjiang throughout the 1980's that protested the growing

amount of Han migrants to Xinjiang and the publication of a book on Chinese sexual customs that were deemed offensive to Uyghurs.²⁸ Additionally, the PRC put down various underground separatist organizations and a series of Han-Uyghur ethnic clashes that periodically flared up in western Xinjiang.²⁹

Post-Tiananmen minority policies in China became more heavy-handed as CCP officials, concerned not only with the potential for internal unrest but also the implications of newly independent Muslim nations in Central Asia, targeted the culture and ethnic identity of Uyghurs while striving to improve general levels of development in the region. The CCP initiated massive infrastructure projects, such as the Tarim Basin highway and new rail lines, as well as continuing to encourage Han Chinese to migrate to Xinjiang. As a result, ethnic tension in the region increased to a level not seen since the Nationalists attempts at suppression prior to 1949. In addition to an increase of demonstrations in general protest of PRC policies, the 1990's saw the emergence of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a terrorist organization that has claimed responsibility for a number of bombings and criminal activity.^{30 31} As witnessed by a string of low-level bombings prior to the Beijing Olympics in 2008 and the dramatic riots of 2009, Uyghur resistance to China's minority policies continues and the PRC has shown no indication of altering its policies. In fact, the most recent PRC pronouncements on Xinjiang have focused on alleviation of poverty and continued investment in the region in an effort to promote "harmonious development."³²

Chapter 4: Human Security Analysis of Minority Groups in China

The three ethnic groups discussed above represent three very different reactions to Chinese minority policies that have been influenced by distinctive historical legacies, different senses of ethnic identity, and what seems, at least anecdotally, to be a conscious choice by the PRC to use separate strategies and levels of policy enforcement. For the Zhuang, the challenge has been in coming to terms with an ethnic identity that did not really exist prior to 1949. Since gaining regional autonomy in 1958, the Zhuang have suffered more from internal squabbles than from CCP minority policies. The advent of Zhuang activism in the 1980's and 90's was, if not welcomed by the CCP, at least tolerated to a much greater degree than other groups. The Hui peoples' long history of living among the Han and weathering various levels of repression from the CCP since 1949 offers another view of minority experience in China. This group, although sometimes resistant to Chinese policies, has had a much smoother integration into the PRC than the more widely recognized ethnicities in China. In particular, this group provides this study with an interesting counterpoint to the notion that the CCP actively represses all religion. The Muslim Hui seem to have been granted much more leniency in the practice of its religion than others. Finally, the Uyghurs represent the far end of the scale of repression. Like Tibetans, the Uyghurs have been more active in pursuing autonomy and limited freedoms from the CCP and have also experienced the most persecution. The Uyghurs, in particular, point out the difficulty in this study of

determining whether ethnic groups that resist more meet more repression or if persecution of minorities spurs more resistance.

Human Security Framework

A brief discussion of the specific indicators that comprise the basis of this paper is necessary before beginning an in-depth investigation of the three case studies. The framework utilized in this paper is based on research and policy formulation conducted by the Human Security Unit (HSU) of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The HSU recently published a guide titled *Human Security in Theory and Practice* (2009) that attempts to operationalize the concept of Human Security. While the HSU's guidelines are intended more for practitioners than scholars, some useful insights can be gleaned from the publication. Table 4 below shows each component of the framework, the guidance from the HSU, and the indicators used by this study. Additionally, Table 4 shows the human security indicators that were discounted due to lack of sub-national data and/or inconclusive data. Obviously, the available data either does not fit neatly with what the HSU recommends or it is not available at all at the autonomous regional level. Where possible, roughly equivalent statistics were used.

Table 4 – Human Security Indicators

Human Security Components	HSU Indicators	Indicators Utilized in this Study (2000-2008)
Economic Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assured access to basic income - Public and private sector employment, wage employment, self-employment - Government financed social safety nets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Per Capita Annual Urban Disposable Income – PRC Data - Per Capita Annual Rural Net Income – PRC Data - Unemployment Rates – PRC Data
Food Security - Not Used -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entitlement to food, by growing it themselves, having the ability to purchase it or through a public food distribution system 	<p>No Sub-national Data Found</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Global Hunger Index - Millennium Development Goals Indicators - LexisNexis Search
Health Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to basic health care and health services - Interconnected surveillance systems to identify disease outbreaks at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of Hospital Beds – PRC Data - Medical Technical Personnel per 10000 Population – PRC Data - Millennium Development Goals Indicators
Environment Security - Not Used -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainable practices that take into account natural resource and environmental degradation (deforestation, desertification) - Early warning and response mechanisms for natural hazards and/or man-made disasters at all levels 	<p>Data Inconclusive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of Pollution Monitoring Agencies – PRC Data - Investment in Pollution Treatment – PRC Data - Number of Pollution Treatment Projects – PRC Data - Environmental Performance Index - LexisNexis Search
Personal Security - Not Used -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rule of law - Explicit and enforced protection of human rights and civil liberties 	<p>No Sub-National Data Found</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UN Office on Drugs and Crime - Human Rights Watch
Community Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explicit and enforced protection of ethnic groups and community identity - Protection from discrimination against ethnic/indigenous/refugee groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minorities at Risk Database
Political Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protection of human rights - Protection from political or state repression, torture, ill treatment, unlawful detention and imprisonment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minorities at Risk Database - CECC Political Prisoner Database

Economic Security

The first indicator examined in the sub-category of economic security is the general change in purchasing power from 2000-2008. Due to the specific reporting methods of the PRC, the data used to determine economic security in these regions depends upon data for both urban and rural populations. Each region's data is listed in Table 5 below with the national data as a contrast and the general percentage of growth in each indicator. Generally, ethnic minorities represent a larger share of the rural population in China's autonomous regions, but this is not a constant. For example, the Hui are well represented in the urban areas and the Uyghurs tend to have a higher percentage of the population in some of XUAR's southern urban areas.³³ For the purposes of this study, it was determined that using both urban and rural data would best illuminate growth in autonomous regions.

Table 5 – Income Growth 2000-2008³⁴

Region	Per Capita Annual Disposable Income of Urban Households (yuan)			Per Capita Net Income of Rural Residents (yuan)		
	2000	2008	% Change	2000	2008	% Change
GZAR	5834	14146	+142.5	1865	3690	+97.9
NHAR	4912	12932	+163.3	1724	3681	+113.5
XUAR	5645	11432	+102.5	1618	3503	+116.5
PRC	6280	15781	+151.3	2253	4761	+111.3

Overall, the data shows a general equivalence in the growth of disposable income and net income in the ethnic autonomous regions. Unemployment data for the regions also show a relatively good economic outlook for the autonomous regions. As of 2008, the reported rates of urban unemployment are as follows: GZAR – 3.8%, NHAR – 4.4%,

and XUAR – 3.7%. All these are fairly similar as well, but it should be noted that the PRC generally under reports this data and only residents who register for benefits are counted. Additionally, while international sources do not track economic data sub-nationally, available reporting on economic progress in China indicates, that as a nation, China has enjoyed a great deal of success in improving the economic well being of its citizens. According to World Bank measurements, China has dramatically reduced poverty over the past 30 years. In 1981, roughly 65% of China’s population lived below the World Bank’s poverty line standard. That figure has dropped to below 10% today. To put this remarkable achievement into better perspective, since 1981, China has successfully lifted almost 8% of the total world population out of poverty.³⁵

In general, the data surveyed indicates a fairly comparable level of economic purchasing power and rate of employment across all three case studies, so each group has been assigned a score of 0 for economic security (see Table 7). **GZAR = 0 , NHAR = 0, XUAR = 0.**

Food Security

Feeding the most populous nation in the world has historically been a struggle for leaders in China, but in this area of human security, the PRC has seen a great deal of success. Finding data specific to each case study was difficult. In some cases, officials at the autonomous region level used the Engel coefficient as a determination of the general living conditions of its populations, but even Chinese academics admit that the growing gap between wealthy and poor residents may be distorting this indicator.³⁶ International sources provide an indication of food security at the national level. This

year, the International Food Policy Research Institute gave China a ranking of 9th out of the 84 nations it examined. Since 1990, China's Global Hunger Index Score (GHI) improved from 11.6 to 6.0.³⁷ Additionally, the Millennium Development Goals tracked by the UN indicate that China has made impressive progress in decreasing the number of underweight children less than 5 years of age and in the total number of undernourished people.³⁸ Although a severe drought this year in southwestern China, of which Guangxi is a part, resulted in higher prices for produce and some pockets of hunger, the PRC dispatched a huge amount of food and water to the afflicted area to ameliorate the crisis.³⁹ Additionally, a periodical search produced a fair amount of reports from international newspapers in 2005 that declared the China had "won" its war with hunger when it received its last international food aid shipment in April of 2005.⁴⁰ Despite the widely acknowledged improvement that China has enjoyed in providing its population with adequate nutrition, this study eliminated this component of human security in its final analysis (see Table 7) because research yielded no adequate sub-national measurements of food security. **No assessment assigned.**

Health Security

Measurements of the level of health security available to the populations in these three case studies relied on changes on the number of medical clinics and hospitals, the availability of medical personnel, the number of hospital beds, and some selected data from the UN Millennium Development Program. Actual mortality rates were not readily available for each autonomous region.

Table 6 below shows the change in the number of medical facilities available, how that change has tracked with population change, how those numbers breakdown as a function of the total square area of regions, and the current population density.

Table 6 – Health Care Institutions⁴¹

Region	Number of Medical Facilities Available (total)		Number of People per Each Facility		Number of Medical Facilities per 100 km ²		Population Density (km ²) 2008
	2000	2008	2000	2008	2000	2008	
GZAR	13707	10442	3466	4835	5.79	4.41	207
NHAR	1361	1633	4032	3760	2.05	2.45	89.1
XUAR	7314	6739	2529	3162	0.44	0.41	11.8
PRC	324771	278337	3903	4771	0.69	0.62	139.6

The data in Table 6 presents a mixed picture. Despite having more medical facility density in the GZAR and because the region is so populous, its medical facilities must handle more people than the national baseline. This region is densely populated and mountainous and as such, many small clinics have been set up in these areas to provide more available healthcare. Additionally, the density of medical facilities in the XUAR appears much worse than the national baseline, but because most of this region is uninhabited desert, it still enjoys the least amount of people per medical facility. With the exception of the GZAR, minority regions appear to have more access to medical facilities than the PRC average.

A somewhat clearer picture of the level of health security in these regions can be gained by through additional analysis of the number of medical personnel and hospital beds. Table 7 below shows the total number of medical personnel in each region, the

number of people per each technician, the number of hospital beds, and the number of people per bed.

Table 7 – Medical Personnel and Hospital Beds⁴²

Region	Total Number of Medical Personnel		Number of People Per Doctor		Total Number of Hospital Beds		Number of People per Hospital Bed	
	2000	2008	2000	2008	2000	2008	2000	2008
GZAR	127036	155656	374	324	85422	118372	556	427
NHAR	19171	21407	286	287	13825	20967	404	298
XUAR	122064	130174	152	164	70542	96852	262	220
PRC	5591026	6169050	227	215	3113165	4036483	407	329

In all cases, medical personnel and hospital bed availability has either improved over the 8-year period or is much better than the national baseline. Here again, the GZAR data is below the national baseline due to a higher population density, but it also has shown the most improvement overall.

In addition to the PRC data, Millennium Development Goals Indicators show a general improvement in the mortality rates for infants and children less than 5 years of age since the year 2000. Additionally, China’s prevention and treatment of major diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis have shown steady improvement from year to year.⁴³ Finally, according to the World Bank’s reported World Development Indicators, life expectancy in China has been rising every year.⁴⁴ On the whole, international measurements paint a fairly upbeat picture for the state of health care, disease prevention, and mortality rates in China. Official PRC statistics present a much more mixed picture. The minority populations in Ningxia and Xinjiang appear to have more access to healthcare facilities, medical personnel, and hospital beds than the Zhuang in Guangxi. In all available sub-national data examined, the GZAR has less availability

than the national baseline even though there seems to be marked improvement in medical personnel and hospital beds.

Overall, an examination of healthcare availability reveals that the GZAR is worse than the PRC as a whole, while the NHAR and XUAR is doing better than the baseline. For these reasons, this study assesses the GZAR as “less secure” because although it does not compare favorably to the national baseline, it is showing the most improvement. The NHAR and XUAR are both “most secure” because they have better availability than the PRC as a whole (see Table 7). **GZAR = 2, NHAR = 1, XUAR = 1.**

Environment Security

Environmental degradation is a pervasive problem in China. The country’s rapid economic development and general improvement in its citizens’ standards of living have come at fairly high cost to the natural environment. Official PRC statistics in this area are dubious and do not provide a clear indication of the comparative level of environmental degradation in each examined region. PRC data demonstrates an overall increase in funding for pollution treatment in all three case studies, but provides no information on the extent of environmental damage.⁴⁵ International sources do show the seriousness of the China’s pollution problems, but only at a national level. For example, the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy conducts an annual survey of the environmental performance of all nations and China routinely ranks near the bottom of the list. In fact, China’s ranking has fallen from 104 in 2008 to 121 this year.⁴⁶ China’s international rank on environmental performance cited above calls into question the effectiveness of this increase in pollution treatment investment in all three

regions. A cursory LexisNexis search of environmental degradation in each of the case study regions shows that it is a fairly common problem. Both Ningxia and Xinjiang are beset with challenges arising from over farming and poor irrigation that has led to an increasing problem with desertification.^{47 48}In Guangxi, ethnic Zhuang, in a rare display of displeasure, conducted demonstrations against an aluminum plant that is suspected of poisoning the drinking water of a number of villages.⁴⁹ Ultimately, no accurate measurement of the impact of environmental degradation on security can be made because no real sub-national data source is available. Other than data on government initiatives on treating pollution, the PRC is reluctant to publish official statistics on the extent of degradation, so no accurate assessment was possible (see Table 7). **No assessment assigned.**

Personal Security

The HSU's description of personal security focuses on the rule of law and enforced protection of civil rights. Obviously, this is not an area that the PRC reports on in its annual statistical yearbook. To provide a somewhat accurate picture of the application of the rule of law in China, a number of international sources were used to determine the level of criminal activity in the country as a whole. Discussion of human and civil rights are included below in the analysis of community and political security. The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports that the homicide rate in China is very low when compared with other countries. The rate per 100,000 populations was reported as 1.2 in 2007 by the PRC. Like other statistics, there is concern over Chinese predilection for under reporting. The UNODC's database shows that in 2004 the World

Health Organization's data was 2.12 per 100,000 while official PRC statistics reported 1.9 intentional homicides per 100,000.⁵⁰ Assessing the effectiveness of the Chinese judicial system is difficult as well. In 2002, the UN reported that China, at that time, did have over 200,000 judges and magistrates, giving it the most court officials of any nation, but on a per capita basis, this is a very inadequate amount by most international standards.⁵¹ Additionally, Human Rights Watch reported last year that China is increasingly weakening the ability of defense lawyers to advocate for their clients by withholding registration for failure to pass annual inspections.⁵² Where China does excel is in the total number of executions. Although the PRC closely guards the number of executions it conducts, all international estimates indicate that China executes more prisoners than any other nation. Amnesty International claims that in 2009, China executed more people than all other nations combined.⁵³ Overall, there was no specific data found to indicate any uneven application of laws or repression that would impact the personal security of the case studies examined. Additionally, the CHS model of human security offers an unclear distinction between personal and political security. As such, this study does not provide an assessment of personal security (see Table 7), but instead relies on political security indicators to form an analysis of the causes of ethnic conflict in China. **No assessment assigned.**

Community Security

On paper, China's dedication to both the promotion and protection of ethnic identity and rights is truly remarkable. Article 4 of the PRC Constitution declares the following:

*All nationalities in the People's Republic of China are equal. The state protects the lawful rights and interests of the minority nationalities and upholds and develops a relationship of equality, unity and mutual assistance among all of China's nationalities. Discrimination against and oppression of any nationality are prohibited; any act which undermines the unity of the nationalities or instigates division is prohibited.*⁵⁴

In addition, Article 36 of the PRC Constitution proclaims the freedom of religious beliefs, but included is a catch-all codicil the prohibits and religious activities “that disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or interfere with the educational system of the state.” Unfortunately, China’s lofty rhetoric does not match its actions. To determine the level of community security for these groups, research was heavily dependent on the Minorities at Risk (MAR) database maintained by the University of Maryland. This database tracks ethnic minorities around the world and assesses their vulnerability. Currently, the MAR database considers only three groups in China to be at risk, Tibetans, Uyghurs, and the Hui, and its dataset extends up to 2006 only. This greatly facilitates research by offering a plethora of data points to draw from that are organized under broad indicators. This portion of the study will focus on Group Status and Group Conflict Behavior as described below:

- Group Status (Historical Autonomy and Separatism Indicators, Disadvantages, Group Organization and Representation, Grievances)
- Group Conflict Behavior (Intracommunal Conflict, Intercommunal Conflict, Protest, Rebellion, Government Repression of Group)

To facilitate this portion of the study, the remainder of discussion will focus solely on the Hui and the Uyghurs. Under the category of Group Status, more interesting disparities can be found. In general, the data indicate that the Uyghurs face more political and economic discrimination, more restrictions on religion and language, and a much higher level of political, economic, and cultural grievances than the Hui. Examination of Group Conflict Data shows a much higher level of government repression of both nonviolent and violent group members.⁵⁵ Considering the Zhuang are not included as a vulnerable minority population, it is awarded a score of 1 or most secure. Since the dataset indicates that the Hui experience less active repression, less restrictions on expressions of ethnic identity, and less conflict than the Uyghurs, it is awarded a score of 2 or more secure. Finally, the Uyghurs are awarded a score of 3 or least secure (see Table 7). **GZAR = 1, NHAR = 2, XUAR = 3.**

Political Security

Finally, political security, according to the HSU, is defined as protection from human rights abuses, political repression, and unlawful detention and imprisonment. Although the previous dataset supports the conclusion that the Uyghurs have it worse off than the other two groups, additional data is useful in further driving home the point. An examination of the, admittedly incomplete, list of political prisoners in China reveals an interesting disparity. Of the known cases, approximately 1452 as tallied by the Congressional-Executive Committee on China, 79 are identified as Uyghurs. A case-by-case examination of the CECC's exhaustive list found no prisoners of either Hui or Zhuang ethnicity.⁵⁶ The list does suffer from lack of accurate information and

the distinction between Han Chinese and especially the Hui is sometimes difficult to determine. Yet, it is important to note that the current CECC list does not yet include Uyghurs detained following the riots in Xinjiang in 2009, so the true number is most likely much higher. Based on this information and the previous examination of the MAR dataset, the Uyghurs are awarded a score of 3, the Hui a score of 2, and the Zhuang a score of 1 (see Table 7). **GZAR = 1, NHAR = 2, XUAR = 3.**

Ethnic Unrest

Finally, to complete the research portion of this study, an accurate assessment of the number of incidents of ethnic unrest among each group is necessary. Compiled, accurate data highlighting the numerous incidents of ethnic unrest in China is difficult to find in one place. Obviously, the more dramatic events, such as the 2009 riots in Xinjiang, gain a larger share of international attention, but protests, riots, and open clashes with authorities occur far more frequently than is realized by most international observers. For example, earlier this year, two separate instances of ethnic unrest occurred in Guangxi. The protests over water pollution this summer have been previously cited, but there were also protests in October of this year over a plan by the government to acquire land from local villages as part of a hydropower project in the region.⁵⁷ Additionally, Guangxi was the scene of violent protests over the strict application of the one-child policy in 2007.⁵⁸ In Ningxia, the Hui have also been involved in periodic clashes with authority in the past decade. In 2004, over 500 Hui Muslims clashed with 1500 Han Chinese after a minor altercation quickly spread out of control. In this case the violence took place in Henan province, but reports indicate that

following the onset of violence, Hui from Ningxia quickly responded to assist their compatriots in the neighboring province.⁵⁹ The potential for ethnic unrest in China seems to be always lying just under the surface of everyday society. The Uyghur riots are the most significant recent example of this tension. A brawl in Guangdong province, over 2000 miles away, quickly pulsed through the nervous system of Chinese society only to erupt in massive violence that left many Uyghur and Han dead and wounded. Over the past decade, with the exception of the Tibetans, the Uyghur have gained more attention than any other ethnic group. It is for this reason the group has been awarded a score of 3. LexisNexis searches indicate that although widespread violence is not apparent in Guangxi, there does appear to be more low-level incidences of protest, demonstrations, and violence than the Hui. Therefore, the Zhuang are awarded a score of 2 and the Hui a score of 1 (see Table 7). **GZAR = 2, NHAR = 1, XUAR = 3.**

Results

Table 7 – Human Security Matrix

Minority	Human Security Indicators							Ethnic Unrest
	Economic	Food	Health	Environment	Personal	Community	Political	
Zhuang	0		2			1	1	2
Hui	0		1			2	2	1
Uyghur	0		1			3	3	3

Overall, the results of this study are inconclusive. The data fairly obviously explains the levels of unrest among the Uyghurs, but the higher incidence of unrest among the Zhuang does not fit well with the original hypothesis of this study that predicts a strong correlation between lack of community security and levels of unrest. The Zhuang have not only enjoyed lower overall levels of repression and discrimination

form the CCP, their ethnic identity has been actively promoted since 1949. The findings seem to suggest a possible link between perceived threat of ethnicities by the central government and the level of repression. The Zhuang have, historically, posed little or not threat to the rule of the CCP and have been permitted to more fully express themselves than other groups. There seems to be less health security among the Zhuang as demonstrated by the generally lower levels of healthcare availability in the GZAR, but unrest among this minority group has erupted over a variety of non-health related issues, such as pollution and government appropriation of land. Additionally, the Hui levels of unrest do not correspond well with the level of repression they have experienced as outlined by the MAR dataset. A specific link between the expression of ethnic identity, levels of community security, and incidence of unrest does not seem to exist.

Chapter 5: Implications and Recommendations

This paper recommends that scholars continue to develop the field of human security in order to better define the terms used and to create better databases for measuring it. Human security has a lot to offer security studies because it can help scholars and policymakers better understand the forces behind the sub-national and transnational violence that has become a major challenge in to nation-states in the post-Cold War era. Additionally, although this paper fails to provide a clear link between community security and the prevalence of ethnic violence in China, it does demonstrate the many challenges facing the PRC leadership as it tries to navigate the tightrope of dramatic economic and social change while ignoring and even stymieing political change.

Value of the Human Security Approach

Human Security is still a relatively new field of study within International Relations theory and, as such, suffers from underdevelopment. The first major flaw in the approach is a general vagueness in the operational terms and definitions. The HSU provides a neat framework that organizes the principles well, but then fails to provide clear definitions of those what exactly is meant by “economic security” or “community security.” Additionally, these terms often overlap and lend a degree of ambiguity and imprecision to the entire framework. For example, human rights are grouped under personal security, but also show up as a component of political security. If a minority is imprisoned for protesting environmental degradation, is that considered an indication of political insecurity, personal security, environmental security, or all three? All judgment

on the value of this approach for humanitarian operations is withheld, though, because, it does seem to be a useful approach for the implementation of humanitarian strategies

Next, because this field is still underdeveloped, there is a considerable lack of data specifically suited to measure the identified indicators. Over the course of this study, data had to be culled from many disparate sources that were often ill defined and not explicitly intended for measuring human security indicators. It seems that further research in this field and using this approach will be necessary to build an adequate body of data that can be helpful to future attempts at applying human security to specific case studies.

Implications for Future Ethnic Conflict in China

It appears that ethnic conflict will remain an obstacle to the policymakers and leaders of China for the foreseeable future. Across all seven indicators of human security, the PRC is faced with a number of challenges it must overcome if it is serious about solving its “ethnic problem.” Under economic security, China has made truly historic progress. China’s rapid economic rise has successfully pulled more people from the depths of poverty than any other nation in history. Yet, this success story does mask a number of issues that have the potential to lead to unrest in the future. Income inequality, especially between the urban and rural populations is an ongoing problem that is progressively growing worse. Additionally, the coastal provinces have long enjoyed a head start on the path of development and have caused the CCP to rapidly readjust priorities and focus more development funds on the neglected interior and western regions of the nation. These interior areas are where most of China’s minorities

are located. Finally, in areas with large populations of minorities, this inequality also serves to divide the majority Han from the ethnic groups the CCP wishes to integrate into China. Food security is probably China's most successful area of human security and will continue to be a key component of the CCP's claim to legitimacy. Historically, the mandate of heaven was granted to the emperor to protect the people from the uncontrollable forces of nature that periodically beset the Chinese people. Every year the emperor would make the all-important pilgrimage to the Temple of Heaven in Beijing to pray for good crop yields. Massive amounts of treasure and manpower were employed over China's long history to control the flooding of the Yellow and Yangtze rivers to keep the people safe and well fed. The CCP's challenge in the future will be in to maintain a similar tacit agreement with the people of ensuring adequate food supplies. Health security in China is facing a different challenge in that the population is quickly aging and an adequate level of facilities for caring for the "geriatric bomb" has yet to be reached. Perhaps the most pressing and potentially damaging concern for the leadership of China is the continuing degradation of the environment. In more ways than one, it impacts virtually every other human security indicator. The poor state of water quality, dwindling supply of potable water sources, and continuing desertification of once arable land could have a real impact on food supplies, health, and the economic well-being of the Chinese people. The final three indicators are all inter-related and of particular salience to ethnic minority populations, but have real implications for the majority Han Chinese as well. The grand bargain the CCP has struck with the people of China is an exchange of obedience and support for prosperity. This arrangement has

served the CCP well for the past 30 years, but if the experience of other developing nations is any indication, at some point the increasingly prosperous Chinese will eventually wish to have more of a say in the governance of their nation. The crucial question for the CCP leadership is how long they can withhold civil and human rights from an increasingly dissatisfied population before true catastrophe once again befalls China.

Endnotes

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