# Xinjiang's 100,000: State-led Urban-to-Rural Population Resettlement in Socialist China

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B.A. in History, May 2010, Hiram College
M.A. in History, August 2014, The George Washington University

A Dissertation submitted to

The Faculty of
The Columbian College of Arts and Sciences
of The George Washington University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 21, 2017

Dissertation directed by

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The Columbian College of Arts and Sciences of The George Washington University certifies that Charles Richard Kraus has passed the Final Examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy as of March 3, 2017. This is the final and approved form of the dissertation.

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Acknowledgements

It is immensely satisfying that, after five years of graduate study, I can finally acknowledge in writing the many mentors, colleagues, friends, and family members who supported the completion of this dissertation.

The research for this project began in earnest in summer 2013, but it would have never started if not for several prior interventions. In January 2011, when I was a master's student in the Elliott School of International Affairs, Professor Shawn McHale, then the director of the Asian Studies program and my advisor, called me to his office. He asked me rather pointedly: "what are you doing?" Initially I thought I had done something terribly wrong, only to realize a few days later that Professor McHale was encouraging me to ditch my plans to obtain a master's degree in Asian studies and instead enroll in a history Ph.D. program. This was the right advice, and I am grateful for it.

Even earlier, Adam Cathcart introduced me to the study of history at Hiram College. In 2007, he brought me to China for the first time. Without Adam's initial encouragement and continued support throughout the years, things would have played out much differently. I am forever grateful for those summer days spent searching for sources in the northeast, travelling the Sino-Korean border, and talking in the hutongs of Beijing, as well as all the time spent together in quieter corners of northeast Ohio.

My advisor at The George Washington University, Edward A. McCord, continues to provide outstanding mentorship. I thank Professor McCord for the close attention he has paid to my research and writing over the years, but also for much, much more. Professor McCord is a jack of all academic trades: a model historian, teacher, and

administrator. On top of this, he's an incredibly kind person. Necessarily, this dissertation reflects only a small part of what Professor McCord has taught me.

My committee members, Gregg Brazinsky, Shawn McHale, Bruce Dickson, and Justin Jacobs, were all exceptionally helpful throughout the writing and review process. I thank them especially for their critical questions during the defense, as well as their encouragement. Many other colleagues provided written and oral feedback on various pieces of the dissertation, shared sources and ideas, or otherwise made my research possible. I especially want to thank Sergey Radchenko, Joseph Torigian, Wen-hsin Yeh, Zhang Jishun, Shen Zhihua, Dai Chaowu, Li Sheng, Li Danhui, Yafeng Xia, Xue Chen, Chen Bo, You Lan, Xu Jianying, Ariane Knuesel, Wang Chenyi, Sandrine Catris, Ed Pulford, Chen Jian, Enrico Fardella, Judd Kinzley, Hao Ge, Chen Chuangchuang, Chen Tao, Eric Szetzekorn, Shao Weinan, Wang Di, and Liu Yi.

I am incredibly fortunate to have had two academic homes in Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. At GWU, Jim Hershberg, Daqing Yang, Dane Kennedy, Jisoo Kim, Katrin Schulteiss, Erin Chapman, Michael Weeks, and the History Department as a whole have stimulated this research in ways they probably do not realize. My peers in the Department, especially Benjamin Young, Qingfei Yin, and Ryan Musto, provided essential intellectual companionship. At the Wilson Center, Christian Ostermann gave me time, space, and travel opportunities to research and write the dissertation. I thank my other colleagues in the History and Public Policy Program, especially Evan Pikulski and Laura Deal, for their support and friendship over the years.

This dissertation was researched at more than 25 archives in China (I had hoped for more!). Due to the current political climate in China, as well as the absence of clear and binding declassification laws, my experiences at many of these archives were not always pleasant. That said, I would like to thank the staffs in Shanghai, Jiaxing, Beijing, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Changshu, Wuxi, Wuhan, Guangzhou, and Tianjin who at least *tried* to help. Despite a deluge of requests, the librarians at The George Washington University and the Wilson Center always provided outstanding service.

None of my research or writing would have been possible without the generous financial support of several institutions and organizations. I especially thank the Department of History at The George Washington University, the Sigur Center for Asian Studies, the Cosmos Club (Washington, D.C.), the American Council of Learned Societies, and the Henry Luce Foundation.

Family members in Thompsonville, Beulah, New York City, Nagoya, and Pinghu made writing the dissertation worthwhile. I thank my parents, Charles and Judith Kraus, for their interest in my progress and so much more. They've showed me what lifelong learners look like.

My wife, Ting Ye, made much of the research and writing happen—and I don't mean this figuratively. Ting's borderline aggressive refrain, "when are you going to finish?!," was made on a daily basis. Ting kept me focused on the task at hand and ensured that I stayed on track—at least most of the time.

Having just put the finishing touches on this dissertation, Ting already has a new demand: "Now finish the book!" Thanks, Ting.

Abstract of Dissertation

Xinjiang's 100,000: State-led Urban-to-Rural Population Resettlement in Socialist China

From 1963 through 1966, more than 100,000 middle and high school students from China's largest cities moved to Xinjiang, the Chinese frontier. Known as China's "educated youth," these teenagers were part of an ambitious state-led, urban-to-rural population resettlement project which aimed to transform people and place during China's high socialist era. Intended as a project of permanent resettlement with an ever-expanding number of participants, the campaign came to an abrupt halt in the autumn of 1966 and withered slowly over the next several decades. The Chinese Communist Party's will to change urban China, frontier China, and the minds and bodies of the nation's youth was consistently tested by the tumult of its own making as well as by the resistance of the campaign participants themselves.

Based on research at 20 archives in China, this dissertation presents a history of this urban-to-rural population resettlement program from its inception in the 1950s and 1960s to its bitter end in the 1970s and 1980s. It offers a revisionist account of the origins of the campaign, focusing on demographics, economics, and ideology rather than ethnicity or international security. It exposes the gulf between party-state rhetoric and lived reality and the challenges of acculturating urban peoples to rural environs through a close analysis of the on-the-ground experiences of the "educated youth" in Xinjiang. Finally, the dissertation uncovers how the Cultural Revolution disrupted and altered urban-to-rural resettlement in socialist China and how, in early reform era, the "educated youth" attempted to chart their own futures by resisting the party-state's mandates.

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# Introduction

From 1963 through 1966, more than 100,000 middle and high school students from China's largest cities moved to Xinjiang, the Chinese frontier. Known as China's "educated youth" (知识青年 *zhishi qingnian*, or 知青 *zhiqing*), these teenagers were part of an ambitious state-led, urban-to-rural population resettlement project which aimed to transform people and place during China's high socialist era.[1] Intended as a project of permanent resettlement with an ever-expanding number of participants, the campaign came to an abrupt halt in the autumn of 1966 and withered slowly over the next several decades. The Chinese Communist Party's will to change urban China, frontier China, and the minds and bodies of the nation's youth was consistently tested by the tumult of its own making as well as by the resistance of the campaign participants themselves.

One of the most remarkable aspects of this grandiose project is that Chairman Mao Zedong had very little to do with it.[2] The policy of urban-to-rural resettlement in China—the idea of moving someone as young as 15 years old thousands of miles away from home—evolved over many years, coming into light as old policies and campaigns

[1] According to Jeremy Brown and Matthew D. Johnson, "high socialism was characterized by state ownership of property. Party-state fusion, the politicization of everyday life, and a planned economy that privileged heavy urban industry by extracting grain from the countryside and restricting internal migration." I agree with this definition, except that the Chinese state controlled and heavily regulated—rather than restricted—internal migration. See "Introduction," in *Maoism at the Grassroots: Everyday Life in China's Era of High Socialism*, ed. Jeremy Brown and Matthew D. Johnson (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 6.

[2] In most narratives, Mao Zedong also emerges as the central figure, the man who (almost) singlehandedly orchestrated the movement of millions of China's young people to the countryside. See Michel Bonnin, *The Lost Generation: The Rustication of China's Educated Youth (1968-1980)*, trans. Krystyna Horko (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2013), xvii, 443; Helena K. Rene, *China's Sent-Down Generation: Public Administration and the Legacies of Mao's Rustication Program* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 75; Yihong Pan, *Tempered in the Revolutionary Furnace: China's Youth in the Rustication Movement* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003), 1. This interpretation fits with the overall Mao-centric approach to PRC history written by scholars such as Frank Dikötter. See *Mao's Great Famine: The History of China's Most Devastating Catastrophe, 1958-1962* (New York: Walker & Co., 2010).

failed and new opportunities emerged. It was constructed, piecemeal, at many different offices and institutions in Beijing and across urban China and frontier China. It was the product of conversations about real and perceived problems, as well as opportunities, relating to the Chinese economy, the country's population, its environments, and the future of the revolution. It was a Chinese government rationalization, a "solution to a perceived problem" in the words of Richard Bessel and Claudia Haake, aimed at transforming and improving society.[3]

Highly ambitious, the campaign to resettle 100,000 young people permanently from China's eastern cities to its northwestern deserts nearly suffocated under its own weight. The experiences of China's "educated youth" laid bare the difficulties of moving and acculturating an urban population to labor and everyday life in rugged Xinjiang. Tested by the campaign participants themselves prior to 1966, the program was disrupted entirely by the chaotic Chinese Cultural Revolution. The "educated youth," disavowed by the very leaders who had put them on the Chinese frontier in the first place, fended for themselves for the next decade. When the post-Mao era leadership strove to reconstitute the human footprint of urban-to-rural population resettlement after 1976, the campaign's subjects resisted fiercely. The issue of resettlement to Xinjiang became one of the most contentious political issues in China during the late 1970s and the 1980s, poisoning state-society relations in the early reform era.

**State-led Urban-to-Rural Resettlement**

[3] Richard Bessel and Claudia B. Haake, "Introduction: Forced Removal in the Modern World," in *Removing Peoples: Forced Removal in the Modern World*, ed. Richard Bessel and Claudia B. Haake (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 7.

The resettlement of China's urban youth to Xinjiang from 1963 through 1966 is one chapter of the long "Movement to Go Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages" (上山下乡运动 *shangshan xiaxiang yundong*), a campaign which ostensibly stretched from the mid-1950s through the late 1970s.[4] Overall, this campaign moved more than one million urban youth prior to start of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution—including Xinjiang's 100,000—and upwards of 20 million after the worst upheavels had ended (1969-1976).[5] Unfolding on an almost unimaginable scale, China's urban-to-rural population resettlement projects have long been of interest to scholars in the United States and Europe.[6] The scholarly coverage has, however, been uneven.

[4] The literature in Chinese on the "Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages" movement is too vast to mention here. For probably the best two syntheses, see Ding Yizhuang, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi: Chulan, 1953-1968 nian* (History of China's *Zhiqing*: The Beginning Waves, 1953-1968) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 1998), and Liu Xiaomeng, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi: Dachao, 1966-1980 nian* (History of China's *Zhiqing*: The High Tide, 1966-1980) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 1998).

[5] At the high end, some authors estimate that more than 10 million people were relocated in the 1950s and 1960s and more than 20 million youth individuals rusticated during the Cultural Revolution alone. See Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence, "China: Patterns of Population Movement," June 1973, 8, in CIA Records Search Tool (CREST) CIA-RDP85T00875R000600040001-7, National Archives and Records Administration. College Park, Maryland.

[6] See, in order of appearance, Rensselaer W. Lee, III, "The Hsia Fang System: Marxism and Modernisation," *The China Quarterly* 28 (October-December 1966): 40-62, doi: 10.1017/S0305741000028290; John Gardner, "Educated Youth and Urban-Rural Inequalities, 1958-66," in *The City in Communist China*, ed. John Wilson Lewis (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1971), 235-286; Martin Singer, *Educated Youth and the Cultural Revolution in China* (Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1971); Pi-chao Chen, "Overurbanization, Rustication of Urban-Educated Youths, and Politics of Rural Transformation: The Case of China," *Comparative Politics* 4, no. 3 (April 1972): 361-386; June Teufel Dreyer, "Go West Young Han: The *Hsia Fang* Movement to China's Minority Areas," *Pacific Affairs* 48, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 353-369; Jan S. Prybyla, "Hsia-Fang: The Economics and Politics of Rustication in China," *Pacific Affairs* 48, no. 2 (Summer 1975): 153-172; Thomas P. Bernstein, *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages: The Transfer of Youth from Urban to Rural China* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977); Peter J. Seybolt, ed., *The Rustication of Urban Youth in China: A Social Experiment* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1977); Anne McLaren, "The Educated Youth Return: The Poster Campaign in Shanghai from November 1978 to March 1979," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 2 (July 1979): 1-20; Lynn T. White, III, "The Road to Urumchi: Approved Institutions in Search of Attainable Goals during Pre-1968 Rustication from Shanghai," *The China Quarterly* 79 (September 1979): 481-510, doi: 10.1017/S0305741000038285; Thomas B. Gold, "Back to the City: The Return of Shanghai's Educated Youth," *The China Quarterly* 84 (December 1980): 755-770, doi: 10.1017/S0305741000012662; Stanley Rosen, *The Role of Sent-Down Youth in the Chinese Cultural Revolution: The Case of Guangzhou* (Berkeley, CA: Institute of East Asian Studies, University of California, Berkeley, 1981); Pan, *Tempered in the Revolutionary Furnace* ; Michel Bonnin, *Génération perdue: Le mouvement d'envoi des jeunes instruits à la campagne en Chine, 1968-1980* (The Lost

Several major works in modern Chinese history have focused specifically on population resettlement following in the wake of the Cultural Revolution, particularly in regard to the millions of young people from China's urban cores who were "sent down" to the countryside in an effort to reassert control over the Red Guards and moderate the Revolution's violence.[7] Little scholarship, however, has explored the origins, experiences, and full-life span of the earlier urban-to-rural population resettlement program before start of the Cultural Revolution. This dissertation seeks to provide a fuller understanding of this earlier resettlement campaign and offers a case study concentrating on the relocation of 100,000 young city dwellers to Xinjiang.[8]

But what should we call the campaign and, more importantly, the type of internal migration which it stimulated?[9] After all, China's history since 1949 is awash with euphemistically named political campaigns. While the name "Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages" movement is less deceptive than other contemporary political campaigns (such as "democratic reform," or *minzhu gaige*, in Tibet),[10] the the

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Generation: The Campaign to Send Educated Youth to the Countryside in China, 1968-1980) (Paris: Editions de l'Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2004); Bin Yang, "'We Want to Go Home!' The Great Petition of the *Zhiqing*, Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, 1978-1979," *The China Quarterly* 198 (June 2009): 401-421, doi: 10.1017/S030574100900037X; Rene, *China's Sent-Down Generation*.

I rely primarily upon the English translation of Bonnin's work. See Bonnin, *The Lost Generation*.

[7] Bonnin, *The Lost Generation*.

[8] In 1979, Lynn T. White wrote on the institutional relationships involved in urban-to-rural population to Xinjiang. See White, "The Road to Urumchi." Even scholars writing in the field of Xinjiang history, while occasionally noting that some Shanghai teenagers arrived at the Production and Construction Corps in the 1960s, have yet to dig deeply into this subject. See, for example, James A. Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 252-253, 267, 279-280.

[9] Unfortunately, scholars writing in both Chinese and English have not really considered what else to call the movement or how to categorize the type of migration resulting from the campaign. James Lee's seminal study on migration throughout Chinese history called the Mao era population movements instances of "planned migration." Thomas Bernstein, who wrote probably the first book on the "Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages" movement, called them population "transfers." See, respectively, James Lee, "Migration and Expansion in Chinese History," in *Human Migration: Policies and Patterns,* ed. William H. McNeill and Ruth S. Adams (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), 20-47; Bernstein, *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages*.

[10] On "democratic reforms" in Tibet, see Robert Barnett, *Lhasa: Streets with Memories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

movement's official title alone tells us very little about the origins, outcomes, and consequences of population resettlement in socialist China. The official periodization, moreover, often treats resettlement as a single, continuous movement, when in fact there was never just one rustication movement in China; rather, there many different ones.[11] We thus need to be wary of uncritically adopting the languages and mentalities of the Chinese state to describe and study this movement.[12]

Determining what to call this episode depends in part on the people who constituted it. In China, all participants in the "Movement to Go Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages" prior to autumn 1966 were, in theory, volunteers.[13] Chapter Three of the dissertation, however, complicates this notion, showing that the campaign hinged on total social mobilization. For young Chinese in the cities, the social pressures to register to go to Xinjiang were palpable. Moreover, as Deng Peng argues and as Chapter Six demonstrates, the participants could not simply leave the frontier at a time of their own choosing.[14] Because that the participants' freedom of movement was greatly constricted by the state, the migration could variously be described as a "population transfer," "coerced migration," an "involuntary resettlement," "population displacement,"

[11] Not only did the political and economic contexts of rustication before and during the Cultural Revolution differ widely, but the rationales for population transfers within these two specific periods also often shifted. Local chroniclers in Beijing, for example, subdivide the "Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages" movement into five distinct phases, running from 1955 all the way through 1980. While I do not agree with the chronologies deployed in Beijing's *Gazetteers*, the point remains: there was not merely one "Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages" movement, but rather many small ones. See Beijing difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles of Beijing), ed., *Laodong zhi* (Labor Gazetteer), vol. 34 of *Beijing zhi* (Beijing Gazetteers) (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1999), 43.

[12] For this critique in other PRC contexts, see Neil J. Diamant, *Revolutionizing the Family: Politics, Love, and Divorce in Urban and Rural China, 1949-1968* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Gail Hershatter, *The Gender of Memory: Rural Women and China's Collective Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Brown and Johnson , eds., *Maoism at the Grassroots*.

[13] Michel Bonnin suggests that prior to the Cultural Revolution, the participants were actually volunteers, while anyone sent-down after 1968 was "forcibly rusticated." See Bonnin, *The Lost Generation*, xvii.

[14] Peng Deng, trans. and ed., *Exiled Pilgrims: Memoirs of Pre-Cultural Revolution* Zhiqing (Boston: Brill, 2015).

"forced migration," or an "expulsion." While these terminologies have been used widely by states and scholars since the nineteenth century, historians such as Alf Lüdtke argue that they carry with them very different connotations and may even serve to promote different political agendas.[15]

While the participants in the resettlement program to Xinjiang were not strictly volunteers, the term "forced migration"—which appears often in the study of China's recent political history—is probably inappropriate.[16] Not only were there some actual "volunteers" in the campaign (both at its inception and through to its ambiguous end), but experts on migration also emphasize that that the line separating "free" and "forced" migration is often tenuous. This ambiguity between free and forced migration has given rise to softer terminologies such as "impelled migration," a subtle means of showing individual human agency in the face of an intrusive state.[17]

Implying that China's resettled peoples still made meaningful choices, "impelled migration" is an apt description of the Xinjiang resettlement project. However, I hesitate to use this terminology often for two reasons. First, the Chinese state's primary role in instigating population resettlement in the 1950s and 1960s contrasts sharply with migration in post-reform China, which is by-and-large driven by the market and

[15] Alf Lüdtke, "Explaining Forced Migration," in *Removing Peoples: Forced Removal in the Modern World*, 13-32. To give one example, the term "population transfer" was used in postwar Europe to blunt the harsh edges of ethnic expulsions. See Matthew Frank, *Expelling the Germans: British Opinion and Post-1945 Population Transfer in Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).
[16] See, for example, Florence Padovani, "Involuntary Resettlement in the Three Gorges Dam Area in the Perspective of Forced Migration Due to Hydraulic Planning in China," in *Forced Migration and Global Processes: A View from Forced Migration Studies,* ed. Francois Crepeau et al (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 91-124.
[17] See, for example, William Petersen, "A General Typology of Migration," *American Sociological Review* 23, no. 3 (June 1958): 256-266.

individual choice.[18] Second, China's population resettlement projects in the 1960s also followed a unique trajectory. While migration in China today—and indeed, throughout most of world history—is primarily from rural areas to urban ones, China's socialist era resettlements went in the opposite direction.[19] We need a terminology which captures these two highly distinctive elements of migration during China's high socialist era.

To highlight the important—but not exclusive—role of the Chinese state in its execution and to emphasize the unique, essentially unprecedented, directional path of this migration, I describe the movement of millions of young people prior to and during the Cultural Revolution as forms of "state-led urban-to-rural population resettlement."

This terminology is also used to avoid endorsing or condoning the campaign. In China and elsewhere, state-led population resettlement evokes strong emotional reactions. While in the People's Republic of China, official historiography continues to valorize the participants of the movement, writers in the West are often critical of this state project. I fully recognize that the case study examined here produced wrenching emotional and physical pain at an individual and familial level, poisoned state-society relations, and may have even had long-lasting ecological consequences for the water scarce Tarim Basin.[20] Yet resettlement also temporarily eroded urban favoritism and

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[18] Since the beginning of the reform era, China's so-called "floating population" (流动人口 *liudong renkou*), or individuals who move without official approval from the state, has dramatically expanded in size. While illegal internal migration did take place during the Mao era (as described in subsequent chapters), China's market-oriented economy has propelled hundreds of millions of people to move since 1979. See Kam Wing Chan, "Migration and Development Strategies in Post-1949 China," in *Development-Induced Displacement in India and China: A Comparative Look at the Burdens of Growth,* ed. Florence Padovani (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016), 7-8.

[19] C. Cindy Fan, "Migration, *Hukou*, and the City," in *China Urbanizes: Consequences, Strategies, and Policies*, ed. Shahid Yusuf and Tony Saich (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2008), 65-90.

[20] On this last point, see Niels Thevs, "Water Scarcity and Allocation in the Tarim Basin: Decision Structures and Adaptations on the Local Level," *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs* 40, no. 3 (2011): 113-137; Thomas Hoppe, *Chinesische Agrarpolitik und uygurische Agrarkultur im Widerstreit: Das sozio-kulturelle Umfeld von Bodenversalzungen und -alkalisierungen im nördlichen Tarim-Becken (Xinjiang)* (Chinese Agricultural Policy and Uyghur Agricultural Culture in Conflict: Socio-Cultural Environment of

redistributed wealth to areas in need of development, while, over the long-term, it has nurtured new social groupings and powerful forms of self-identification.[21] I therefore strive to examine the origins, experiences, and ends of urban-to-rural population resettlement in socialist China in as dispassionate, objective fashion as possible.

**Urban China and Frontier China**

The case study at the heart of this dissertation is an example of state-led urban-to-rural population resettlement, but more precisely it is an example of urban-to-frontier population resettlement. In Chinese, the word "frontier" (边疆 *bianjiang*) refers to China's vast borderland provinces which are inhabited, often sparsely, by non-Han Chinese populations. Encompassing Xinjiang, Tibet, and many other provinces and autonomous regions, the "frontier" has historically been distinct from the core of China, or what is sometimes called "China proper" (内地 *neidi*).[22] In Chinese political culture, "frontier" thus connotes ethnic and cultural difference between China's majority population, Han, and its many minority peoples.[23] Imagined this way, the Chinese frontier is but another example of what Frederick Jackson Turner referred to as the "meeting point between savagery and civilization."[24]

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Salinisation and Alkalization in the Northern Tarim Basin, Xinjiang) (Hamburg: Institut für Asienkunde, 1992).

[21] On the latter point, see, for example, David J. Davies, "Old Zhiqing Photos: Nostalgia and the 'Spirit' of the Cultural Revolution," *China Review* 5, no. 2 (Fall 2005): 97-123, and Guobin Yang, "China's *Zhiqing* Generation: Nostalgia, Identity, and Cultural Resistance in the 1990s," *Modern China* 29, no. 3 (July 2003): 267-296, doi: 10.1177/0097700403029003001; Laifong Leung, ed., *Morning Sun: Interviews with Chinese Writers of the Lost Generation* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994).

[22] James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759-1864* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

[23] M. Taylor Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation: Cooperation and Conflict in China's Territorial Disputes* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 42. See also Xiaoyuan Liu, *Recast All Under Heaven: Revolution, War, Diplomacy, and Frontier China in the 20th Century* (New York: Continuum, 2010).

[24] Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963 [1920]), 3.

This aspect of Turner's frontier thesis is salient in Western historiography about Xinjiang. Primarily concerned with the long-simmering conflict between the region's Muslim population and the Chinese state, many authors believe that the arrival of China's urban youth in Xinjiang in the 1960s was an assimilationist policy undertaken by the Chinese Communist Party.[25] According to this view, the Chinese government deliberately attempted to counterbalance, or perhaps even dilute, Xinjiang's Muslim-dominated population through an influx of Han Chinese youth.[26] More dramatically stated: state-led migration to the Chinese frontier is a manifestation of Han Chinese colonialism.[27] The primary institution which facilitated this migration—the Xinjiang Production and

[25] Rian Thum, *The Sacred Routes of Uyghur History*; David J. Brophy, *Uyghur Nation: Reform and Revolution on the Russia-China Frontier* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016); Gardner Bovingdon, *The Uyghurs: Strangers in Their Own Land* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Dru C. Gladney, *Dislocating China: Reflections on Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004); Linda Benson and Ingvar Svanberg, *China's Last Nomads: The History and Culture of China's Kazaks* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1998); Justin John Rudelson, *Oases Identities: Uyghur Nationalism along China's Silk Road* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); Dru C. Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1996 [1991]).

[26] James D. Seymour, "Xinjiang's Production and Construction Corps, and the Sinification of Eastern Turkestan," *Inner Asia* 2, no. 2 (2000): 171-193, doi: 10.1163/146481700793647805. See also Judith Shapiro, *Mao's War Against Nature: Politics and the Environment in Revolutionary China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 4, and Dreyer, "Go West Young Han," 353.

[27] David Bachman, "Making Xinjiang Safe for the Han? Contradictions and Ironies of Chinese Governance in China's Northwest," in *Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers,* ed. Morris Rossabi (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 156-157; Nicolas Becquelin, "Staged Development in Xinjiang," *The China Quarterly* 178 (June 2004): 366, doi: 10.1017/S0305741004000219. Becquelin is echoed by Isabelle Côté, "Political Mobilization of a Regional Minority: Han Chinese Settlers in Xinjiang," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34, no. 11 (2011): 1855-1873, doi: 10.1080/01419870.2010.543692, and Mette Halskov Hansen, *Frontier People: Han Settlers in Minority Areas of China* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 5. Historians have helped to shape the consensus that the resettlement of Han Chinese was meant to consolidate Chinese rule Xinjiang. Joanna Waley-Cohen's study on discipline and punishment in mid-Qing China argued that criminal and political exile to Xinjiang was intended to augment the state's colonization project in that region. See Joanna Waley-Cohen, *Exile in Mid-Qing China: Banishment to Xinjiang, 1758-1820* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991).

Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi has complicated these depictions of Han Chinese in Xinjiang by demonstrating the variations in settler practice in the decades since 1949. See Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi, "Han Migration to Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region: Between State Schemes and Migrants' Strategies," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 138 (2013): 156. See also Agnieszka Joniak-Lüthi, "The Han *Minzu*, Fragmented Identities, and Ethnicity," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 72, no. 4 (November 2013): 849-871, doi: 10.1017/S0021911813001095.

Construction corps (新疆生产建设兵团 *Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan*), or simply, the *bingtuan* (兵团)—is, moreover, portrayed by many scholars as colonialism's vanguard.[28]

An abundance of archival data, however, suggests that ethnicity had very little or nothing to do with urban-to-frontier population resettlement. While the "educated youth" of the 1960s were indeed part of the still ongoing demographic shift in which the number of Han Chinese in Xinjiang have come to achieve near parity with (or exceed) the number of Uyghurs, the region's titular majority, this was not the intention of the program at its outset. In other words, the goals of this rustication movement were not necessarily the same as its outcomes.

We thus need to reframe how we study the Chinese frontier, or at least recognize how China's socialist leaders actually saw it. Imagined as a developmental state of being, rather than a description of cultural difference, China's leaders saw the frontier primarily as a contrast to the "city" (市 *shi*).[29] Whereas the latter was developed, industrialized, and overpopulated, the former was just the opposite: underdeveloped and underpopulated. Though similar to China's "countryside" (农村 *nongcun*) in these respects, the frontier was not a static description. It represented an idealized transitional state. Depicted as a

[28] Bovingdon, *The Uyghurs*, 51-60; Côté, "Political Mobilization of a Regional Minority," 1858; Donald H. McMillen, "Xinjiang and the Production and Construction Corps: A Han Organisation in a Non-Han Region," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 6 (July 1981): 65-96; Donald H. McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power and Policy in Xinjiang, 1949-1977* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979), 57-66; Seymour, "Xinjiang's Production and Construction Corps."

[29] During the period under study, frontier China was not the same thing as ethnic China, or so-called "ethnic minority areas" (少数民族地区 *shaoshu minzu diqu*). While often conterminous with one another, policy documents deliberately distinguish between these two entities.

place teeming with opportunity, the frontier was waiting to be transformed and turned into a socialist vanguard through heavy state-investments and organized, collective labor.

Instead of ethnicity, the data shows that the urban-to-rural resettlement program must be understood in the contexts of the interwoven regional histories of frontier China and urban China and the broader political history of China at this time. At the tail end and in the aftermath of the Great Leap Forward, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party pushed forward with a series of economic and political rebalancing measures designed to end famine, restore order to the countryside, reduce urban favoritism, and recalibrate China's population map. Urban-to-rural population resettlement was a means of uncapping Xinjiang's potential while drastically reducing the size of China's cities. In the nationwide effort to "support agriculture" (支援农业 *zhiyuan nongye*), the economies of urban China and frontier China became complementary, even as they faced different challenges and prioritized different goals.

State-led urban-to-rural population resettlement in the 1960s shows the complicated interconnectivity between urban China, rural China, and frontier China and invites us to transverse the traditional geographic fault lines dividing modern Chinese history.[30] Bound by political, economic, and cultural connections, the symbiotic

[30] During the early decades of the People's Republic of China, much of what was written about the country concerned village life. The emphasis on rural areas, land reform, and collectivization only persisted as the villages became more open to fieldwork in the 1970s and 1980s, and later as the vaults of the archives were selectively revealed. See William Hinton, *Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966); C.K. Yang, *A Chinese Village in Early Communist Transition* (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1959); Edward Friedman, Paul G. Pickowicz, and Mark Selden with Kay Ann Johnson, *Chinese Village, Socialist State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991); Edward Friedman, Paul G. Pickowicz, and Mark Selden, *Revolution, Resistance, and Reform in Village China* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005); Huaiyin Li, *Village China Under Socialism and Reform: A Micro-History, 1948-2008* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2009).

More recently, scholars have sought to correct the rural bias in the historiography by revisiting the Chinese Communist Party's urban policies. Scholars in the field of Shanghai studies are now proliferating research on the post-1949 era, and new works are also emerging on other urban areas such as Beijing,

relationships between urban China and rural China meant that policy in one realm was inevitably shaped by developments in another.[31]

**China's "Educated Youth"**

Driven by a desire to simultaneously change the city, the countryside, and the frontier, China's population resettlement programs in the 1950s and 1960s targeted several different social strata, including peasants, workers, and government and party cadres. It also encompassed a broad range of experiences. Some individuals were sent to factories, others to rugged borderlands; some people managed to stay close to home, but others had to traverse the entire country and ended up on the actual edges of China. There were many different forms of rustication which were practiced in different localities and

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Tianjin, and Hangzhou. For older assessments, see Ezra F. Vogel, *Canton under Communism: Programs and Politics in a Provincial Capital, 1949-1968* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969; John Wilson Lewis, ed., *The City in Communist China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1971). For Shanghai history, see in order of appearance: Matthew D. Johnson, "Beneath the Propaganda State: Official and Unofficial Cultural Landscapes in Shanghai, 1949-1965," in *Maoism at the Grassroots*, 199-229; Jennifer E. Altehenger, "Between State and Service Industry: Group and Collective Weddings in Communist Shanghai, 1949-1956," *Twentieth-Century China* 40, no. 1 (January 2015): 48-68, doi: 10.1179/1521538514Z.00000000053; Maura Elizabeth Cunningham, "Shanghai's Wandering Ones: Child Welfare in a Global City, 1900-1953" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Irvine, 2014),169-205; Qiliang He, "Between Accommodation and Resistance: Pingtan Storytelling in 1960s Shanghai," *Modern Asian Studies* 48, no. 3 (May 2014): 524-549, doi: 10.1017/S0026749X12000789; James Z. Gao, "Eating, Cooking, and Shanghai's 'Less-than-Manly-Men': The Social Consequences of Food Rationing and Economic Reforms," *Frontiers of History in China* 8, no. 2 (June 2013): 259-293, doi: 10.3868/s020-002-013-0017-4; Christian Henriot, "Slums, Squats, or Hutments? Constructing and Deconstructing an In-Between Space in Modern Shanghai (1926-65)," *Frontiers of History in China* 7, no. 4 (December 2012): 499-528, doi: 10.3868/s020-001-012-0030-5; Denise Y. Ho, "Reforming Connoisseurship: State and Collectors in Shanghai in the 1950s and 1960s," *Frontiers of History in China* 7, no. 4 (December 2012): 608-637, doi: 10.3868/s020-001-012-0034-3; Denise Y. Ho, "Revolutionizing Antiquity: The Shanghai Cultural Bureaucracy in the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1968," *The China Quarterly* 207 (September 2011): 687-705; Zhang Jishun, "Thought Reform and Press Nationalization in Shanghai: The *Wenhui Newspaper* in the Early 1950s," *Twentieth-Century China* 35, no. 2 (April 2010): 52-80, doi: 10.1353/tcc.0.0030.

For Beijing history, see Aminda M. Smith, *Thought Reform and China's Dangerous Classes: Reeducation, Resistance, and the People* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013). For Hangzhou, see James Z. Gao, *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou: The Transformation of City and Cadre, 1949-1954* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004).

[31] Felix Wemheuer, *Famine Politics in Maoist China and the Soviet Union* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); Jeremy Brown, *City versus Countryside in Mao's China: Negotiating the Divide* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Gao, *The Communist Takeover of Hangzhou*.

at different times.[32] While subsequent chapters introduce some of these forms of resettlement, such as the so-called "downsizing" (精简 *jingjian*) of industries and government offices in urban China after the Great Leap Forward, the primary emphasis of this dissertation is on the resettlement of young people.[33]

Most participants involved in the urban-to-rural resettlement campaign to Xinjiang were between the ages of 16 and 25 *sui* (15-24 years old), unmarried, and had attained a middle school or high school education. These individuals were known as "educated youth," or the *zhiqing*. When the CCP began using this terminology with great frequency in the mid-1950s, it did not intend for it to become a political category. Thus, unlike "landlord" or "rich peasant," this label was not a life-sentence. I therefore use the term in quotes throughout the dissertation.

According to Chinese scholars, the term "educated youth" was primarily a means of contrasting these members of China's "baby boomer" generation with the older generation of industrial workers, which was less educated and only semi-literate.[34] It was also an allusion to past generations of "educated youth" who had made contributions for the good of the Chinese nation. The term "educated youth" dated back at least to the May Fourth Movement of 1919, and it was deployed often by the Nationalist Government in

[32] Prior to the Cultural Revolution, one could be sent "down to the countryside" (下乡 *xiaxiang*) and relocated to strange and entirely new locales, or one could simply be made return to their home village (回乡 *huixiang*). During the Cultural Revolution, *chadui* (插队) meant to go to a village, but *chachang* (插场) meant to go to a state-run farm. There was also the practice of *xiafang* (下放), which brought urban cadres—rather than young people—to the villages in an attempt to trim excess labor from the bureaucracies.

[33] See also Luo Pinghan, *Da qianxi: 1961-1963nian de chengzhen renkou jingjian* (The Great Migration: The Downsizing of Urban Populations, 1961-1963) (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 2003).

[34] Yuan Jin, Ding Yunliang, and Wang Youfu, *Shenfen jiangou yu wuzhi shenghuo: 20shiji 50niandai Shanghai gongren de shehui wenhua shenghuo* (Identity Construction and Material Life: The Social and Cultural Lives of Shanghai Workers in the 1950s) (Shanghai: Shanghai shudian chubanshe, 2008), 8-9.

subsequent decades.[35] The Guomindang, for example, called on "educated youth to join the army" during the Sino-Japanese War.[36] The Chinese Communist Party revived the phrase in the 1950s and 1960s and remained faithful to its connotations of national service and sacrifice.

Most important, however, "educated youth" was a distinction from so-called "social youth" (社会青年 *shehui qingnian*), or individuals who had graduated from middle and high school but had not officially entered the workforce. The term "social youth" had negative political and social connotations, implying that a young person was effectively outside of the party and state's embrace. After all, if a young person was not in school, their mentality (思想 *sixiang*) could not be monitored and shaped by an official educational institution; if they were not at work, their productivity could not be channeled by state-affiliated work units. They were therefore vulnerable to illicit social influences and engaging in immoral behavior, all while not contributing to the development of the national economy.

The distinction between "social youth" and "educated youth" is important for understanding the evolving aims of urban-to-rural population resettlement in pre-Cultural Revolution China. While initially a means of transforming the landscape of frontier China and the cityscapes of urban China, gradually the Chinese state used urban-to-rural population resettlement to also transform the minds and bodies of 100,000 young people. By experiencing both the joys and the sorrows of agricultural labor, the nation's youth

[35] Zuoya Cao, *Out of the Crucible: Literary Works about the Rusticated Youth* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2003), 1.
[36] See, for example, Sun Yuqin and Liu Jingzhong, "Kangzhan moqi de 'shiwan zhishi qingnian congjun' yundong shuping" ("A Review of the '100,000 Educated Youth Joining the Army' Movement at the End of the Anti-Japanese War"), *Kang ri zhanzheng yanjiu* no. 3 (2010): 19-27.

could undergo an ideological and physical rejuvenation. Stimulated by urban-to-rural population resettlement, self-transformation allowed once hopeless "social youth" to become "educated youth," a vanguard force for the Chinese and even world revolutions.

**Resettlement's Afterlives**

The idea of a reciprocal transformation between people and place—that minds, bodies, and environments would all be changed—was the overarching theme of and rationale for urban-to-rural population settlement in socialist China prior to 1966. Yet moving 100,000 people from China's urban heart to its remote, underdeveloped periphery was not a simple process. The on-the-ground experiences of young people in Xinjiang challenged the powerful and persuasive ideas underlying urban-to-rural population resettlement. The hardships of agricultural labor, combined with deteriorating living standards—whether measured in terms of housing, food, or clothing—tested the resolve of the urban "educated youth" to remain faithful to the campaign.

While the complaints of the *zhiqing* did not fully erode the will of the state to transform the people and place through population resettlement, by autumn 1966, the campaign was, on paper, over. The start of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution disrupted resettlement work, preventing Shanghai and other cities from dispatching additional young people to Xinjiang. The temporary hiatus in mobilization work became permanent as the Cultural Revolution progressed, leading to a total collapse of institutional linkages between Xinjiang and the sending communities. Many *zhiqing* already in Xinjiang, moreover, opted to return to the cities either for the sake of the revolution or for their own individual safety. As the human footprint of population resettlement receded, the central leadership disavowed resettlement to Xinjiang.

After years of championing population resettlement to the far northwest, the campaign ended abruptly, but it was not entirely over. The post-Cultural Revolution, post-Mao leadership strove to reconstitute the human footprint of urban-to-rural population resettlement, but in the process, it engendered strong resistance from the campaign's subjects. The collision of state and society in the early reform era revealed the depth of social resentment toward population resettlement as a state-building tool. While the Central Government pushed back against the demands of the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang as much as it could, the physical, living remnants of the high socialist era could not be permanently preserved in the far northwest.

**Numbers**

This dissertation uses a general figure of "100,000" urban youth sent to Xinjiang in the years between 1963 and 1966 because the precise number of individuals dispatched remains hard to know. Although Shanghai supplied most of the "educated youth" to Xinjiang during this period, the *zhiqing* also came from dozens of other locations, including Beijing, Wuhan, and Tianjin and several cities in Jiangsu Province and Zhejiang Province. Based on the available data from these locales, the actual number of *zhiqing* sent to Xinjiang was probably closer to 125,000, but the challenges of knowing the exact number of "educated youth" remain.

Sources from each of the sending communities—such as provincial, municipal, and urban district-level gazetteers (志 *zhi*)—often do provide details about urban-to-rural resettlement in the 1960s, although they do not always include a final tally on the numbers of young people sent to Xinjiang. Even when they do, occasionally one finds multiple estimates within a set of sources from the same community. Furthermore, the

estimates provided by the sending communities do not always match data provided by the receiving community; in this case the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. The gazetteers are wholly imperfect sources, and allow us to only arrive at a general estimate—not a concrete figure—of the numbers of *zhiqing* sent to Xinjiang after the Great Leap Forward.[37]

As mentioned above, Shanghai, China's largest city, provided the lion's share of young urbanites to Xinjiang. An historian of urban-to-rural resettlement to Xinjiang and himself a veteran of the campaign, Xie Min'gan (谢敏干), reports that the Production and Construction Corps received 97,048 individuals from Shanghai between September 1961 and October 1966.[38] How Xie reached this figure is not exactly clear, but his calculation does dovetail with some of the statistics provided by the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.[39] Yet neither Xie's arithmetic nor the *bingtuan*'s are consistent with figures from Shanghai. At least two local gazetteers report that the city sent 12,000 fewer teenagers to Xinjiang during this period.[40]

Beijing, China's capital city, sent a much smaller contingent of young people to Xinjiang. In fact, according to Beijing's *Labor Gazetteer*, the city sent only 223 *zhiqing* to Xinjiang in 1965.[41] Declassified documents from the Beijing Municipal Archives also

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[37] Andrew G. Walder, "Rebellion and Repression in China, 1966-1971," *Social Science History* 38 (Winter 2014): 513-539.
[38] Xie Min'gan, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji* (Chronicle of Major Events in the Forty Years the Shanghai Educated Youth Spent Going Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages in Xinjiang) (Shanghai: Zhuhai chubanshe, 2006), 48.
[39] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, ed., *Shengchan jianshe bigntuan zhi* (Production and Construction Corps Gazetteer, vol. 37 of *Xinjiang tongzhi* (Annals of Xinjiang) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1998), 28.
[40] See, for example, "Shanghai qingnian zhi" bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for the *Gazetteer of Shanghai Youth*), ed., *Shanghai qingnian zhi* (Gazetteer of Shanghai Youth) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 2002), 9, 94, 487, 766-769.
[41] Beijing difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 46.

suggest that Xinjiang ranked low among resettlement destinations, dwarfed by farms in Northeast China.[42] Yet other sources, including materials produced by the *bingtuan*, suggest that Beijing sent over 4,000 young people to the far northwest in the mid-1960s.[43]

Wuhan, the largest city in Hubei Province, also participated in urban-to-rural resettlement to Xinjiang. Unfortunately, Wuhan's municipal gazetteers do not provide total figures for the resettlement program.[44] A local *wenshi ziliao* collection from Hubei, however, reveals that 7,491 individuals were sent to Xinjiang between 1964 and 1966.[45] The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps offers a similar figure of 7,900.[46]

Tianjin, a major port city to the south of the capital, also established an important population resettlement relationship with Xinjiang. Like Wuhan, the official gazetteers from Tianjin do not provide total statistics for the campaign.[47] Memoir compilations, such as those edited by Wang Guozheng (王国征), however, suggest that Tianjin sent as

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[42] Beijing shi anzhi chengshi xiaxiang qingnian lingdao xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Beijing Municipal Leading Small Group for Placing Urban Sent-Down Youth), "Gequ dongyuan he zuzhi zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang qingkuang jianbao (shi'er)" ("Brief Report on the Situation of All Districts Mobilizing and Organizing Educated Youth to Go Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages, No. 12"), September 20, 1965, Beijing shi dang'anguan (Beijing Municipal Archives [BMA]), 110-001-01749, 138. See also untitled letter from 北京市安置城市下乡青年领导小组办公室 Beijing shi anzhi chengshi xiaxiang qingnian lingdao xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Beijing Municipal Leading Small Group for Placing and Sending Down Urban Youth) to the 中央安办 Zhongyang an ban (Central Committee Placement Work Office), March 12, 1966, BMA, 110-001-01741, 3-5.

An important collection of memoirs from Beijing also indicates that the number of *zhiqing* was in the low two-hundreds. See Zhao Yanjun, ed., *Tianshan jiaoxia de Beijing zhiqing* (Beijing *Zhiqing* at the Foot of the Heavenly Mountain) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan chubanshe, 2014).

[43] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Shengchan jianshe bigntuan zhi*, 28.

[44] See, for example, Wuhan difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee of Local Chronicles for Wuhan Municipality), ed., *Dashi ji* (Chronicle of Major Events), vol. 2 of *Wuhan shi zhi* (Gazetteer of Wuhan Municipality) (Wuhan: Wuhan daxue chubanshe, 1990), 241, 247.

[45] Gong Qianghua, ed., *Hubei ershi shiji wu liu niandai yuan Jiang shiliao xuanji* (Selected Historical Data on Hubei's Aid to Xinjiang in the 1950s and 1960s) (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 2008).

[46] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Shengchan jianshe bigntuan zhi*, 28.

[47] See, for example, Tianjin shi difangzhi bian xiu weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles in Tianjin), ed., *Tianjin tongzhi: Dashiji* (Annals of Tianjin: Chronicle of Major Events) (Tianjin: Tianjin shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 1994), 399.

a many as 11,000 individuals to Xinjiang.[48] The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps indicates 7,000 young people from Tianjin came to Xinjiang in the 1960s.[49]

While several cities in Jiangsu Province dispatched "educated youth" to Xinjiang in the 1960s, local gazetteers from Xinjiang state the province sent only 2,900 *zhiqing*.[50] This figure is significantly smaller than sources from Jiangsu. The provincial *Labor Administration Gazetteer,* for example, suggests that Jiangsu provided 17,221 teenagers to Xinjiang in the mid-1960s.[51] Individual municipal gazetteers from the participant communities also point to over 15,000 young people going to Xinjiang. Nanjing, for example, reports that 6,700 *zhiqing* went to Xinjiang in just two years.[52] It is unclear precisely how many Wuxi sent, although it probably sent among the largest contingent from Jiangsu, with some sources suggesting it was as large as 4,000 *zhiqing*.[53] Xuzhou, a mid-sized city in northwestern Jiangsu Province, sent 2,870 *zhiqing* to northern Xinjiang

[48] See, for example, Wang Guozheng, ed., *Na hunqian mengying de difang* (The Place We Miss So Much) (Beijing: Zhongguo sanxia chubanshe, 2004).
[49] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Shengchan jianshe bigntuan zhi*, 28.
[50] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Shengchan jianshe bigntuan zhi*, 28.
[51] Jiangsu sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compliation Committee for the Gazetteers of Jiangsu Province), ed., *Laodong guanli zhi* (Labor Administration Gazetteer), vol. 72 of *Jiangsu sheng zhi* (Jiangsu Provincial Gazeteer) (Beijing: Fangzhi chubanshe, 2000), 128. See also Jiangsu sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compliation Committee for the Gazetters of Jiangsu Province), ed.,*Minzheng zhi* (Civil Administration Gazetteer), vol. 70 of *Jiangsu sheng zhi* (Jiangsu Provincial Gazeteer) (Beijing: Fangzhi chubanshe, 2002), 834.
[52] Jiangsu sheng Nanjing shi laodong zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compliation Committee for the *Nanjing Municipal Labor Gazetter*), ed., *Nanjing laodong zhi* (Nanjing Municipal Labor Gazetteer) (Beijing: Fangzhi chubanshe, 1999), 768-769. For 1966 statistics, see also Zhongguo gongchandang Nanjing shi weiyuanhui (CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu 'guanyu yijiuliuliu nian dongyuan chengshi zhishi qingnian xiaxiang chadui he zhiyuan Xinjiang jianshe anpai yijian de baogao" ("The [Nanjing] Municipal Committee forwards the Municipal Committee's Streamlining and Settlement Small Group's 'Report on Plans and Proposals to Mobilize Urban Educated Youth to Go Down to the Villages and Join Production Teams or Assist Xinjiang's Construction in 1966'"), June 29, 1966, Jiangsu sheng dang'anguan (Jiangsu Provincial Archives [JPA]), 3030-003-0122, 14-16.
[53] Wuxi shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles of Wuxi Municipality), ed., *Wuxi shi zhi* (Wuxi Municipal Gazetteer), vol. 3 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1995), 2078.

over a period of two years.[54] Idyllic Suzhou sent somewhere around 800 *zhiqing* to Xinjiang in 1965-1966.[55] Smaller cities, such as Zhenjiang, sent around 400 young people to Xinjiang in 1964-1965,[56] while Changzhou and Changshu also sent several hundred during the final two years of the resettlement campaign.[57]

Local gazetteers from Xinjiang report that Zhejiang Province dispatched about 4,800 urban "educated youth."[58] For once, this figure does match the data contained in Zhejiang's own official histories.[59] Of cities within Zhejiang, Hangzhou sent only 94

[54] Wang Xilong, ed., *Xuzhou shi zhi* (Gazetteer of Xuzhou Municipality), vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju, 1994), 1774. See alsoZhonggong Xuzhou shiwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (CCP Xuzhou Municipal Committee Streamlining and Settlement Office), "Dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang nongken jianshe gongzuo xiaojie" ("Summary of Work to Mobilize Social Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Land Reclamation Construction") July 30, 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0122, 45-51. See also in JPA 3030-003-0122, 69-75.

[55] Suzhou shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles of Suzhou Municipality), ed., *Suzhou shi zhi* (Suzhou Municipal Gazetteer), vol. 3 (Nanjing: Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 1995), 510.

[56] During the same period, it sent just over 2,000 others to farms and cooperatives within Jiangsu Province. See Zhang Shikai et al, ed., *Zhenjiang shi zhi* (Gazetteer of Zhenjiang Municipality), vol. 1 (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 1993), 485-486.

[57] See Changzhou shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles of Changzhou Municipality), ed., *Changzhou shi zhi* (Changzhou Municipal Gazetteer), vol. 3 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1995), 83, and Jiangsu sheng Changshu shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles of Changhu Municipality), ed., *Changshu shi zhi* (Gazetteer of Changshu Municipality) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1990), 636.

[58] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Shengchan jianshe bigntuan zhi*, 28.

[59] "Zhejiang sheng laodong baozhang zhi" bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for *Gazetteer of Job Security in Zhejiang Province*), ed., *Zhejiang sheng laodong baozhang zhi* (Gazetteer of Job Security in Zhejiang Province) (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2004), 120.

individuals;[60] Wenzhou sent 1,500;[61] and Ningbo sent over a thousand.[62] Smaller urban areas, such as Taizhou's Huangyan District, dispatched around 500 young people.[63]

Based on this data, the number of young city dwellers sent to Xinjiang in the 1960s ranges from 107,000 on the low-end to 142,000 on the high-end. While I would personally estimate that the number of *zhiqing* was close to 125,000, Xinjiang's own *Labor Gazetteer* estimates that the Uyghur Autonomous Region received 129,000 urban youth from 1963-1966.[64]

Relative to China's overall population in the 1960s and even to the population of young people in China at this time, 100,000 people may seem like a small figure. However, it is important to note that Xinjiang was only one location among many other resettlement destinations. Across China, dozens if not hundreds of state-run farms and local cooperatives absorbed surplus "educated youth" from cities. In total, more than one

[60] Hangzhou shi geweihui zhiqing ban (Educated Youth Office of the Hangzhou Municipal Revolutionary Committee), "Hangzhou shi zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang de jiben gaikuang" ("Basic Situation of Hangzhou Educated Youth Who Went Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages"), September 16, 1981, Hangzhou shi dang'anguan (Hangzhou Municipal Archives [HMA]), 036-003-105, 9-16. See also Hangzhou shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles in Hangzhou Municipality), ed., *Hangzhou shi zhi* (Gazetteer of Hangzhou Municipality), vol. 9 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1997), 225.

[61] Although the Municipal Gazetteer states in one passage that the resettlements to Xinjiang took place in 1964, other passages indicate the mobilization of "educated youth" did not actually commence until June 1965. See Wenzhou shi zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for the *Wenzhou Municipal Gazetteer*), ed., *Wenzhou shi zhi* (Wenzhou Municipal Gazetteer), vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), 61, 318; and Wenzhou shi zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for the *Wenzhou Municipal Gazetteer*), ed., *Wenzhou shi zhi* (Wenzhou Municipal Gazetteer), vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1998), 1928.

[62] Ningbo shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for the *Ningbo Municipal Gazetteer*), ed., *Ningbo shi zhi* (Ningbo Municipal Gazetteer), vol. 1 (Ningbo: Ningbo chubanshe, 1995), 121.

[63] Zhengxie Zhejiang sheng Huangyan qu weiyuanhui wenzhi ziliao he xuexi weiyuanhui, ed., *Huangyan wenshi ziliao* (Historical Materials from Huangyan), vol. 28 (Huangyan, 2014).

[64] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, ed., *Laodong zhi* (Labor Gazetteer), vol. 17 of *Xinjiang tongzhi* (Annals of Xinjiang) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1996), 62.

million urban teenagers were likely sent-down in the years after the Great Leap Forward and before the Cultural Revolution.[65]

Statistically, Xinjiang is thus an appropriate case study of a larger resettlement program during this period. It received around 10 percent of all sent-down "educated youth" in the 1960s, and was also the most popular resettlement destination for several cities. Shanghai, for example, sent far more of its young people to Xinjiang than any other location. Even farms on the outskirts of the city paled in comparison.[66] For Nanjing, Xinjiang received 30 percent of all young people resettled between 1962 and 1966.[67] Further north in Xuzhou, local statistics suggest that Xinjiang received more than half of the city's *zhiqing* sent-down prior to the Cultural Revolution.[68] In other words, for many of the sending communities, Xinjiang was the single most important resettlement destination.

Resettlement to Xinjiang is also compelling object of study because it was the most radical example of urban-to-rural resettlement prior to the Cultural Revolution. Geographically, it moved people from one side of China to the farthest possible other

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[65] Peng Deng, "Introduction: Exiled Pilgrims: Experiences of Pre-Cultural Revolution *Zhiqing*," in *Exiled Pilgrims*, 3.

[66] See "Shanghai laodong zhi" bianxuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for *Shanghai Labor Gazetteer*), ed., *Shanghai laodong zhi* (Shanghai Labor Gazetteer) (Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue chubanshe, 1998), 113.

[67] Jiangsu sheng Nanjing shi laodong zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nanjing laodong zhi*, 768-769. For 1966 statistics, see also Zhongguo gongchandang Nanjing shi weiyuanhui (CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu 'guanyu yijiuliuliu nian dongyuan chengshi zhishi qingnian xiaxiang chadui he zhiyuan Xinjiang jianshe anpai yijian de baogao" ("The [Nanjing] Municipal Committee forwards the Municipal Committee's Streamlining and Settlement Small Group's 'Report on Plans and Proposals to Mobilize Urban Educated Youth to Go Down to the Villages and Join Production Teams or Assist Xinjiang's Construction in 1966'"), June 29, 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0122, 14-16.

[68] Wang, ed., *Xuzhou shi zhi*, vol. 2, 1774. See alsoZhonggong Xuzhou shiwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (CCP Xuzhou Municipal Committee Streamlining and Settlement Office), "Dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang nongken jianshe gongzuo xiaojie" ("Summary of Work to Mobilize Social Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Land Reclamation Construction") July 30, 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0122, 45-51. See also in JPA 3030-003-0122, 69-75.

side; economically, it moved them from the most developed cities to the least developed frontier; and socially and culturally, it moved them from a familiar, densely populated Han Chinese societies to remote enclaves in essentially foreign land. To put it more concretely, the Chinese Government was willing to catapult someone as young as 15 years old over 4,000 kilometers. Urban-to-rural population resettlement to Xinjiang was the most extreme manifestation of the Chinese state's will to dramatically transform the existing population geography.

**Sources**

Utilizing materials from 20 archives on Mainland China, this dissertation benefits from and seeks to accelerate the archival turn in PRC history. It is the first English-language study of urban-to-rural population resettlement in socialist China to be based primarily upon unpublished archival sources. Deng Peng, Michel Bonnin, Helena Rene, Thomas Bernstein, and Yihong Pan, by contrast, drew largely on interviews, oral history testimonies, newspaper accounts, and personal reminiscences to construct their narratives of population resettlement prior to and during the Cultural Revolution.[69] The methodologies deployed in these works are not under criticism; oral histories of resettlement are invaluable for understanding the lived experiences of the "educated youth." Archival research is thus not inherently superior to oral history, but it often does cast this history in a different light.[70] The considerable wealth of archival materials now

[69] Deng, *Exiled Pilgrims*; Bonnin, *The Lost Generation*; Rene, *China's Sent-Down Generation*; Bernstein, *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages*; Pan, *Tempered in the Revolutionary Furnace*. Only Deng's work, an edited collection of brief memoir essays with an insightful introductory essay, focuses on the pre-Cultural Revolution rustications.

[70] For further discussions on oral histories and textual research in the context of PRC history, see Hershatter, *The Gender of Memory*. I also describe some of the justifications for using archival sources in Charles Kraus, "Researching the History of the People's Republic of China," *Cold War International History Project Working Paper* 79 (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center, April 2016). See also Smith, *Thought Reform and China's Dangerous Classes*, 7-8.

accessible—some 50 years after the last pre-Cultural Revolution "educated youth" were sent-down—invites inquiry. My work utilizes these sources to fill in the other half of a conversation started by the scholars mentioned above.

I draw on documents collected from archives at nearly every administrative level, including the archives of individual ministries (部 *bu*), provinces (省 *sheng*), municipalities (市 *shi*), and urban districts (区 *qu*).

The bulk of the sources underlying this dissertation come from the Shanghai Municipal Archives (SMA). Shanghai sent the largest contingent of young people to Xinjiang in the 1960s, and fortunately today, the SMA is the most open, accessible, and advanced archive in China. The hundreds if not thousands of individual documents available at the SMA relevant to urban-to-rural resettlement were essential to this dissertation. They include individual reports, letters, speeches, and other artifacts which cover all aspects of the "educated youth" in Xinjiang—the lead up to the campaign, mobilization for it, site visits to and inspections of Xinjiang, the end of resettlement in 1966, life during the Cultural Revolution, the attempts by many rusticates to return to Shanghai during the early Reform and Opening era, and, finally, the Central Government's interventions in the early 1980s which forced the majority of Shanghai rusticates to return to or remain in Xinjiang. These speeches, descriptive and statistical reports, and directives were, moreover, composed by many stakeholders involved in the campaign, including the Shanghai People's Government, the Municipal Labor Bureau, the Shanghai CCP Committee, the Communist Youth League, the State Council, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, and various work teams (工作组 *gongzuo zu*), small groups (小组 *xiao zu*), and individual cadres.

By casting a wide archival net and conducting research in the archives of several other sending communities (such as Tianjin, Beijing, and Ningbo) as well as closer to the grassroots level (such as in the archives of Huangpu District and Jing'an District in Shanghai), I was able to cross-reference, cross-check, contextualize, and challenge the data accessible in Shanghai. For instance, in the SMA I found a copy of a speech which described the long train ride from Shanghai to Urumqi as a coming of age moment; in the Jiangsu Provincial Archives, however, I found another record describing how the train to Xinjiang was overcrowded, stuffy, and did not even have clean drinking water.[71] While I was not able to research at the archive of every single sending community, I tried to get to most of them.

Unfortunately, I do not cite a single unpublished document from archives in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. While a handful of studies of PRC-era Xinjiang do cite archival documents from the region, the archives in Xinjiang are essentially closed to outside researchers.[72] The Archives of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps—undoubtedly one of the most important to the story told here—have not been utilized by any scholar, at least to my knowledge. Although I could find many reports written and produced by Xinjiang's officials in archives in Shanghai, Tianjin, Beijing, Hubei, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang, as well as in a handful of published document

[71] See, respectively, "Xinjiang nong yi shi shengli jiu chang Wu Yueying dahui fayan gao" ("Draft Speech of Wu Yueying of the Victorious 9th Farm, Xinjiang 1st Agricultural Division, at the Meeting"), April 29, 1964, Shanghai shi dang'anguan (Shanghai Municipal Archives [SMA]), B127-1-162, 28-34; and Zhonggong Nanjing shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining and Placement Small Group of the CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee), "Guanyu shoupi jin Jiang zhishi qingnian tuzhong qingkuang de huibao" ("Report on the Travels of the First Group of Educated Youth Going to Xinjiang"), August 7, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 6-8.

[72] See, for example, Zhe Wu, "Caught between Opposing Han Chauvinism and Opposing Local Nationalism: The Drift toward Ethnic Antagonism in Xinjiang Society, 1952-1963," in *Maoism at the Grassroots*, 306-339.

collections,[73] my study is inherently biased toward the perspectives of the sending communities and not the receiving community.

Even if the archives are in China are not always open, the markets are. Michael Schoenhals and Jeremy Brown, especially, have shown that our understanding of the history of the People's Republic of China can be dramatically enhanced by utilizing the so-called "garbage materials" (垃圾材料 *laji cailiao*).[74] These orphaned government documents, intimate personal artifacts, and rare publications, magazines, and newspapers from the Mao era can purchased from used booksellers in China today, often at modest prices. To be sure, these sources are not without their problems, and materials purchased on the market are probably best thought of as a complement to archival research, not as a substitution for it.[75] For this dissertation, however, I do make use of unpublished documents from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, personal dossiers and artifacts, Cultural Revolution-era tracts, speeches, and rare books and periodicals.

The source materials available for this dissertation—while still voluminous—have unfortunately gradually *decreased* since I started my research in 2013, as the staffs at the archives have been actively removing sources and "reclassifying" documents. In 2014, I

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[73] See, especially, Bingtuan dangwei dangshi yanjiushi and Bingtuan dang'an ju, ed., *Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan lishi wenjian xuanbian* (Selected Historical Documents of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps [XSJBLWX]), 2 vols. (Wujiaqu: Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan chubanshe, 2015); Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Zhibian zhishi qingnian zhuanji* (Album on the Youth Who Aided the Borderland and Educated Youth [ZZQZ]), vol. 12 of *Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan shiliao xuanji* (Historical Selections of the Xinjang Production and Construction Corps) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2003); and Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi and Zhonggong Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu weiyuanhui, eds., *Xinjiang gongzuo wenxian xuanbian* (Selected Documents on Xinjiang Work [XGWX]) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2010).

[74] For two excellent examples, see Michael Schoenhals, *Spying for the People: Mao's Secret Agents, 1949-1967* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); and Brown, *City versus Countryside in Mao's China*.

[75] Elizabeth J. Perry, "The Promise of PRC History," *Journal of Modern Chinese Studies* 10, no. 1 (2016): 113-117. See also my criticisms and concerns in Kraus, "Researching the History of the People's Republic of China."

discovered that several folders related to the "educated youth" at the SMA, which I consulted the previous year, had been removed and was no longer publicly accessible. The contents of one folder included letters written from Commander Wang Zhen (王震) to the central government in 1963 proposing this relocation campaign, a summary of the first year of the campaign, and several speeches given by Shanghai officials at mobilization meetings.[76] As it turned out, this was among the most important folders related to the *zhiqing,* and its removal was especially aggravating. I was not able to systematically verify how many other materials previously consulted were also removed, but this example is a poignant reminder: though we can now use archives to write PRC history, the raw materials presented to us are very much curated and tightly controlled. Reclassification, moreover, undermines a critical aspect of the historical method and the scholarly enterprise: reproducibility.

On the bright side, the efforts of the staff at the archives to control the flow of information on China's history are not just misguided, but often fruitless. I occasionally discovered that some documents, now removed from one folder, were available in other folders within an archive. Even more perplexing, I found many reclassified documents which were published in officially sanctioned Chinese-language books or journals, including the materials produced by Wang Zhen in 1963.[77] While it is probably only a matter of time before the duplicates of now "classified" documents are removed from the archives, there is little the censors can do about documents published in books which are available in libraries around the world.

[76] See SMA B127-1-359.
[77] See Yao Yong, *Shanghai zhiqing zai Xinjiang* (The Shanghai *Zhiqing* in Xinjiang) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang daxue chubanshe, 2001), 193-196.

**Outline**

Chapter One introduces why the Chinese state hesitated to begin urban-to-rural resettlement until 1963. Though desirous of tapping into Xinjiang's natural resources, the People's Republic of China also wanted to protect urban economies and accelerate China's industrialization. As a result, the state practiced rural-to-frontier population resettlement. Concurrent with the Great Leap Forward, the Chinese Government moved hundreds of thousands of rural *hukou* holders from Jiangsu, Hubei, Henan, and Anhui to Xinjiang and other outlying provinces. The state's will to transform the interiors and exteriors of China, however, was challenged during this period by technological barriers and social resistance. The failure of rural-to-rural resettlement cast urban-to-rural resettlement in favorable light and helped to create an urban-frontier population nexus.

Chapter Two moves the history of urban-to-rural resettlement forward chronologically, showing how the campaign unfolded during the post-Great Leap Forward "reform" period. With Mao Zedong on the sidelines of China's leadership, the Central Committee took steps to end the famine and restore agricultural production. To do so, China's leaders stripped away the preferential treatment of cities and downsized urban populations. After expelling a host of vulnerable populations from the cities (including rural *hukou* holders), the state finally targeted unemployed young people. It was individuals such as Commander Wang Zhen who then connected the dots and recognized that the so-called "social youth" could aid the development of Xinjiang and help the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps to achieve its grain, silk, and cotton mandates.

Rather than a response to narrow problems such as ethnic tensions or cross-border conflict, urban-to-rural resettlement emerged out of much broader milieu: the post-Great Leap Forward political and economic transition. Considered a means of resolving real problems, however, urban-to-rural resettlement was not just about place, it was also about people. Chapter Three explores how the Chinese state mobilized more than 100,000 young people to leave the cities and move thousands of kilometers away to Xinjiang. It demonstrates that the longer "mobilization" went on, the more the urban-to-rural resettlement became about ideology, revolution, and social reform. While initially the Chinese state sought to transform the landscape of frontier China and the cityscapes of urban China, gradually it used urban-to-rural population resettlement to Xinjiang to transform the minds and bodies of the nation's youth.

Chapter Four compares the Chinese state's ambitious with the campaign's actual results. To be sure, urban-to-rural resettlement to Xinjiang did coincide with an increase in the output of cash crops and foodstuffs in the region. Aside from developmental results, certain aspects of the campaign, such as the cross-country journeys, helped to nurture political and emotional attachments to China among young urbanites that previously may not have existed. Yet the reality of the on-the-ground experiences of the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang often clashed with the state's promises. The participants in urban-to-rural resettlement often experienced displeasure and physical discomfort as they attempted to make new lives in Xinjiang.

As Chapter Five demonstrates, however, it was not the complaints of the rusticates which eroded the will of the state to transform the frontier and the individual through population resettlement. Rather, the Chinese Communist Party remained invested

in using population resettlement as a means of achieving the transformation of both people and place until the start of the Cultural Revolution. The effects of the Cultural Revolution on urban-to-rural population resettlement were disastrous, however, bringing the campaign to a prompt and unceremonious end. After the Cultural Revolution sparked considerable social and political unrest in Xinjiang, Zhou Enlai and other central-level leaders decided to disown rustication to the far northwest entirely. In the months and years that followed, thousands of *zhiqing* deserted Xinjiang or otherwise fended for themselves.

The final chapter, Chapter Six, shows that despite the Cultural Revolution bringing an official end to resettlement to Xinjiang, the single initiative still had a long afterlife. The semi-reformist leadership under Hua Guofeng and the reformist leadership under Deng Xiaoping both strove to reconstitute the human footprint of urban-to-rural population resettlement. While the post-Mao leaderships mandated that China's *zhiqing* generation return to Xinjiang, China's society resisted fiercely. While the Central Government pushed back against the demands of the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang as much as it could, the physical, living remnants of the Mao era proved difficult to preserve in the far northwest.

# Chapter 1: Precursors

## Introduction

This dissertation is about the practice and consequences of state-led, urban-to-rural population resettlement in socialist China. As a case study, it concentrates on the relocation of 100,000 young city dwellers to Xinjiang in the years between the end of China's Great Leap Forward and the start of its Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. While Chapter Two and Chapter Three explain how a series of structural and contingent factors—namely, development, demography, ideology, and a few key personalities—converged in the early and mid-1960s to create the phenomenon of "educated youth" on the Chinese frontier, this chapter charts the pre-history of and precursors to urban-to-rural population resettlement in China.

The central question asked here is: why did the Chinese state only start to deploy urban-to-rural resettlement in the early 1960s and not any earlier? After all, state-led population resettlement was a fixture of political life in the People's Republic of China almost immediately after its founding in 1949.[1] In the mid and late 1950s, the Chinese state leaned heavily on its ability to upend millions of people, using state-led migration—forms of human and social engineering—to ignite and sustain China's socialist revolution. In the seemingly inhospitable frontier of Xinjiang, for example, an area which the Chinese Communist Party hoped to turn into an agricultural and socialist paradise, the state moved hundreds of thousands of people over the span of just three years.

[1] Ding, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi*.

But these resettled peoples were not urbanites. Because the Chinese state also desired to engineer a modern, industrial economy, it did its utmost to protect China's existing industrial centers: that is, the cities. While the population of urban China grew substantially in the 1950s, the CCP preferred to keep most of its educated and skilled workers and students home. Thus, at this stage of the Chinese revolution, instead of moving city dwellers long distances, the PRC more often practiced rural-to-rural and rural-to-frontier resettlement.[2] The massive relocation program briefly mentioned above, for example, sought to channel huge pools of relatively uneducated workers from the rural interiors of China and bring them to the country's fringes, including Xinjiang.[3]

As an answer to the question asked above, all of this is important because the type of state-led population resettlement practiced in China in the 1950s failed. Rural-to-rural resettlement, at least to Xinjiang, was too costly—economically and socially—for China's state and society to bear. While the privileging of the cities and the idealization of the frontier did create important structural conditions for urban-to-rural resettlement, the failure of rural-to-rural resettlement itself nurtured the urban-frontier population nexus which emerged in post-Great Leap China.

**Cities in Socialist China**

In November 1960, China's Premier, Zhou Enlai, complimented the iconic Argentinian revolutionary Ernesto "Che" Guevara for successfully organizing a revolution right in America's backyard. The Cuban revolution was of complex significances, regionally and globally, Zhou noted, and yet there was a single explanation

[2] See, for example, Gregory Rohlf, *Building New China, Colonizing Kokonor: Resettlement to Qinghai in the 1950s* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016).
[3] See Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 61.

for Che's outstanding achievement. "Some Latin American friends did not heed peasants," Zhou explained. "You [Che]," however, "very much heeded this point and succeeded."

For Zhou Enlai (and Chairman Mao Zedong, who was also in the room), Che's success in the Cuban countryside was further proof of the universality of the Chinese revolutionary experience. Indulging in tales from China's history (at least how he liked to remember them), Zhou proclaimed that long before Che and Castro had risen to power, there was Chairman Mao, who "very much heeded this point." Mao, nodding his head in agreement, finally interjected in the conversation: "The enemy taught us, not allowing us to exist in cities."[4]

The points which Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong emphasized to Che Guevara are remarkably consistent what scholars in China and in the West have long obsessed over: the Chinese Communist Party's rural revolution. Several landmark works in Chinese history underlined the efficacy of the CCP's political and social programs in the countryside before and during the Chinese Civil War; others have even pinpointed the Nationalist Party's ultimate demise in China's villages.[5] Mao had indeed mused in 1939 that "since China's key cities have long been occupied by the powerful imperialists and

[4] Memorandum of Conversation between Mao Zedong and Ernesto "Che" Guevera, November 19, 1960, Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaobu dang'anguan (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China [PRCFMA]), 202-00098-01, 1-14, accessible at http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/115155.

[5] Chalmers A. Johnson, *Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power: The Emergence of Revolutionary China, 1937-1945* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1962); Donald Gillin, "'Peasant Nationalism' in the History of Chinese Communism," *Journal of Asian Studies* 23, no. 2 (February 1964): 269-289; Lloyd E. Eastman, *Seeds of Destruction: Nationalist China in War and Revolution, 1937-1949* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1984), 220.

their reactionary Chinese allies," the CCP was better off cultivating support in the villages and winning over the hearts and minds of the peasants.[6]

The actual experiences of the Chinese Civil War and the myths cultivated around it have tended to cast shadows on the post-1949 period. However, just as we now know that winning rural China was only half the battle for the CCP,[7] we also now know that, in the era of the People's Republic, the CCP's relationship to urban China was much more nuanced and complicated than any public proclamation suggested.[8]

After the founding of the PRC, the Party's policies toward the cities were often amicable and pragmatic.[9] The CCP advocated a "policy of prudence" in the early 1950s, for example, and called on its cadres to co-opt—rather than outright purge—so-called democratic elements and capitalists in the cities.[10] The Chinese state actually treasured the cities, home to China's industrial foundations and the country's most educated and skilled workforces.[11] By continuing to stash China's most important and profitable businesses in areas with preexisting industrial infrastructure—the coastal cities—New

[6] See December 1939, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,* vol. 1 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967).
[7] For narratives which situate the CCP's victory squarely in the battlefield, and not in the countryside, see S.C.M. Paine, *The Wars for Asia, 1911-1949* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), and Christopher R. Lew, *The Third Chinese Revolutionary Civil War, 1945-49: An Analysis of Communist Strategy and Leadership* (New York: Routledge, 2009).
[8] Christian Hess, "The Rise of the Chinese Communist Party," in *Demystifying China: New Understandings of Chinese History,* ed. Naomi Standen (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), 182.
[9] See, for several examples, Jonathan J. Howlett, "'The British Boss is Gone and Will Never Return': Communist Takeovers of British Companies in Shanghai (1949-1954)," *Modern Asian Studies* 47, no. 6 (2013): 1941-1976, doi: 10.1017/S0026749X13000140; Jishun Zhang, "Creating 'Masters of the Country' in Shanghai and Beijing: Discourse and the 1953-54 Local People's Congress Elections," *The China Quarterly* 220 (December 2014): 1071-1091, doi: 10.1017/S0305741014001118; Zhang Jishun, "Thought Reform and Press Nationalization in Shanghai: The *Wenhui Newspaper* in the Early 1950s," *Twentieth-Century China* 35, no. 2 (April 2010): 52-80, doi: 10.1353/tcc.0.0030.
[10] The "policy of prudence" was articulated in February 18, 1951, *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,* vol. 5 (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1967), 48.
[11] Jos Gamble, *Shanghai in Transition: Changing Perspectives and Social Contours of a Chinese Metropolis* (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 7.

China, moreover, showed remarkable continuities with the Guomindang and the colonial powers.[12]

In the 1950s, Mao obsessed over China's industrial modernization, wanting to rapidly develop the country's heavy industries: iron and steel, mining, oil, shipbuilding, railways, and artillery, among others. He thus prioritized urban economic development above all else. In favoring the development of heavy industry, Mao Zedong believed he was following Marxists precepts.[13] According to Su Xing, China's preeminent economic historian of the post-1949 period, Mao also had more practical reasons in mind. Heavy industry could serve as an engine for the rest of the economy, helping to modernize agriculture, develop transportation networks, and advance the country's national defense.[14] There was also an element of national pride: Mao allegedly quipped once that, while China could produce something like a teapot, it could not produce "a car, an airplane, a tank, or a tractor."[15] Heavy industrialization, in Mao's view, could destroy the "Old China" (旧中国 *jiu Zhongguo*) and put "New China" on an even footing with the rest of the modern world.[16]

With subsidies from rural China and support from the Soviet Union, business did boom in China's big cities in the 1950s. China's cities, especially in the east, received

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[12] Guojia tongji ju (National Bureau of Statistics), "Zhuyao gongye bumen shengchanli peizhi zai diqu de bianhua" ("Changes in the Productivity of the Main Industrial Sectors by Region"), April 1960, in Su Xing and Yang Qiubao, eds., *Xin Zhongguo jingji shi ziliao xuanbian* (Selected Data on the Economic History of New China [XZJSZX]) (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanshe, 2000), 353-362.

[13] Guojia tongji ju (National Bureau of Statistics), "Youxian fazhan zhong gongye" ("Prioritize the Development of Heavy Industry"), April 1960, in XZJSZX, 295.

[14] Su Xing, *Xin Zhongguo jingji shi* (Economic History of New China), rev. ed. (Beijing: Zhonggong zhongyang dangxiao chubanse, 2007), 151-153.

Heavy industrialization, as Gang Tian explains, also allowed the PRC to grow its exports and reap foreign exchange reserves. See Gang Tian, *Shanghai's Role in the Economic Development of China: Reform of Foreign Trade and Investment* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996), 13-14.

[15] Su, *Xin Zhongguo jingji shi*, 151-153.

[16] Guojia tongji ju (National Bureau of Statistics), "Shehui zhuyi gongyehua" ("Socialist Industrialization"), April 1960, in XZJSZX, 288-294.

huge amounts of state infrastructure investments and, in the early 1950s, became home to a majority of state-owned enterprises.[17] Shanghai in particular emerged as the leading industrial center in China.[18] From 1952 through 1957, technocrats in Shanghai estimated an average annual growth rate in the city's economy of 14.7 percent.[19] In 1956, Shanghai's industrial output was valued at over 10 billion yuan, 34.3 percent higher than in 1955. During the same year, Shanghai accounted for 18.2 percent of all industrial output in China.[20] Shanghai's leaders privately boasted that "Shanghai's economic situation is extremely good."[21]

Cities elsewhere also reported astounding economic gains during the PRC's first decade, so much so that collectively, the major cities along the coast—from Dalian and Tianjin in the north down to Guangzhou in the deep south—accounted for 77 percent of all industrial output in the PRC in 1952 (not including handicrafts). Even in 1959, the narrow strip of land at China's easternmost fringes continued to account for 62 percent of the nation's total industrial output.[22]

As the works of Felix Wemheuer and Jeremy Brown have shown, the privileging of the cities in 1950s took place at the remarkable expense of rural China.[23] Rural areas

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[17] Guojia tongji ju (National Bureau of Statistics), "Shinian lai woguo jiben jianshe de kuoda" ("China's Expanding Capital Construction over the Past Ten Years"), April 1960, in XZJSZX, 345-352.
[18] For the history of Shanghai during the first decade of the PRC, see Zhang Jishun, *Yuanqu de dushi: 1950niandai de Shanghai* (A City Displayed: Shanghai in the 1950s) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2015).
[19] Even through the end of 1978, annual growth averaged 8.8 percent. See Gamble, *Shanghai in Transition*, 9.
[20] Su, *Xin Zhongguo jingji shi*, 261.
[21] Shanghai shi di'er shangye ju (Shanghai Municipal Second Commerce Bureau), "1960nian Shanghai shi jingji fazhan qingkuang de diaocha ziliao" ("Investigative Materials on Shanghai's Economic Development in 1960"), undated but from 1960, SMA, B98-1-780, 1-13.
[22] Guojia tongji ju (National Bureau of Statistics), "Yanhai he neidi de guanxi" ("The Relationship between [China's] Coastal and Inland Areas"), April 1960, in XZJSZX, 330, 333.
[23] See, especially, Wemheuer, *Famine Politics in Maoist China and the Soviet Union*; Brown, *City versus Countryside in Mao's China*; Jeremy L. Wallace, *Cities and Stability: Urbanization, Redistribution, and Regime Survival in China* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

of the country subsidized urban industrialization and shielded the cities from the worst of agricultural downturns. Following the calamity of the Great Leap Forward and the resulting deaths of millions of individuals, mostly in the countryside, the Chinese state did take steps to "rebalance urban-rural relations" (调整城乡关系 *tiaozheng cheng xiang guanxi*). Softening its preferential treatment of the cities, a semi-reformist Chinese Communist Party used the post-Great Leap moment to introduce urban-to-rural population resettlement.

In the 1950s, however, the privileging of the cities meant, for the most part, that this form of resettlement was not in the cards, even as the Chinese state had ambitious plans for relatively underpopulated frontiers such as Xinjiang. Once again this tax would be paid by rural China.

**The Frontier in Socialist China**

Recent scholarship has challenged perspectives of China as a purely East Asian society. Concerned with China's "Central Asian identity," a growing number of scholars are demonstrating the critical importance of Xinjiang to the political, economic, and social development of China during the first half of the twentieth century.[24] These historiographically significant claims about Xinjiang's standing in China, however, may not have been immediately apparent to the Chinese Communist Party in 1949. After all, at the time of the so-called "peaceful liberation" (和平解放 *heping jiefang*) in autumn 1949, Xinjiang was a blank spot on the CCP's mental map of China.

[24] China's "Central Asian identity" is borrowed from Liu, *Recast All Under Heaven*. For other works operating in this tradition, see Justin Jacobs, *Xinjiang and the Modern Chinese State* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016); Judd C. Kinzley, "The Spatial Legacy of Informal Empire: Oil, the Soviet Union, and the Contour of Economic Development in China's Far West," *Twentieth-Century China* 40, no. 3 (October 2015): 220-237; Hsiao-ting Lin, *Modern China's Ethnic Frontiers: A Journey to the West* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

Evidence abounds that the Chinese Communist Party did not have much awareness of developments or conditions in Xinjiang. Because there was not a functioning CCP organization in the region during the Chinese Civil War, all roads to Urumqi had to go through Moscow first. Even after consultations with Stalin, the ever-ambitious Mao struggled to draft an invasion plan for Xinjiang. Hesitant, the Chairman sometimes contemplated delaying until the situation had settled in China proper.[25]

These sentiments were shared on the battlefield. The commander of the PLA's First Field Army and the man most responsible for executing the invasion of Xinjiang, Wang Zhen (王震), admittedly knew nothing about Xinjiang. From the perches of Lanzhou and Yumen, Wang was often heard saying to his subordinates to "go find [him] someone who understands Xinjiang." If they were knowledgeable about this place, Wang exclaimed, even a lowly "camel puller" (拉骆驼 *la luotuo*) would satisfy his request.[26]

Though ignorant of Xinjiang, Commander Wang carried on, bringing with him thousands of Chinese troops into the far northwest. He helped to establish CCP rule in Xinjiang, before losing a factional battle in the early 1950s and handing the reins over to

[25] See Charles Kraus, "Creating a Soviet 'Semi-Colony'? Sino-Soviet Cooperation and Its Demise in Xinjiang, 1949-1955," *Chinese Historical Review* 17, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 129-165. For documentary details, see "Liu Shaoqi zhihan Ma-lin-ke-fu tongzhi Wo zai Xinjiang ge danwei lianluoyuan wenti (Ewen)" ("Russian Letter from Liu Shaoqi to Comrade Malenkov on the CCP's Liaisons in Xinjiang"), August 1949, PRCFMA, 109-00004-03, 10; "Memorandum of Conversation between Anastas Mikoyan and Zhou Enlai," February 1, 1949, Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiyskoy Federatsii (Archive of the President of the Russian Federation [AP RF]), f. 39, op. 1, d. 39, ll. 25-30, reprinted in Sergey Radchenko and David Wolff, "To the Summit via Proxy-Summits: New Evidence from Soviet and Chinese Archives on Mao's Long March to Moscow, 1949," *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 16 (Spring 2008): 141. See also Zhu Peimin, Chen Hong, and Yang Hong, *Zhongguo gongchandang yu Xinjiang minzu wenti* (The Chinese Communist Party and Xinjiang's Nationality Problems) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2004), 40.

[26] Wang Zhen zhuan bianxie zu, *Wang Zhen zhuan* (Biography of Wang Zhen), vol. 1 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2001), 437.

Wang Enmao (王恩茂), a fellow veteran of the First Field Army.[27] By 1955, Xinjiang Province had been reconstituted as a Uyghur Autonomous Region, but it remained tightly in Beijing's hands.[28]

The Chinese Communist Party's deep unfamiliarity with China's far west in 1949 helped to nurture a romantic idealism of Xinjiang. Though Xinjiang had long eluded unified administrative control under the Nationalist Government and seemed poised to offer unique governing challenges after 1949, the new Chinese state was often upbeat about this part of China.[29] As they learned more about Xinjiang, leaders in Beijing increasingly (and rather earnestly) associated it with environmental splendor, agricultural

[27] The official line on Wang Zhen's removal from the Xinjiang Sub-Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party has changed frequently over the years. For the most recent verdict, see "Xi Zhongxun zhuan" bian weihui (Editorial Committee for the *Biography of Xi Zhongxun*), ed., *Xi Zhongxun zhuan* (Biography of Xi Zhongxun), vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2013), as well as Deng Liqun, *Deng Liqun zishu (1915-1974)* (Autobiography of Deng Liqun, 1915-1974) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2015).

[28] "新疆维吾尔自治区介绍 Xinjiang Weiwu'er zihiqu jieshao," *Renmin ribao* (People's Daily [RMRB]), October 1, 1955; Dong Biwu, "Zai qingzhu Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu chengli dahui shang de jianghua," October 1, 1955, in XGWX, 138-140.

There was actually considerable debate over the name "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region." See Letter fromDeng Xiaoping, Xi Zhongxun, and Li Weihan to Mao Zedong, March 27, 1953, in XGWX, 98-100; Xinjiang fenju (Xinjiang Sub-Bureau [of the CCP Northwest Bureau]), "Guanyu Xinjiang shixing minzu quyu zizhi mingcheng wenti baogao" ("Report on Naming as Xinjiang Implements Minority Autonomy"), February 28, 1955, in XGWX, 131-132; Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee), "Guanyu Xinjiang shixing minzu quyu zizhi mingcheng wenti baogao de piyu" ("Comments on the Report regarding the Naming as Xinjiang Implements Minority Autonomy"), April 16, 1955, in XGWX, 130.

[29] Beset by warlordism for many years, the Guomindang only reasserted centralized control over Xinjiang during the twilight of the Republican Era—and even then, the province remained divided and embroiled by ethnic and international conflicts. See Jacobs, *Xinjiang and the Modern Chinese State*; V.A. Barmin, *Sin'tszian v sovetsko-kitaikikh otnosheniiakh, 1941-1949 gg*. (Barnaul, Russia: Barnaul'skii gosudarstvennyii pedagogicheskii universitet, 1999); Wang Ke, *Higashi Torukisutan Kyōwakoku kenkyū: Chūgoku no Isuramu to minzoku mondai* (A Study on the East Turkestan Republic: Muslims and the National Question in China) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1995); Wang Jianlang, "The Return of Xinjiang to Chinese Central Control During the Late Period of the Sino-Japanese War: A Reappraisal Based on *Chiang Kai-Shek's Diary*," *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 4, no. 2 (2010): 145-162; Andrew D.W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang 1911-1949* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

abundance, and material wealth—even though Xinjiang was, in large measure, extraordinarily poor at the time of the PRC's founding.[30]

Of course, unfamiliarity alone cannot explain the CCP's idealism about Xinjiang; after all, the Party was not ignorant for long. In the months following November 1949, the new Chinese state absorbed the institutional memory of the former Republican regime in Urumqi (including its military) as well as that of the breakaway regime in Ili, the East Turkestan Republic. It also benefitted from the regional expertise of a close ally, the Soviet Union, and the ballooning presence of the People's Liberation Army and a new hybrid Chinese/minority bureaucracy. These agents transmitted powerful ideas about the future of Xinjiang back to Beijing and how the region ought to be governed, developed, and transformed.

Less commonly remarked upon but crucial to the Chinese Communist Party's utopian thinking about Xinjiang were the highly educated members of Chinese society: social and natural scientists.[31] After spreading itself across all of Xinjiang in the early 1950s, the Chinese state dispatched study group after study group to Xinjiang. Employing a methodology akin to Clifford Geertz's "thick description," Chinese experts developed a dense repository of data about Xinjiang: its topographies, ecologies, resources, peoples, religions, and so forth.[32] These anthropological and ethnographic works, known in Chinese as known as "social investigation" (社会调查 *shehui diaocha*), were mediate to

[30] On the economy of Xinjiang at mid-century, see Owen Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and the Inner Asian Frontiers of China and Russia* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1950). On economic planning for Xinjiang, see Kraus, "Creating a Soviet 'Semi-Colony'?"
[31] On the role of social scientists in a related context, see Thomas S. Mullaney, *Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
[32] On the tradition of "social investigations" in China, see Tong Lam, *A Passion for Facts: Social Surveys and the Construction of the Chinese Nation-State, 1900-1949* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). On "thick description," see Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

the leading kernels of the Chinese Communist Party and shaped policy in Xinjiang in concrete ways, informing, for example, the pace and style of land reform in the early 1950s and collectivization in the mid-1950s.[33]

Most important for the beginning of population resettlement to Xinjiang were a series of investigations conducted by the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) from 1956 through 1959.[34] Work teams affiliated with the Chinese Academy of Sciences canvassed nearly every inch of Xinjiang during this period, and their research resulted in numerous publications and public and private symposia.[35] The CAS work teams on the ground in Xinjiang strove to offer concrete proposals for how to "develop" the region, including how to "transform" the desert and overcome the bottlenecks imposed by Xinjiang's ecology (such as water scarcity). The end goal, they claimed, was the "oasis-fication" of Xinjiang, or creating the conditions for villages, towns, and cities to thrive, even in locations where they once did not and could not exist.[36]

Despite occupying a climate zone which was not conducive to water-intensive farming and cash cropping, these researchers earnestly believed that "scientific

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[33] See, for example, *Nanjiang nongcun shehui* (Rural Society in Southern Xinjiang) (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2009 [1952]); and*Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu ruogan diaocha cailiao huibian* (Collection of Assorted Investigative Materials on the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region) (published for internal circulation, 1956), author's collection (AC).

[34] The Soviet Union lent support to the Chinese Academy of Sciences and even jointly sponsored scientific investigations of Xinjiang. See Zhongguo kexueyuan Xinjiang zonghe kaochadui (Chinese Academy of Sciences' Team for Comprehensively Surveying Xinjiang) and Sulian kexueyuan dili yanjiusuo (Geography Research Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences), eds., *Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu de ziran tiaojian (lunwen ji)* (Collection of Essays on the Natural Conditions of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region) (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1959).

[35] See, for example, Zhongguo kexueyuan Xinjiang zonghe kaochadui (Chinese Academy of Sciences' Team for Comprehensively Surveying Xinjiang), Xinjiang bayi nong xueyuan (Xinjiang 8/1 Agricultural Academy), and Xinjiang nongye kexue yanjiusuo (Xinjiang Agricultural Sciences Research Institute), *Xinjiang nongye* (Agriculture in Xinjiang) (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe, 1965).

[36] Zhongguo kexueyuan Xinjiang zonghe kaochadui (Chinese Academy of Sciences' Team for Comprehensively Surveying Xinjiang), "'Xinjiang nongye zirar ziyuan kaifa liyong ji nongye heli buju de yuanjing shexiang' jianyao baogao (chugao)" ("Draft Summary Report of 'Development and Utilization of Agricultural and Natural Resources and Prospects for Rational Agricultural Distribution in Xinjiang'"), December 1960, 18, in AC.

management" would allow the party, state, and people to overcome the constraints imposed by nature in Xinjiang.[37] They certainly proposed dramatic development plans which suggested as much. The Chinese Academy of Sciences reported to Beijing, for example, that Xinjiang could grow upwards of 50-percent of all cotton in China, a "strategic material," as well as many other critical resources for socialist state-building.[38] Others in the Chinese academic bureaucracy salivated at the prospects of finally tapping into Xinjiang's oil and ores.[39]

The language deployed and ideas developed by China's natural and social scientists resonated closely with the language and ideas of state leaders. When Marshal Zhu De (朱德) visited Xinjiang in autumn 1958, for example, he too showed a faith in man's ability to overcome the seemingly insurmountable challenges imposed by nature. Speaking to a group of local party leaders about unlocking Xinjiang's hidden riches, Zhu suggested that:

> [We] must plant trees and bring about the forestation [of Xinjiang]. [We] must transform nature and turn [Xinjiang] green.
>
> This so-called 'green'—it just means to that you won't be able to see the Gobi Desert, [you won't see] the sand. You won't see the bare mountains.[40]

[37] *Da gao shuili, gaijian jiu guanqu* (Build Irrigation Works and Transform the Old Irrigated Areas) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1959). See also how researchers in Xinjiang affiliated with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences claimed in 1960 that "science should serve production" in "Zhongguo kexueyuan Xinjiang zonghe kaocha gongzuo zongjie zhu xueshu huiyi kai muci" ("Opening Speech at the Meeting to Review and Study the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Comprehensive Survey of Xinjiang"), undated but probably 1960, AC.
[38] Zhongguo kexueyuan Xinjiang zonghe kaochadui, "'Xinjiang nongye zirar ziyuan kaifa liyong ji nongye heli buju de yuanjing shexiang' jianyao baogao (chugao)," 22.
[39] Judd Creighton Kinzley, "Staking Claims to China's Borderland: Oil, Ores and State-building in Xinjiang Province, 1893-1964" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, San Diego, 2012).
[40] Speech by Zhu De at the Enlarged Meeting of the XUAR Party Committee, September 22, 1958, in XGWX, 207-208.

Even following the conclusion of his tour, Zhu's dramatic tone remained on full display. Reporting to his colleagues in the Central Committee, Zhu remarked, for example, that "Xinjiang has so much fertile land which can be reclaimed." Wanting to realize Xinjiang's potential, he called upon the Uyghur Autonomous Region to place equal emphasis on cotton and grain production, while also boosting production of fruits such as cantaloupe, grapes, and apples. He also introduced the idea of growing mulberry trees to jumpstart the sericulture industry, claiming that mulberry was "a primary means of conquering the desert." Zhu's reporting also helped to enliven and expand the work of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, a paramilitary organization which we will hear more about in subsequent chapters.[41]

As the highest ranking CCP leader to have visited Xinjiang up to that point in time, Zhu's comments were of special importance then, and they deserve special scrutiny now. But they were hardly unique among comments made by high ranking Chinese leaders. At a major national symposium on the "ethnicities issue" (民族问题 *minzu wenti*) in China held in August 1957, Zhou Enlai shared a remarkably similar idealism about the far northwest. Even though the Premier had not yet visited this part of China himself, he told his audience stories of the abundant natural sources beneath the earth's soil and the prospects for a rich agricultural paradise above. Suddenly a champion for the region, Zhou proclaimed that "out of all regions [of China], Xinjiang has the most potential." In front of a huge crowd, Zhou gushed over Xinjiang's precious resources, like oil and non-ferrous metals, and pined over the cotton and other cash crops which

[41] Untitled report from Zhu De to Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee), October 6, 1958, in XGWX, 208-211.

could be produced on reclaimed land. The Premier, like Zhu De and a host of scientists, believed Xinjiang was ripe to become a socialist and agricultural utopia.[42]

These descriptions of Xinjiang—made both by natural and social scientists as well as state-leaders—informed prescriptions for its development. They also left perceptible imprints on China's collective consciousness. Visual representations of Xinjiang in popular media, textbooks, and films reinforced the notion of a Chinese frontier finally being remade by an industrializing nation and an industrious people. The nationally distributed *People's Pictorial*, a bulky oversized magazine, ran a spread of photos reflecting this mentality in 1960. The magazine's cover featured a young Uyghur girl, adorned in traditional dress, hat, and braided hair, accompanied a young Han Chinese woman. Standing together in a lush green field of cotton crops, the smiled at one another as they worked to prune the leaves of a plant. Inside the magazine, there were additional landscapes of Xinjiang with accompanying texts prepared by Zhang Zhonghan (张仲瀚), a leading figure in Xinjiang's Production and Construction Corps. These images depicted copious water supplies, dense green fields, and brand new tractors. The resulting achievements of land reclamation and, most importantly, happy people showcased what Xinjiang was becoming: a socialist utopia, made anew by man.[43]

**Peopling the Frontier**

[42] "Zhou zongli zai minzu gongzuo zuotanhui de jianghua" ("Premier Zhou [Enlai's] Speech at the Nationalities Work Symposium"), August 4, 1957, Hubei sheng dang'anguan (Hubei Provincial Archives [HPA]), SZ 1-1-12. A slightly different published version of this speech is available in *Zhou Enlai tongyi zhanxian wenxuan* (Selected Works of Zhou Enlai related to the United Front) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1984).
[43] Zhang Zhonghan, "Tianshan nanbei chuang qiji" ("Miracles North and South of the Tianshan"), *Renmin huabao* (China Pictorial), no. 21 (1960): 6-11.

There were at least two problems which could have easily derailed the Chinese state's idealistic vision of Xinjiang's future, however. The first was Xinjiang's isolation from the rest of China and, specifically, the absence of a railway which connected it to the interior of the country. During the first half of the twentieth century, the absence of a rail link prevented the frequent exchange of goods, peoples, and ideas between Xinjiang and China proper, thus aggravating the Nationalist Government's control. In 1949, inter-provincial transportation remained such an acute problem that the People's Liberation Army had no idea how it would actually execute a ground invasion of Xinjiang. It took a Soviet airlift to get many troops into the province.[44] Even in the 1950s, the PLA had to create a production offshoot—the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps—to cope with material shortages caused by Xinjiang's distance from the rest of China.[45]

Overcoming this technological bottleneck was thus of immense importance to Chinese leaders and thinkers. As Zhou Enlai told Joseph Stalin in 1952, the envisioned Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway and additional lines reaching the Sino-Soviet border were of "greater importance" than any other rail project in China.[46] China's Premier thought as much for the same reasons as the Chinese Academy of Sciences, which proclaimed in 1960 that the completion of the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway would facilitate the

[44] "Dui ge yezhanjun de jinjun bushu" ("Advanced Deployment of Each Field Army"), May 23, 1949, in *Mao Zedong junshi wenxuan* (Mao Zedong's Manuscripts on Military Affairs), vol. 5 (Beijing: Junshi kexue chubanshe; Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), 591-592; "Dui jinjun xibei he chuanbei de bushu" ("Deployments for the Advancing Armies in the Northwest and Northern Sichuan"), June 27, 1949, in *Mao Zedong junshi wenxuan* (Mao Zedong's Manuscripts on Military Affairs), vol. 5 (Beijing: Junshi kexue chubanshe; Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1993), 625.
[45] Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun Xinjiang nongye jianshe di yi shi siling bu, zhengzhi bu (Headquarters and Political Department of the Chinese PLA Xinjiang First Agricultural Construction Division), *Jin Jiang shinian shi (chugao)* (Draft History of Ten Years in Xinjiang) (published for internal circulation, 1959; reprinted, 1984), esp. 17-18, AC.
[46] Minutes of Conversation between I.V. Stalin and Zhou Enlai, August 20, 1952, AP RF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 329, ll. 54-72, accessible at http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111244.

comprehensive economic development of Xinjiang.[47] "The economy of the entire Autonomous Region—especially the areas along the railways," one CAS researcher commented out loud, would "flourish at a fast rate once the Lan-Xin Railway opens."[48]

A lack of want was not the main impediment standing in the way of the Chinese state. As early as 1949, the leaders of New China mulled how to build the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway. Due to the engineering expertise required and immense material costs associated with constructing this rail line, China's leaders frequently broached the issue with their wealthier Soviet counterparts. Even prior to establishing a formal alliance with Moscow, Mao Zedong asked Anastas Mikoyan, one of Joseph Stalin's closest emissaries, for the Soviet Union's assistance in building a rail line to Xinjiang.[49] When Mao had the opportunity to meet and communicate directly with Stalin himself, as well as his successor, Nikita Khrushchev, he continued to beg quietly for outside aid to build this rail way.[50]

Tensions between China and the Soviet Union in the late 1950s and early 1960s stymied such cross-border cooperation, and prevented China from completing the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway before 1962. While the Chinese state struggled to use technology and massive engineering projects to transform Xinjiang, it turned its attention

[47] Zhongguo kexueyuan Xinjiang zonghe kaochadui, "'Xinjiang nongye zirar ziyuan kaifa liyong ji nongye heli buju de yuanjing shexiang' jianyao baogao (chugao), 32.
[48] "Zhongguo kexueyuan Xinjiang zonghe kaocha gongzuo zongjie zhu xueshu huiyi kai muci."
[49] Anastas Mikoyan's recollections of his trip to China (1949), undated but from 1958, provided to the National Security Archive by Sergo Mikoyan, accessible at http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121774.
[50] Nikita Khrushchev, *Statesmen, 1954-1964*, vol. 3 of *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*, ed. Sergei Khrushchev, trans. George Shriver (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 427-428.

to a second potential bottleneck: people. Despite being the largest administrative unit in China, in the 1950s Xinjiang's population was relatively small and disperse.[51]

Across China's ethnic borderlands, the Chinese Communist Party believed that "shortages of manpower" hamstrung development.[52] Local officials in Xinjiang reinforced this sentiment, revealing to audiences of their counterparts from across China that:

> At the same time, we are working under the principle of self-reliance, [we] must continue to receive national assistance as well as the assistance of the fraternal provinces and cities…Construction would not be possible if [we] were to abandon the assistance from the country.[53]

Chinese social and natural scientists had also come to believe that state-led migration was necessary to uncap Xinjiang's developmental potential. When the Academy of Sciences completed its studies of Xinjiang in the late 1950s, it paid close attention to the distribution of people, taking note of where labor forces were concentrated and where they were lacking. All this information was packaged into a plan for "the distribution of

[51] Guojia minwei bangongting (General Office of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission), *Quanguo shaoshu minzu qingkuang tongji ziliao (1949-1959)* (National Statistics on Ethnic Minorities, 1949-1959), vol. 30, no. 75, *Zhonggong zhongyao lishi wenxian ziliao huibian: Xi jian tongji ziliao zhuanji* (Important Historical Documents of the CCP: Scarce Statistics Series) (Los Angeles: Zhongwen chuban wu fuwu zhongin, 2011), 7. On population distribution and its consequences on identies in Xinjiang, see Rudelson, *Oases Identities*.

[52] The plan also sought to move people to China's other frontier provinces: namely, Qinghai, Ningxia, Sichuan, and Inner Mongolia. See Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee), "Guanyu dongyuan qingnian qianwang bianjiang he shaoshu minzu diqu canjia shehui zhuyi jianshe de jueding" ("Resolution on Mobilizing Youth to Move to the Frontiers and Ethnic Minority Areas to Participate in Socialist Construction"), August 29, 1958, in XGWX, 202-203. See also in ZZQZ, 3-4.

[53] "Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu dangwei shuji chu shuji Ceng Di, jianwei fu zhuren Yang Rungui tongzhi de shumian fayan" ("Written Statements by Comrades Secretary Ceng Di of the CCP Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Party Committee Secretariat and Deputy Director Yang Rungui of the Construction Committee"), April 18, 1960, SMA, A54-2-1025, 168-173.

future immigrants to Xinjiang" and otherwise tinkering with the urban and rural distribution of peoples within the Uyghur Autonomous Region. [54]

In August 1958, the CCP thus called for the relocation of 5.7 million people from the interior of China to the country's fringes; of this, they planned for an astounding two million persons to go to Xinjiang before 1963.[55] This massive, state-led population resettlement program was intended to "quickly eliminate urgent uneven development in the national economy, hasten China's socialist construction, strengthen ethnic unity, [and] consolidate national defense," but it was also—as we have seen above—intended to realize the idealistic if not utopian visions of Xinjiang articulated by a wide range of individuals in socialist China.[56]

**Peopling the Cities**

In 1961, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps' Lin Haiqing (林海清) of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps put pen to paper to write *The Colorful Tarim*. A veteran of the People's Liberation Army and a leader of the 1949 invasion of Xinjiang, Lin used *The Colorful* Tarim playfully to describe the Production and Construction Corp's "struggle" to control nature, harness Xinjiang's resources, and turn this rich frontier into a "great garden for communism." The short pamphlet, published by

[54] Zhongguo kexueyuan Xinjiang zonghe kaochadui (Chinese Academy of Sciences' Team for Comprehensively Surveying Xinjiang), "'Xinjiang nongye zirar ziyuan kaifa liyong ji nongye heli buju de yuanjing shexiang' jianyao baogao (chugao)," 19-20.
[55] The plan also sought to move people to China's other frontier provinces: namely, Qinghai, Ningxia, Sichuan, and Inner Mongolia. See Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee), "Guanyu dongyuan qingnian qianwang bianjiang he shaoshu minzu diqu canjia shehui zhuyi jianshe de jueding" ("Resolution on Mobilizing Youth to Move to the Frontiers and Ethnic Minority Areas to Participate in Socialist Construction"), August 29, 1958, in XGWX, 202-203. See also in ZZQZ, 3-4.
[56] Zhonggong Jiaxing xianwei (CCP Jiaxing County Committee), "Guanyu quanxian shouci zhi Ning gongzuo huiyi qingkuang he di'er pi zhi Ning renwu yijian de baogao" ("Report on the First All County Aid-Ningxia Work Meeting and the Second Installment of Aid-Ningxia [Workers]"), May 18, 1959, Jiaxing shi dang'anguan (Jiaxing Municipal Archives [JMA]), 001-001-389, 20-24.

Shanghai's Children's Publishing House, was, however, not just descriptive; it was also an invitation. As Lin concluded his text, "We welcome you [young people] to come to the Tarim for a visit or for a tour, [but] even more so, we welcome you to join us in building the Tarim together."[57]

Given the publisher of *The Colorful Tarim*, it seems clear that Lin was asking young urban youth from cities such as Shanghai to come to the far northwest and join up with the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. But would they come?

There were certainly huge numbers of young people in the cities in the 1950s. China's urban population grew substantially during the PRC's first decade.[58] Shanghai, ballooning in sized, jumped from around 4 million to 6.5 million urban residents by 1955.[59] The three major cities in Zhejiang Province—Hangzhou, Wenzhou, and Ningbo—collectively grew by over 2.2 million people in the 1950s.[60] Even mid-sized

[57] Lin Haiqing, *Wanzi qianhong Talimu* (The Colorful Tarim) (Shanghai: Shaonian ertong chubanshe, 1964 [1961]), 62.

[58] Of course, population growth was by no means new for China's cities; in Shanghai, for example, the urban population had grown rapidly during the first half of the twentieth century, large due to instability in the countryside. See Richard Gaulton, "Political Mobilization in Shanghai, 1949-1951," in *Shanghai: Revolution and Development in an Asian Metropolis*, ed. Christopher Howe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 37-38; Leo Ou-Fan Lee, *Shanghai Modern: The Flowering of a New Urban Culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 3.

[59] Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu bangongshi (Shanghai Municipal People's Government Office), "Guanyu Shanghai shi renkou qingkuang he shimin jingji shenghuo ziliao" ("Materials on Shanghai's Population and the Economy and Lives of Urban Citizens"), January 28, 1955, SMA, B25-2-6, 38-56.

[60] Zhejiang sheng renkou pucha bangongshi (Census Office of Zhejiang Province), Zhejiang sheng gong'an ting (Public Security Department of Zhejiang Province), and Zhejiang shen tongji ju (Bureau of Statistics of Zhejiang Province), *Zhejiang sheng renkou tongji ziliao huibian, 1949-1985* (Complilation of Zhejiang Province's Demographic Data, 1949-1985), vol. 30, no. 192, *Zhonggong zhongyao lishi wenxian ziliao huibian: Xi jian tongji ziliao zhuanji* (Important Historical Documents of the CCP: Scarce Statistics Series) (Los Angeles: Zhongwen chuban wu fuwu zhongin, 2014), 8, 439, 441, 450-451. From 1949 through 1959, Hangzhou grew by over one million people; the downtown areas alone increased in size by over 300,000 residents. In Wenzhou, the urban population shot up from 2.7 million to nearly 3.5 million. Ningbo increased by only 141,000 people over the same period.

cities, such as Wuxi in Jiangsu Province, witnessed remarkable population growth over the 15 year period after liberation.[61]

What accounted for this remarkable population growth? Mostly, it was high natural birthrates, which hovered between 17 percent and 35 percent in the PRC's decade.[62] From 1950 through 1957, China as a whole averaged a crude birth rate of 2.135 percent; in the final year before the famine struck, the country averaged 34.0 births for every 10.8 deaths.[63] While rural-to-urban migration was also substantial (and is discussed below) in the 1950s, natural population growth in Shanghai probably accounted for twice as much of the city's growth as did the migrants.[64]

China's baby boomer generation—or the "1940s population cohort" and the "1950s population cohort"—meant that there was skyrocketing demand for primary and middle school education in the 1950s.[65] From 1952-1957, the number of students enrolled in primary school rose by 125.8 percent.[66] As cities such as Shanghai began to produce

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[61] Wuxi shi chengshi renkou xiaxiang anzhi bangongshi (Wuxi Municipal Office for Sending Down and Settling the Urban Population), "Wuxi shi chengshi renkou bianhua he xiaxiang youguan ziliao" ("Relevant Materials on Urban Population Change and *Xiaxiang* in Wuxi Municipality"), April 30, 1966, Wuxi shi dang'anguan (Wuxi Municipal Archives [WMA]), B8-1-43, 1-4.

[62] Zhejiang sheng renkou pucha bangongshi (Census Office of Zhejiang Province), Zhejiang sheng gong'an ting (Public Security Department of Zhejiang Province), and Zhejiang shen tongji ju (Bureau of Statistics of Zhejiang Province), *Zhejiang sheng renkou tongji ziliao huibian, 1949-1985* (Complilation of Zhejiang Province's Demographic Data, 1949-1985), vol. 30, no. 192, *Zhonggong zhongyao lishi wenxian ziliao huibian: Xi jian tongji ziliao zhuanji* (Important Historical Documents of the CCP: Scarce Statistics Series) (Los Angeles: Zhongwen chuban wu fuwu zhongin, 2014), 12.

[63] Guojia tongji ju (National Bureau of Statistics), ed., *Jianguo sanshi nian guomin jingji tongji tiyao (1949-1978)* (Summary of National Economic Statistics for the Three Decades since the Founding of the PRC, 1949-1978), vol. 30, no. 1 of *Zhonggong zhongyao lishi wenxian ziliao huibian: Xi jian tongji ziliao zhuanji* (Important Historical Documents of the CCP: Scarce Statistics Series) (Los Angeles: Zhongwen chuban wu fuwu zhongin, 2009), 8.

[64] Christopher Howe, *Employment and Economic Growth in Urban China, 1949-1957* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 33.

[65] Jiayin Liang, "Components of a Meaningful Retirement Life: A Phenomenological Study of the 1950s Birth Cohort in Urban China," *Journal of Cross Culture Gerontology* 26 (2011): 279-298, doi: 10.1007/S10823-011-9149-7. See also Donald J. Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers: An Oral History of Russia's Cold War Generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[66] Su, *Xin Zhongguo jingji shi*, 167.

more and more elementary graduates (570,000 from Shanghai in 1952 alone), they had to expand the number of middle schools in operation rapidly.[67] Across China, the number of students in regular middle schools rose by 252.2 percent and reached a figure of 6,281,000 students by 1957.[68] At the same time, cities poured resources into developing other types of schools and academies for non-traditional students.

The result was that, for Shanghai at least, by 1960 over 90 percent of the city's population was reportedly literate and over two million young people were enrolled in some type of educational institution.[69] While these were achievements which socialist China could be proud of, the country's growing cohort of well-educated young people challenged state planners. Put simply, job placements did not keep pace with the numbers of urban youth reaching working age. In Shanghai in 1956, for example, only a fraction of urban students who finished elementary or middle school could secure official job placements at factories and other work units inside of cities.[70] This gap gave rise to the phenomenon of "social youth" or so-called "neighborhood youth" (街道青年 *jiedao qingnian*). These awkward turns of phrase were not political descriptions; rather they described young people who had graduated from schools but had not officially entered the workforce.[71] As the Communist Party Committee in Shanghai described, "the main ideological problem at present is that they [social youth] don't see any future. Their

[67] Lynn T. White, III, *Careers in Shanghai: The Social Guidance of Personal Energies in a Developing Chinese City, 1949-1966* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 13-23.
[68] Su, *Xin Zhongguo jingji shi*,167.
[69] White, *Careers in Shanghai*, 13-23.
[70] Shanghai laodong ju dangzu (Party Group of the Shanghai Labor Bureau), "Guanyu muqian zhishi qingnian tiaopei gongzuo de qingkuang ji jinhou yijian de baogao" ("Report on the Current Work of Deploying Educated Youth and Proposals for the Future"), April 17, 1956, SMA, B25-2-11, 2-12.
[71] "Guanyu jiaqiang shehui qingnian gongzuo de baogao (caogao)" ("Draft Report on Strengthening Work related to Social Youth"), undated but from sometime in 1954, SMA, C23-2-50, 7-17. See also Alex Cockain, *Young Chinese in Urban China* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 100.

mentalities are depressed and chaotic." As a result, "they feel as if they are wasting their youth in the midst of the motherland's socialist construction."[72]

In addition to unemployed recent graduates, the Shanghai Municipal Communist Youth League also categorized young housewives, street-peddling youth (摊贩中的青年 *tanfan zhong de qingnian*), and "village youth who had blindly entered the city" as *shehui qingnian*. This organization claimed that there were as many as 700,000 "social youth" in the city in 1954 and in 1955, with the clear majority being either recent graduates or young housewives. They dwelled over what to do with them.[73] Armed with new educational opportunities yet trapped in a system where industrial opportunity still lagged behind population growth, young people in 1950s urban China were seemingly stuck between a rock and a hard place.[74] Might Xinjiang have been an option?

**Experimenting with Urban-to-Rural Resettlement**

In December 1955, Chairman Mao Zedong read an essay concerning the cooperativization movement in a single village in Henan Province. Along the margins, Mao jotted down his thoughts about the report. In messy longhand, the Chairman wrote:

> This is a good essay and can be used as reference everywhere. The work of organizing the participation of middle school students and high school

[72] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan tuanshiwei guanyu jiaqiang shehui qingnian gongzuo de baogao" ("The [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee Approves the CYL [Shanghai] Municipal Committee's Report on Strengthening Work related to Social Youth"), July 23, 1955, SMA, A80-2-108, 8-11.
[73] Guanyu jiaqiang shehui qingnian gongzuo de baogao (caogao)" ("Draft Report on Strengthening Work related to Social Youth"), undated but from sometime in 1954, SMA, C23-2-50, 7-17; Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan tuanshiwei guanyu jiaqiang shehui qingnian gongzuo de baogao" ("The [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee Approves the CYL [Shanghai] Municipal Committee's Report on Strengthening Work related to Social Youth"), July 23, 1955, SMA, A80-2-108, 8-11.
[73] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei bangongshi (Office of the CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu shehui qingnian zhiyuan kenhuang de sixiang qingkuang fanying" ("Ideological Situation of Social Youth Volunteering to Reclaim Wasteland"), August 30, 1955, SMA, C21-1-430, 34-38.
[74] It is also worth noting that even for those fortunate enough to gain employment at a factory within Shanghai, the wages and benefits were not particularly good. See Yuan, Ding, and Wang, *Shenfen jiangou yu wuzhi shenghuo,* 31, 43.

> graduates in collectivization is mentioned in the report. This deserves special attention. All intellectuals who can go to work in the countryside should be happy to do so. The countryside is vast and there is much to be done there.[75]

Who knows how attached Mao was to this idea, but the Central Committee ran with it. Shortly thereafter, in January 1956, the leading body of the CCP enshrined Mao's marginalia in the draft version of its *Outline of the National Plan for Agricultural Development, 1956-1967*, calling upon middle and high school students from the cities to spend time working in China's countryside.[76]

Given the growing populations of the cities, the frontier's demand for labor, and the precarious state of urban youth employment in the mid and late 1950s, one might expect that urban-to-rural population resettlement in China would have begun in earnest following Mao's 1955 call. Reading the headlines in China alone would also have given this impression. On April 8, 1957, Liu Shaoqi penned an opinion piece for the *People's Daily* on "Middle School and Primary School Graduates Participating in Agricultural Production."[77] Even earlier, the *People's Daily* published an editorial proclaiming that full employment in the cities for elementary and middle school graduates was a pipe dream, and that China's youth ought to look forward to working in the agricultural sector.[78] Considerable propaganda circulated within and outside of urban bureaucracies claiming that to go down to the countryside was virtuous and rewarding. As one young

[75] "'Zhongguo nongcun de shehui zhuyi gaochao' anyu" ("Notes on *The Socialist High Tide in China's Villages*"), December 1955, in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed. *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* (Mao Zedong's Manuscripts since the Founding of the PRC [JYMW]) vol. 5 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1991), 527, 566.
[76] Hebei sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles of Hebei Province), ed., *Laodong zhi* (Labor Gazetteer), vol. 64 of *Hebei sheng zhi* (Hebei Provincial Gazetteer) (Beijing: Zhongguo dang'an chubanshe, 1995), 98.
[77] Hebei sheng difangzhi bianzuan, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 99.
[78] Hebei sheng difangzhi bianzuan, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 98-99.

Shanghainese, allegedly writing from a farm in Hubei, announced: "to be an educated peasant (有文化的农民 *you wenhua de nongmin*) in a village gives [us] so much pride."[79]

And yet cities such as Beijing responded utterly unenthusiastically. China's capital city sent probably only 200 students to farms in Northeast China over the course of 1955 and 1956.[80] Shanghai's contribution to population growth to frontier provinces at this stage was also a drop in the bucket. In 1958, for example, it planned to send a paltry 700 people to Xinjiang.[81] While other reports paint a much more impressive picture of Shanghai's mobilization work, such as one which reveals how the city sent some 100,000 urban youth to farms in 1958 alone, a closer look at the data tells a more ambiguous story. Most of these individuals went to farms in Shanghai's suburbs or in nearby Anhui Province, not borderland provinces, for temporary tours of duty.[82]

What explains the reluctance of cities to part with so many surplus young people? On the one hand, cities had to balance the demands and quotas associated with mobilizing youth to leave the cities with other administrative requirements, including mandates to increase production and industrial output. Officials in Nanjing, for example, debated how they could possibly meet a deadline to send a small contingent of youth to

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[79] "Gei Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei de yifeng xin" ("A Letter to the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee"), June 17, 1958, SMA, C21-2-1095, 59.
[80] Beijing difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 44.
[81] "Guanche shiwei pizhun de 'guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia waidi gongnongye shengchan de qingshi baogao' de gongzuo fang'an" ("Work Plan to Carry Out the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee Approved 'Instructing and Reporting on Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in Industrial and Agricultural Production in the Outlying Areas'"), August 17, 1958, SMA, C23-2-132, 3-4. See also SMA C23-2-132, 10-11; "Guanyu Gansu, Anhui, Guizhou, Qinghai, Xinjiang wu sheng zhongdeng zhuanye jishu xuexiao lianhe zhaosheng gongzuo fang'an" ("On the Work Plan for Gansu-Anhui-Guizhou-Qinghai-Xinjiang to Recruit from Secondary and Technicla Schools"), August 17, 1958, SMA, C23-2-132, 5-6. See also SMA C23-2-132, 7.
[82] "Dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia wai sheng shehui zhuyi jianshe de gongzuo zongjie" ("Work Summary of Mobilizing Social Youth to Particiapte in Socialist Construction in Outlying Provinces"), March 1959, SMA, C21-1-656, 1-7.

Xinjiang by the middle of 1959 and still meet targeted production goals.[83] Cities dispatching youth to other regions of China were also reluctant to bear certain fiscal responsibilities. In the cases of youth heading to Xinjiang, Heilongjiang, Inner Mongolia, and other provinces which experienced long and frigid winters, cities were required to provide extra cotton-padded jackets and cotton cloth, a challenge given the decline in cotton production during the Great Leap Forward.[84]

Gender biases also worked against sending urban youth to rural China in the 1950s. Most unemployed youth in cities such as Shanghai, for example, were female, but interior and frontier provinces overwhelmingly desired young men to fill labor shortages. Although Shanghai agreed in 1958 to send some youth to Jiangxi, Henan, Yunnan, Fujian, Gansu, and Xinjiang, authorities in the city often repeated that, because, "men are few while girls are plenty," the city would not fully satisfy the requests for people coming from China's outlying provinces.[85]

Urban authorities also avoided the campaign because they felt it was simply difficult to mobilize urban youth to go to areas such as Jiangxi, Qinghai, and Xinjiang,

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[83] Zhongguo gongchandang Nanjing shi weiyuanhui (CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee), "Guanyu jiaqiang zhibian gongzuo lingdao de zhishi" ("Requesting Instructions on Strengthening Leadership over *Zhibian* Work"), June 12, 1959, Nanjing shi dang'anguan (Nanjing Municipal Archives [NMA-1]), 5016-001-001, 5-6.

[84] Nongken bu (Ministry of Land Reclamation) and Shangye bu (Ministry of Commerce), "Guanyu zhiyuan bianjiang shehui zhuyi jianshe qingnian suoxu mianhua, mianbu gongying gongzuo de tongzhi" ("Notification on the Work of Providing Cotton and Cotton Cloth to the Youth Aiding the Socialist Construction of the Frontiers"), April 29, 1959, Guangdong sheng dang'anguan (Guangdong Provincial Archives [GPA]), 235-1-394, 59. The policy to provide additional cotton-padded jackets to youth in places like Xinjiang was only made after many of these people had already arrived in their new homes. Initially, the central government implemented "a unified standard" for clothing subsidies. See SMA, B123-4-898, 1.

[85] Zhonggong Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee Labor Bureau Party Group), "Guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia waidi gongnongye de qingshi baogao" ("Instructing and Reporting on Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in Industry and Agriculture in the Outlying Areas"), August 12, 1958, SMA, C23-2-132, 1-2. See also Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Pizhuan shi laodong ju dangzu 'guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia waidi gong, nongye shengchan de qingshi baogao'" ("Forwarding the Municipal Labor Bureau Party Group's 'Reporting and Instructing on Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in Industrial and Agricultural Construction in Outlying Areas'"), August 15, 1958, SMA, B127-1-289, 1.

parts of China that were considered underdeveloped and backward.[86] Many "social youth" insisted, for example, that being dispatched to areas far outside of the city would place undue hardships on their families, who were already struggling financially.[87] The cities did invest considerable resources to "re-educate" young people about the merits of participating in interior and frontier construction, but the results still often fell flat.[88] When Shanghai sent 110 young men to Northeast China in 1956, 100 of them promptly ran back to the city.[89]

**Population Management in Urban China and Frontier China**

If sending a measly 100 teenagers abroad was a challenge for cities, sending more than 5 million to China's frontiers would have been an impossibility. And yet, as we learned above, the Chinese Communist Party was intent on relocating 5.7 million people to Qinghai, Ningxia, Sichuan, Inner Mongolia, and Xinjiang beginning in 1958. The Chinese state came to rely on rural-to-rural resettlement in part because it had such trouble managing migration among rural peoples. Although high natural birthrates were the driving force behind China's population boom in the 1940s and 1950s, unsanctioned rural-to-urban migration also caused cities to swell in size in the 1950s.

[86] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei zhong xiaoxue biyesheng gongzuo weiyuanhui bangongshi (Office of the Committee for Middle and Elementary School Graduates, CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu zhaokai benshi zhishi qingnian zhiyuan canjia zuguo shehui zhuyi jianshe huansong dahui de jihua" ("Plan to Convene a Farewell Sendoff for the Shanghai Educated Youth Volunteering to Participate in the Motherland's Socialist Construction"), September 2, 1958, SMA, C23-2-132, 17-18.
[87] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei bangongshi (Office of the CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu shehui qingnian zhiyuan kenhuang de sixiang qingkuang fanying" ("Ideological Situation of Social Youth Volunteering to Reclaim Wasteland"), August 30, 1955, SMA, C21-1-430, 34-38.
[88] See, for example, Bian weihui (Editorial Committee), "Shi Ximin tongzhi piyu" ("Comrade Shi Ximin's Remarks"), November 14, 1960, SMA, G20-1-188, 15.
[89] Qingniantuan Shanghai shiwei bangongshi (Office of the CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Qingkuang fanying" ("Situation Responses"), December 6, 1956, SMA, C21-2-758, 54-55.

Although immediately after 1949 many temporary urban dwellers left to go back to the countryside, with the conclusion of the Agrarian Reform Campaign, or land reform, the cities one again saw in-migration start to exceed out-migration. Urban areas were, understandably, highly attractive destinations for migrants as collectivization, food shortages, and agricultural disasters began wreaking havoc on rural areas. Local authorities in Shanghai reported how Shanghai's new urban dwellers from the countryside had heard, through word of mouth, rumors of a booming economy in the cities from family members and friends; later, they were able to meet factory representatives in the villages who had come to recruit new workers.[90] No doubt, the swelling of industrial workers in Shanghai and other cities was in large measure due to peasant migration: at the Shanghai No.1 Steel Mill, the workforce shot up from 2,800 to 13,000 in 1958 and then up to 22,7000 by 1960.[91] Other cities also reported significant numbers of rural peoples entering the city. In Tianjin, for example, net in-migration regularly exceeded 50,000 persons between 1951 and 1957.[92]

The scale of unsanctioned rural-to-urban migration frightened China's ruling class. Enforcing the *hukou* or household registration system, the Chinese Communist Party tightened its control over urban residence permits in the mid-1950s. When it believed in-migration threatened urban economic growth or social stability, municipal governments were encouraged to deport peasants back to the villages *en masse*.[93] In

[90] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei renkou wenti yanjiu weiyuanhui (Research Committee for Population Issues of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu benshi renkou zengchang de qingkuang, jinhou fangzhen he chuli yijian de baogao" ("Report on the Increase in Shanghai's Population and Views on Handling this in the Future"), November 11, 1956, SMA, B25-1-3, 59-66.
[91] Yuan, Ding, and Wang, *Shenfen jiangou yu wuzhi shenghuo*, 8.
[92] Brown, *City versus Countryside in Mao's China*, 36-37.
[93] Dorothy J. Solinger, *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China: Peasant Migrants, the State, and the Logic of the Market* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 36-44; Tiejun Cheng and Mark Selden,

Shanghai, for example, city planners claimed that the rapid influx of rural peoples would increase unemployment among the city's legal residents.[94] Shanghai's Municipal People's Committee went to so far as to call the city's population "bloated" (臃肿状况 *yongzhong zhuangkuang*) due to illegal migration and a twin threat to urban stability and socialist development in the countryside.[95]

Already in 1956, Shanghai had begun a "return to the countryside" (回乡 *huixiang*) movement and tightened its *hukou* enforcement. Rounding up so-called hooligans and troublemakers originally from the countryside (including prostitutes), the city sent them back to their native places. Shanghai even offered material incentives and transportation subsidies to ease the deportation campaign.[96]

Rural areas also partnered with the cities to restrict unsanctioned migration patterns. Agricultural cooperatives, for example, were given a mandate to persuade their members—even those living in disaster stricken areas—that "blindly drifting" (盲目外流 *mangmu wailiu*), or illegally moving, to the cities was a punishable offense.[97] The biggest contribution China's under-developed regions could make to preventing urban-to-rural

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"The Origins and Social Consequences of China's *Hukou* System," *The China Quarterly* 139 (September 1994): 644-668, doi: 10.1017/S0305741000043083.

[94] Howe, *Employment and Economic Growth in Urban China*, 66-73.

[95] Shanghai shi renmin weiyuanhui (Shanghai Municipal People's Committee), "Guanyu chuli he fangzhi waidi renkou liuru benshi de banfa" ("Methods to Handle and Prevent Outside Populations from Flowing into Shanghai"), December 13, 1956, SMA, B25-1-7, 1-2.

[96] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei renkou wenti yanjiu weiyuanhui (Research Committee for Population Issues of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu benshi renkou zengchang de qingkuang, jinhou fangzhen he chuli yijian de baogao" ("Report on the Increase in Shanghai's Population and Views on Handling this in the Future"), November 11, 1956, SMA, B25-1-3, 59-66; Shanghai shi renkou weiyuanhui (Shanghai Municipal Population Committee), "Guanyu jiaqiang chuli he fangzhi waidi renkou liuru benshi de tongzhi" ("Notification on Strengthening Administration and Prevention of Outside Populations Drifting into Shanghai"), January 30, 1957, SMA, B25-1-7, 3-4. On prostitution, see Gail Hershatter, *Dangerous Pleasures: Prostitution and Modernity in Twentieth-Century Shanghai* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 321.

[97] Zhou Enlai and Chen Yun, "Guanyu fangzhi nongmin renkou mangmu wailiu de zhishi" ("Instructions on Preventing the Agricultural Population from Blindly Drifting"), December 30, 1956, SMA, B25-1-7, 7-9.

migration, however, was to promote rural-to-rural resettlement. Thus, the CCP's call for the relocation of 5.7 million people from the interior of China to its outlying edges was both an outgrowth of idealistic development plans for the frontier and a response to perceived crisis in rural China.[98]

Over a period of five years (1959-1963), the Chinese Communist Party planned to dispatch 2 million individuals to Xinjiang from four provinces: Henan, Hubei, Anhui, and Jiangsu. The cohort was to be made up of "young adults (青壮年 *qing zhuangnian*), a term distinctive from simply "youth" (青年 *qingnian*). While the latter referred to moderately educated, unmarried individuals usually in their teens (such as the "social youth" discussed above), "young adults" could refer to anyone aged 17 to 45 *sui* and with a family. The cohort was also overwhelmingly peasant based. Although Jiangsu's quota to support Xinjiang did encompass some urban youth from Nanjing, the clear majority of people to be mobilized came from more rural areas in the province. Similarly, Hubei Province's contribution in 1959 included 45,000 people from greater Huanggang. Although an urban entity today, over 42,000 participants in the campaign were "peasants." Indeed, only 1,200 workers and 640 students from Huanggang went to Xinjiang in 1959. The plans to send another 350,000 people from Hubei to Xinjiang by the end of 1963 likewise focused almost entirely on rural, not urban, populations.[99]

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[98] The plan also sought to move people to China's other frontier provinces: namely, Qinghai, Ningxia, Sichuan, and Inner Mongolia. See Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee), "Guanyu dongyuan qingnian qianwang bianjiang he shaoshu minzu diqu canjia shehui zhuyi jianshe de jueding" ("Resolution on Mobilizing Youth to Move to the Frontiers and Ethnic Minority Areas to Participate in Socialist Construction"), August 29, 1958, in XGWX, 202-203. See also in ZZQZ, 3-4.

[99] See, respectively, Zhongguo gongchandang Nanjing shi weiyuanhui (CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee), "Guanyu zhibian gongzuo qingkuang baogao" ("Report on *Zhibian* Work"), June 12, 1959, NMA-1, 5016-001-001, 7-8; Hubei sheng Huanggang zhuanyuan gongshu (Comissioner of Huanggang, Hubei Province), "Zhiyuan Xinjiang jianshe de zongjie baogao" ("Report Summarizing the Assistance to Xinjiang's Construction"), June 22, 1959, HPA, SZ 48-1-112, 13-18; and Zhonggong Hubei shengwei (CCP Hubei Provincial Committee) and Hubei sheng renmin weiyuanhui (Hubei Provincial People's

Jiangsu Province alone planned to send 600,000 younger adults to Xinjiang before 1963.[100] While Jiangsu ultimately did not live up to this quota, it still sent a remarkable number of rural workers, 120,370, in a relatively short period of time.[101] The other provinces also sent extraordinary contingents: in 1959, Anhui Province sent just over 30,000 individuals.[102] In 1959, Hubei Province sent 50,000; in 1960, it sent 45,700.[103] In total, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region reported that it received 346,655 individuals from these four provinces over a three year period.[104]

**The Failure of Rural-to-Rural Resettlement**

To be sure, the number of individuals Xinjiang taken in from rural areas in Hubei, Jiangsu, Henan, and Anhui Provinces from 1959 through 1963 was astounding, even exceeding the numbers of urban youth Xinjiang received from 1963-1966—the real focus of this dissertation. Yet the rural-to-rural resettlement campaign, at least in the case of Xinjiang, was still a spectacular failure. While, as later chapters will show, urban-to-rural resettlement puttered out over the course of multiple decades, rural-to-frontier resettlement collapsed almost immediately. Not only did the four provinces barely

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Committee), "Guanyu 1960nian dongyuan wo sheng qingzhuang nian zhiyuan Xinjiang shehui zhuyi jianshe de qingshi" ("Request for Instructions on Mobilizing Hubei's Younger Adults to Aid Xinjiang's Socialist Construction"), March 30, 1960, HPA, SZ 67-1-735, 19-21.

[100] Zhonggong Nanjing shi weiyuanhui (CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee), "Zhonggong Nanjing shiwei pizhuan shi dongyuan qingzhuang nian canjia Xinjiang shehui zhuyi jianshe bangongshi guanyu 1959nian dongyuan qingzhuang nian qianwang Xinjiang canjia shehui zhuyi jianshe de juti jihua" ("The CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee Approves the Municipal Office for Mobilizing Younger Adults to Participate in Xinjiang's Socialist Constrution's 'Plans for Mobilizing Younger Adults to Go to Xinjiang to Participate in Socialist Construction in 1959'"), March 31, 1959, NMA-1, 5016-001-001, 1-4.

[101] Jiangsu sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Minzheng zhi*, 825.

[102] Anhui sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles of Anhui Province), ed., *Dashiji* (Chronicle of Major Events), vol. 2 of *Anhui sheng zhi* (Gazetteer of Anhui Province) (Beijing: Fangzhi chubanshe, 1998).

[103] Hubei sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui (Compilation Committee for Local Chronicles of Hubei Province), ed., *Dashiji* (Chronicle of Major Events), vol. 2 of *Hubei sheng zhi* (Gazetteer of Hubei Province) (Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 1990), 657-658.

[104] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 61-62.

achieve 17 percent of their original mandate, but many of the individuals they did to Xinjiang quickly turned out and came home. What happened?

As discussed above, transportation proved to be the biggest bottleneck on moving substantial numbers of people to Xinjiang in an organized fashion. It was not feasible to move 2 million individuals without a dedicated rail network. As the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region reported to Hubei and Anhui, with the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway still under construction, only a quarter of all planned settlers arrived in Xinjiang in 1959. The absence of a developed railway and highway network within Xinjiang in the late 1950s also hurt efforts to people the frontier, effectively preventing Xinjiang from receiving anyone during the winter months. Thus, as early as October of each year, Xinjiang had to stop accepting new settlers from the interior provinces.[105] This was a problem, as discussed above, not easily resolved, taking until 1962, after rural-to-frontier settlement had ended.

Aside from transportation, the economy within Xinjiang during the Great Leap Forward harmed the migration campaign. Despite some earlier claims by Chinese scholars, agricultural shortfalls did hit Xinjiang hard during Mao Zedong's bid to catch up with Great Britain, and areas of the Uyghur Autonomous Region were stricken by famine.[106] Frank Dikotter has unearthed some evidence to suggest that food shortages prompted social instability and unrest in Xinjiang during this period;[107] first hand reports

[105] Untitled letter from the Xinjiang zizhiqu renwei (People's Committee of the Xinjiang [Uyghur] Autonomous Region) to the Hubei and Anhui Provincial People's Committees, July 7, 1959, HPA, SZ 67-2-945, 31.
[106] Zhihua Shen and Danhui Li, *After Leaning to One Side: China and Its Allies in the Cold War* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 182. For a thorough assessment of the Great Leap Forward in Xinjiang, see Zhu Peimin, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu* (Research on the Twentieth-Century History of Xinjiang) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2000), 279-291.
[107] Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, 239-240.

of emissaries from Beijing themselves also show that so-called "livelihood supplies" were hard to come by during the late 1950s and early 1960s. "Some daily necessities cannot be purchased, and the masses have a view [on this]," this individual reported in 1962.[108] The existing agricultural, industrial, and material shortfalls within Xinjiang—which would have hurt the participants in rural-to-rural resettlement no matter what—were compounded by the huge numbers of unsanctioned refugees arriving in the region from Zhejiang and other interior provinces, the places hardest hit by Mao's Great Leap Forward.[109] Hardship and hunger in Xinjiang, according to officials from Hubei Province, were producing high defection rates among resettled peasants, who came back to Huanggang in increasing numbers in 1961 and 1962.[110]

The biggest problems in the campaign, however, were not logistical or material; rather, they were familial. As described above, the participants involved in rural-to-frontier resettlement were "young adults" with families, but the workers' family members were not always allowed to accompany them. As Xinjiang's Party Secretary, Wang Enmao, explained to visiting officials from Hubei Province, the newly resettled populations grumbled constantly about the distance between them and their families. The

[108] "Waijiao bu lingshi si fu sizhang Xu Huang tongzhi dianhua huibao yaodian" ("Telephone Reporting Points from Comrade Xu Huang, Deputy Director of the Department of Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs"), April 21, 1962, PRCFMA, 118-01109-02, 3-4.
[109] Zhejiang sheng renmin weiyuanhui (Zhejiang Provincial People's Committee), "Zhuanfa guowuyuan 'guanyu mangmu liuru Xinjiang de renyuan banli changzhu hukou wenti de pishi' de tongzhi" ("Notification of Forwarding the State Council's 'Instructions on Handling the Long Term *Hukou* of People who Blindly Flowed into Xinjiang"), April 22, 1960, Ningbo shi dang'anguan (Ningbo Municipal Archives [NMA-2]), 地 31-012-024, 59-61.
[110] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu laodong tiaopei weiyuanhui (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Labor Allocation Committee), "Guanyu fan ji zhibian qingzhuang nian chongfan Xinjiang he jieqian jiashu wenti de han" ("Letter on the Issues of Younger Adults who returned Home returning to Xinjiang and Moving their Families"), December 30, 1962, HPA, SZ 67-2-1044, 1-3.

young men, Wang added, were exceedingly upset that they were far away from their wives.[111]

The rapid arrival of nearly 350,000 workers to China's underdeveloped periphery would have probably tested the capabilities of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region no matter what, but there was an accompanying familial and social crisis. As a cost cutting measure, state planners did not want to bring the family members (家属 *jiashu*) of workers to Xinjiang. Unemployed housewives and young children, neither of whom contributed labor, would further tax the grain distribution system in Xinjiang while requiring costly social services such as healthcare and schooling. Thus, the sending and receiving communities both typically refused to allow family members to go to Xinjiang. During the first two years of the program, only 34,000 family members accompanied the young male workers.[112] According to statistics from Jiangsu, the "young adults" from this province alone left behind over 130,000 spouses and children.[113]

The complaints of the resettled young men boiled over into protests on an almost annual basis.[114] When these protests failed, as authorities in Huanggang learned, many of the young men simply voted with their feet, returning home to be reunited with their families. The Uyghur Autonomous Region reacted hastily, introducing regularly scheduled leave for family visitations and inviting deserters back to Xinjiang, but by this point it was increasingly clear that the strategy to populate Xinjiang with rural adults was

[111] "Wang Enmao tongzhi dui weiwen gongzuo fabiao de yijian" ("Comrade Wang Enmao's Views on Our Goodwill Work"), undated but from around November 24, 1959, HPA, SZ 67-2-936, 2-3.
[112] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 61-62.
[113] Jiangsu sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Minzheng zhi*, 833.
[114] Jiangsu sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Minzheng zhi*, 833.

not going to work.[115] By October 1962, over 45,000 so-called *zhibian* (individuals aiding the borderland, or 支援边疆 *zhiyuan bianjiang*) from Hubei, Jiangsu, Anhui, and Henan had fled Xinjiang.[116]From Jiangsu Province alone, over 12,000 individuals came back east in 1961; over the next four years, as many as 70 percent of the original 120,000 fled Xinjiang.[117] Rural-to-frontier resettlement was in disrepair.

By this time, of course, the Great Leap Forward had already devastated China. As Chapter Two will shows, Mao's first great political, economic, and social calamity would further consolidate the conditions for urban-to-rural population resettlement to finally begin.

[115] Hubei sheng Huanggang zhuanqu zhibian bangongshi (Office for *Zhibian* of the Huanggang Special District, Hubei Province), "Jieshao Xinjiang jieqian zhibian jiashu zhunbei gongzuo qingkuang" ("Introducing the Situation of Xinjiang's Prepartory Work to Move the Families of *Zhibian*"), June 29, 1961, HPA, SZ 67-2-947, 6-7.
[116] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 64.
[117] Jiangsu sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Minzheng zhi*, 834.

Chapter 2: Origins

## Introduction

What led the Chinese government, just prior to the start of the Cultural Revolution, to want to dispatch more than 100,000 urban youth permanently to the deserts of northwest China?

The years immediately following the Great Leap Forward have traditionally been portrayed as a time of retrenchment and reform within the Chinese Communist Party; a moment when Chairman Mao retreated, allowing his deputies to pull the country back from the brink.[1] Humiliated at the 7,000 Cadres Conference in early 1962, Mao Zedong exited to the provinces while Liu Shaoqi, Chen Yun, Zhou Enlai, and Li Fuchun anxiously worked to end China's economic and social crises and bring the country—both rural and urban—out of the darkness. [2] It was an era of rational and modest planning foregrounded by two interrelated aims: reviving agricultural production and feeding the Chinese people.

How can this narrative be squared with a concurrent plan to redraw the Chinese map by moving millions of people? State-led population resettlement—traditionally the practice of immodest, even grandiose regimes—proliferated in China during this period. It, moreover, unfolded along a strikingly novel direction, from the cities to the countryside, and had an unimaginable scale: tens of millions of workers, students, families, retirees, and prisoners were shaken by the campaign. In the words of Deng

[1] Roderick MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution, Vol. 3, The Coming of the Cataclysm, 1961-1966* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 137-181, 262-263.
[2] Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 209-213. See also, MacFarquhar, *The Origins of the Cultural Revolution, Vol. 3,* 184-208.

Peng, the Chinese Government, with remarkable speed and cost efficiency "accomplished something that few governments in world history had ever attempted."[3]

To understand why the Chinese Government did what it did, it is sensible to examine what is, in retrospect, the most radical but most thoroughly documented example of state-led population resettlement: the relocation of more than 100,000 teenagers and twenty-somethings from Eastern China to Xinjiang. To put it more concretely, the Chinese Government was willing to catapult someone as young as 15 years old over 4,000 kilometers. Urban-to-rural population resettlement to Xinjiang was the most extreme manifestation of the Chinese state's will to dramatically transform the existing population geography.

What is most remarkable is that Chairman Mao had nothing to do with any of this.[4] So why did it happen? As Chapter One implied, the post-Great Leap resettlement program emerged when the economies of frontier China and urban China became complementary, even as they faced different challenges and prioritized different goals. was not the product of a single individual, nor a single document, but rather was constructed, piecemeal, at many different offices and institutions across China, over a period of several years. It emerged from within institutions, on the streets, and inside homes; it was the product of conversations and debates about real and perceived problems relating to economy, population, revolution, and, to a lesser extent, security.

Concocted entirely by Mao's levelheaded proxies, urban-to-rural population resettlement was part of the post-Great Leap transition aimed at "rationally" reshaping

[3] Deng, "Introduction," 2-3.
[4] The historiographical implications of this statement should be clear: in contrast Frank Dikötter, I believe Mao's radicalism was enabled and accentuated by his comrades in the Central Committee. For a more Mao-centered approach, see Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*.

society, politics, economy, and environment.[5] In making this argument, it is important to recognize that Chinese political culture changed quickly from Great Leap, to post-Leap, to Cultural Revolution. Neil J. Diamant has recently drawn attention to the issue of "policy blending" and the overlapping chronologies of political campaigns in the early PRC.[6] This is not just terminology of a scholar looking backwards on the past. In 1965, China's Vice Premier Tan Zhenlin (谭震林) called this "unifying" (结合起来 *jiehe qilai*): revisiting old plans in light of "new problems" and "new spirits within the Central Committee."[7] Grassroots reports from the 1960s also depict how new campaigns affected older ones; in 1963, Shanghai complained that its cadres were letting the Five-Antis Campaign distract them from population resettlement.[8]

Once a rationale solution to concrete problems, the resettlement program eventually "blended" into, or became "unified" with, political-ideological campaigns. As the Cultural Revolution edged closer, the resettlement program echoed the nationwide shift toward "ideology and politics" (思想政治 *sixiang zhengzhi*). The ideological upswing in the Chinese Communist Party, coinciding with Mao Zedong's return to power in 1964 but especially after 1966, left an indelible impact on Shanghai's "educated

[5] Here my conclusions dovetail with Tania Murray Li, who writes that "although there are occasions when a revolutionary movement or visionary announces a grand plan for the total transformation of society—the kind of plan James Scott describes as 'high modern,' more often programs of intervention are pulled together from an existing repertoire, a matter of habit, accretion, and bricolage." See Tania Murray Li, *The Will to Improve: Governmentality, Development, and the Practice of Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 6.
[6] Neil J. Diamant, "Policy Blending, Fuzzy Chronology, and Local Understandings of National Initiatives in Early 1950s China," *Frontiers of History in China* 9, no. 1 (2014): 83-101.
[7] "Tan fu zongli zai anzhi gongzuo huiyi shang de jianghua" ("Vice-Premier Tan [Zhenlin's] Speech at the Placement Work Meeting"), February 8, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01735, 36-40.
[8] Zhonggong Shanghai shi jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal [Committee]), "Guanyu dangqian jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo qingkuang he yijian de jianbao" ("Brief Report and Views on the Present Work related to Urban Population Reduction"), April 17, 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 84-88.

youth." As the CCP began valorizing those who engaged in hard labor on the western Chinese frontier, while demonizing urban dwellers, the campaign to resettle urban youth to Xinjiang became about ideology, revolution, and social reform.

**The Post-Great Leap Forward Moment**

Although the Great Leap Forward did not officially end until 1962, Liu Shaoqi's tour of China's devastated countryside in early 1961 was a wakeup call for the Chinese Communist Party.[9] As Liu discovered in Hunan Province, inflated statistics on agricultural production since 1958 had led the state to seize so much grain that the peasantry was left with little or nothing to eat. Though the exact death toll remains hotly contested, millions perished during this peacetime famine.[10]

Publicly, the Communist Party did its best to maintain innocence. Deflecting responsibility, the CCP asked its people to think backwards: "if Old China had experienced this kind of natural disaster, who knows how many people would have starved to death[?]"[11] But behind the scenes, Liu Shaoqi and other members of the Central Committee acknowledged a much grimmer reality. The ruling regime had failed to provide its peasants with the basic requirements of human survival: food.

In response, the Chinese Communist Party, even with Chairman Mao still at the helm, instituted several emergency policy measures to revive food production in 1961 and 1962. Li Fuchun (李富春), an economic policymaker, emphasized in January 1961

[9] Xun Zhou, ed., *The Great Famine in China, 1958-1962: A Documentary History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 162-163; Chris Bramall, *China's Economic Development* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 134.
[10] Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*; Yang Jisheng, *Tombstone: The Great Chinese Famine, 1958-1962*, trans. Stacy Mosher and Guo Jian (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2012).
[11] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei xuanchuanbu (Propaganda Department of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Xuanchuan cankao tigang" ("Propaganda Points for Reference"), September 27, 1961, SMA, A62-1-3, 59-65.

that "agriculture is the foundation" of the Chinese economy and must be "placed at the forefront [of our work]." For the annual economic plan, Li called for increasing the cultivation of rice, wheat, and other grains while planting more cash crops, such as cotton and ingredients for vegetable oil.[12]

The cities had been the primary beneficiaries of the 1950s, but as farm work became the "foundation" of the planned economy, the post-Great Leap agenda promised to be less kind to urban China. Indeed, the CCP increasingly looked back on its economic policies with regret. Chen Yun (陈云) claimed that China's famine was in part the result of "urban populations growing faster than production."[13] The Central Committee thus indicated that it would have to make "adjustments to urban-rural relations" (调整城乡关系 *tiaozheng cheng xiang guanxi*) in order to end the famine, restore agricultural productivity, and see the Second Five-Year Plan through to the end.[14]

While in the 1950s rural China had subsidized industrialization in urban China, the CCP now wanted to decrease the extent to which cities leaned on the countryside for grain and other foodstuffs. Initially, the Central Committee announced that cities had to restrict population growth, but soon thereafter the cities were told "reduce urban populations and lessen urban grain requirements."[15] Chen Yun explained that, under

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[12] Li Fuchun, "Guanyu anpai yijiuliuyi nian guomin jingji jihua de yijian" ("Proposals on the National Economic Plan for 1961"), January 14, 1961, in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (CCP Central Committee Literature Research Center), *Jianguo yilai zhongyao wenxian xuanbian* (Selected Important Documents Issued since the Founding of the PRC [JYZWX]), vol. 14 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1997), 19-46.

[13] Chen Yun, "Dongyuan chengshi renkou xiaxiang" ("Mobilize the Urban Population to Go Down to the Villages"), May 31, 1961, in JYZWX, vol. 14, 364-374.

[14] Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee), "Pizhuan guojia jiwei dangzu guanyu di'er ge wunian jihua hou liangnian buchong jihua (kongzhi shuzi) de baogao" ("Forwarding the Report of the National Planning Commission Party Group on Supplementary Plans for the Two Years Following the Second Five-Year Plan [Control Numbers]"), October 6, 1961, in JYZWX, vol. 14, 712-737.

[15] Zhongyang gongzuo huiyi (Central Committee Work Conference), "关 Guauyn jianshao chengzhen renkou he yasuo chengshi shiliang xiaoliang de jitiao banfa" ("Several Ways of Reducing the Urban

current conditions, he expected the grain situation to be even tighter in 1962 than it had been in 1961. If China was going to avoid an agricultural shortfall (and another famine), it urgently needed more labor in the countryside producing food.[16] The Central Committee thus added that in order to "reduce the urban populations," the cities would have to "downsize [industrial] labor" and "mobilize [laid off workers] to return to the villages and support agricultural production."[17] Chen and other senior economists anticipated that the transferring of workers from the cities to the countryside would have to continue for several years in order to restore agricultural production to pre-Great Leap Forward levels.[18]

**Population Reduction Work in Urban China**

Urban officials in Shanghai, Beijing, and elsewhere did their utmost to respond to the nationwide drive to reduce the size of the cities. In winter and spring 1962, they institutionalized and made semi-permanent population work through the formation of so-called "streamlining" or "downsizing" (精简 *jingjian*) small groups and "population

Population Decreasing Urban Grain Provisions"), June 16, 1961, in JYZWX, vol. 14, 412-415. See also Chen Yun, "Muqian caizheng jingji de qingkuang he kefu kunnan de ruogan banfa" ("On the Current Financial and Economic Situation and Several Ways of Overcoming Problems"), February 26, 1962, in JYZWX, vol. 15, 205-222.

[16] Chen Yun, "Dongyuan chengshi renkou xiaxiang" ("Mobilize the Urban Population to Go Down to the Villages"), May 31, 1961, in JYZWX, vol. 14, 364-374.

[17] Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee), "Pizhuan guojia jiwei dangzu guanyu di'er ge wunian jihua hou liangnian buchong jihua (kongzhi shuzi) de baogao" ("Forwarding the Report of the National Planning Commission Party Group on Supplementary Plans for the Two Years Following the Second Five-Year Plan [Control Numbers]"), October 6, 1961, in JYZWX, vol. 14, 712-737.

[18] Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee) andGuowuyuan (State Council), "Guanyu quanbu wancheng he lizheng chao'e jingjian renwu de jueding" ("Resolution on Completing and Exceeding Streamlining Tasks"), March 3, 1963, in JYZWX, vol. 16, 190-195.
See also Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan shiwei jingjian xiaozu yijiuliusinian jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo fang'an" ("Municipal Committee forwards the Streamlining Small Group's Plan for Urban Population Reduction Work in 1964"), March 18, 1964, SMA, A62-1-27, 1-4; and Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Municipal Party Committee Streamlining Small Group), "Shanghai shi yijiujiuliuwu nian jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo fang'an" ("Shanghai's 1966 Work Program for Reducing the Urban Population"), April 9, 1965, SMA, A62-1-33, 1-9. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)

work" (人口工作 *renkou gongzuo*) offices.[19] These units henceforth began mulling long-term plans to limit growth. In Shanghai, local officials designed policies to strictly curb in-migration from rural areas.[20] In Beijing, family planning (计划生育 *jihua shengyu*) and late-marriage (晚婚 *wanhun*) education became part of school curriculum and neighborhood propaganda, all part of an effort to convince young people to limit the number of children they had and to furthermore delay doing so.[21] Laying the groundwork for the one-child policy of later years, the Central Committee also considered how it could regulate the number of births.[22]

The Leading Small Group for Population Work in Shanghai put forth two three-year plans to reduce its population. The first and much more dramatic proposal called for Shanghai to shed two-and-a-half million residents by 1963. While such a plan would greatly reduce Shanghai's grain requirements, it would also chip into Shanghai's industrial output and reduce the city's economic growth rates into the foreseeable future. It would also require that significant opportunities for workers existed outside of the city. The Leading Small Group thus preferred the second and much more moderate proposal,

[19] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Tongzhi" ("Notification"), March 29, 1962, SMA, A62-1-9, 6.
[20] Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee), "Jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo huibao tigang" ("Report Outline on Urban Population Reduction Work"), April 29, 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 21-30.
[21] Beijing shi jihua weiyuanhui (Beijing Municipal Planning Committee), "Guanyu chengshi renkou, laodongli anzhi he ban gong ban du, yi gong yi nong wenti de di san ge wu nian jihua chubu guihua fang'an (caogao)" ("Draft Preliminary Plans for Urban Population and Labor Force Placements, Part-Time Work/Study, and Part-Time Worker/Peasants during the Third Fifth Year Plan"), May 1964, BMA, 133-001-00358, 15-23.
[22] Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee) and Guowuyuan (State Council), "Pizhuan Shanghai shiwei, shi renwei 'guanyu jihua shengyu gongzuo de baogao'" ("Forwarding the Shanghai Municipal Committee and People's Committee's 'Report on the Work of Family Planning'"), June 23, 1965, in JYZWX, vol. 18, 303-309.

with stipulated that the city's population size of 6.5 million could be kept stagnant by managing in-migration and reducing birthrates.[23]

Most of these efforts would not see results for many years, but the cities had to act immediately. In Shanghai, Mayor Cao Diqiu (曹荻秋) took on personal responsibility for the drive to reduce the city's population. At a city-wide meeting convened on July 14, 1961, Mayor Cao announced that Shanghai—China's most prosperous city—could no longer count on the countryside to provide so much grain. To cope with shrinking food supplies, his city would have to shed at least 400,000 people in the coming months.[24]

Cao Diqiu's speech—titled "Reduce the Urban Population, Support Agricultural Production"—was distributed to work units across Shanghai.[25] Population workers actively supported Cao's drive, reporting that Shanghai had huge numbers of "idle peoples and floating agriculturalists in the city," euphemisms respectively for unemployed workers and rural *hukou* holders illegally living in Shanghai. They also claimed that there was persistent "overstaffing" and "wasted labor" at factories, mills, and other enterprises in the cities.[26]

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[23] Shiwei renkou gongzuo lingdao xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Leading Small Group of the Municipal Committee for Population Work), "Guanyu jingjian zhigong, jianshao chengzhen renkou sannian guihua wenti de chubu yijian" ("Preliminary Views on the Three-Year Plan for Streamlining Workers and Reducing the Urban Population"), August 18, 1961, SMA, A62-1-4, 5-7. See also Shiwei renkou gongzuo lingdao xiaozu (Leading Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee for Population Work), "Guanyu 1961-1963nian ben shi jianshao chengzhen renkou de chubu guihua" ("On the Preliminary Plan for Reducing Shanghai's Urban Population during 1961-1963"), August 18, 1961, SMA, A62-1-4, 14-17.

[24] Cao Diqiu, "Jianshao chengzhen renkou dali zhiyuan nongye shengchan" ("Reduce the Urban Population and Support Agricultural Production"), July 14, 1961, SMA, A62-1-3, 7-12.

[25] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei renkou gongzuo lingdao xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Leading Small Group of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee for Population Work), "Tongzhi" ("Notification"), August 16, 1961, SMA, A62-1-3, 4.

[26] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei renkou gongzuo lingdao xiaozu (Leading Small Group of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee for Population Work), "Guanyu jianshao chengzhen renkou zhiyuan nongye shengchan de chubu guihua (cao'an)" ("Draft Preliminary Plan for Reducing the Urban Population and Supporting Agricultural Production"), July 9, 1961, SMA, A62-1-4, 1-4.

Urban population reduction began with the easiest targets: those people with rural *hukous* illegally dwelling in the cities.[27] Launched as the "return to the countryside" movement, this was a vigorous campaign to purge the cities of farmers and peasants. Shanghai's Leading Small Group for Population Work proposed to lay-off rural workers who had come to Shanghai in the 1950s (and especially since January 1958) and dispatch them to the countryside along other members unfortunately part of the so-called "idle population."[28] Authorities began patrolling streets and deporting "street peddlers," destitute rural peoples, and others without an urban *hukou*.[29] Shanghai alone removed 160,000 peasants in less than two years.[30]

The *huixiang* movement was painfully effective, but urban officials could not simply pin the resolution of the so-called "population problem" on rural migrants. If the cities were truly going to lessen their grain requirements, they would have to shed unproductive citizenry from the rosters. The cities thus broadened the scope of the campaign, and now sought to mobilize almost anyone who fell into the "the grain eating population" (吃商品粮人口 *chi shangpinliang renkou*).[31] A subsection of the population

[27] Zhejiang sheng nongye ting (Zhejiang Provincial Department of Agriculture), "Guanyu ben sheng guoying nongchang anzhi chengzhen jingjian zhigong he qingnian xuesheng chubu yijian de baogao" ("Report on Preliminary Proposals for Zhejiang Province's State-Run Farms to Settle Urban Streamlined Workers and Youth and Students"), September 25, 1962, Zhejiang sheng dang'anguan (Zhejiang Provincial Archives [ZPA]), J1116-16-28, 9-12.
[28] Shiwei renkou gongzuo lingdao xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Leading Small Group of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee for Population Work), "Guanyu jingjian zhigong, jianshao chengzhen renkou ruogan juti wenti de yijian" ("Views on Some Specific Issues in the Streamlining of Workers and the Reduction of the Urban Population"), August 16, 1961, SMA, A62-1-1, 2-4.
[29] Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee), "Jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo huibao tigang" ("Report Outline on Urban Population Reduction Work"), April 29, 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 21-30.
[30] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu renzhen zuohao huixiang renyuan de anzhi, jiaoyu gongzuo de tongzhi" ("Notification on Earnestly Completing Resettlement and Education Work for Persons Returning to the Villages"), September 7, 1963, Huangpu qu dang'anguan (Huangpu District Archives [HDA]), 26-2-704, 17-20.
[31] Zhonggong Lin'an xanwei zhengbian jingjian weiyuanhui bangongshi (Office of the Reorganization and Streamlining Committee of the CCP Lin'an County Committee), "Guanyu jinnian yilai wo xian chengzhen

which did not contribute labor, other reports called it the "social population" or "society's population" (社会人口 *shehui renkou*).[32] These included family members of workers (such as housewives), "idle laborers" (闲散劳动 *xiansan laodong*) or simply unemployed men, reformed thought criminals, retired workers, and the disabled, among others.[33] The Central Committee demanded that cities across the country cut 1.12 million of these people and send them to state-run farms, forests, ranches, and fisheries so that they could begin to contribute to the nation's economic output.[34] Cities in Jiangsu Province agreed, announcing anyone "able to work should be sent down."[35]

After targeting these vulnerable populations, eventually population reduction and resettlement creeped into the urban workforces.[36] Industrial layoffs—known euphemistically as "streamlining" (精简 *jingjian*) exercises—were seen by cities as a

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renkou shangshan xiaxiang de dongyuan he anzhi gongzuo qingkuang ji jinhou gongzuo yijian de baogao" ("Report on Mobilizing and Settling the Urban Population of Lin'an Up in the Mountains and Down in the Villages in 1964 and Proposals for Future Work"), November 2, 1964, ZPA, J101-22-14, 88-98. See also Chun'an xian anzhi bangongshi (Chun'an County Settlement Office), "Guanyu dongyuan chengzhen renkou shangshan xiaxiang 'san wu' guihua he yijiuliuliu nian jihua de yijian" ("Program for Mobilzing the Urban Population to Go Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages during the Third Five-Year Plan and Proposals for 1966"), October 23, 1965, ZPA, J101-22-31, 57-59.

[32] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Zhuanfa 'yijiuliusan nian jingjian gongzuo fang'an'" ("Forwarding the '1963 Plan for Streamlining Work'"), April 1, 1964, HDA, 26-2-704, 4-8.

[33] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu jingjian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Situation of Streamlining Work"), September 21, 1962, SMA, A62-1-10, 1-4.

[34] "Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan pizhuan nonglin ban guanyu guoying nong, lin, mu, yu chang anzhi jiaju da zhong chengshi jingjian zhigong he qingnian xuesheng huibao huiyi de baogao" ("The [CCP] Central Committee and State Council Forward the Agriculture and Forestry Office's Report of the Meeting on State-Owned Farms, Forests, Husbandries, and Fisheries Settling Families of Streamlined Workers and Youth and Students from Mid-Sized and Large Cities"), November 22, 1962, in Guowuyuan zhibang ban, ed.,*Zhiqing gongzuo wenjian xuanbian* (Selected Documents in *Zhiqing* Work [ZGWX]]) (published for internal circulation, 1981), 3-8.

[35] Jiangsu sheng liangshi ting, Zhonggong Jiangsu sheng jingjian anzhi bangongshi (Jiangsu Provincial Grain Department and CCP Jiangsu Provicinail Streamlining and Placement Office), "Guanyu dui qian jinian yasuo chengzhen renkou liangshi gongying yiliu wenti chuli de tongzhi" ("Notification on Handling Any Remaining Problems from the Reduction of Grain Supplies for the Urban Population over the Last Several Years"), May 28, 1965, Changshu shi dang'anguan (Changshu Municipal Archives [CMA]), E01-12-050, 3.

[36] Brown, *City versus Countryside in Mao's China*, 105.

speedy mechanism to resolve urban food shortages and am oversaturated labor market; it was, in the words of Tianjin's Communist Party Committee, a "most effective method."[37] They worked painfully well: by early 1963, China reported that 18 million employees had been laid off, 12 million people had been expelled from the cities, and 20 million grain eaters cut off from the state supply system.[38]

**Population Reduction Work Continues**

Brutally successful, urban population reduction in 1961 and 1962 unfolded through the return to the countryside, late marriage, and family planning campaigns, the streamlining of government offices and industries, the removal of street peddlers, and the tightening of residence permit, or *hukou*, controls. Whether the population crisis in urban China was "real" or "socially constructed" is open for debate,[39] but what is clear is that the Chinese Communist Party sought to decrease the extent to which cities leaned on the countryside for grain and other foodstuffs by "rebalancing the urban-rural relationship."

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[37] Zhonggong Tianjin shiwei (CCP Tianjin Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan shiwei jian ren lingdao xiaozu 'guanyu yijiuliuer nian jixu jianshao chengzhen renkou, jingjian zhigong guonei gongzuo de yijian'" ("The [CCP Tianjin] Municipal Committee Forwards the Municipal Committee's Population Reduction Leading Small Grou's 'Views on the Work of Continuing to Reduce the Urban Population and Streamline Workers Domestically"), April 14, 1962, Tianjin shi dang'anguan (Tianjin Municipal Archives [TMA-1]), 98-1-444, 1-4.

[38] Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee) and Guowuyuan (State Council), "Guanyu quanbu wancheng he lizheng chao'e jingjian renwu de jueding" ("Resolution on Completing and Exceeding Streamlining Tasks"), March 3, 1963, in JYZWX, vol. 16, 190-195.

The Chinese Communist Party achieved greater reductions in the grain supply than it did in urban population reduction and workforce downsizing because it also targeted peasants under the slogan of "shrinking the rural grain eating [population]." See "Zhang Yun tongzhi zai quan sheng yasuo chengzhen renkou hou jianshao chengxiang chi shangpin renkou gongzuo huiyi shang de baogao tigang" ("Outline of Comrade Zhang Yun's Speech at the All Provincial Work Conference on Reducing the Eating Population in Urban-Rural Areas after Shrinking the Urban Population"), n.d. but from sometime in 1962, GPA, 256-1-52, 18-24.

[39] Susan Greenhalgh, *Just One Child: Science and Policy in Deng's China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 34.

The drive was, however, to continue through 1963 and beyond. Cities across Eastern China were mandated to keep population sizes "stable at existing levels."[40] But for Shanghai, Beijing, and other cities, having already done such a remarkable job, now faced new challenges. Who could they deport, and to where?

In a report copied to Mao Zedong, Shanghai's Urban Municipal Committee complained the Central Committee that the "outlying areas" (外地 *waidi*) were not demanding enough of Shanghai's workforce. The lower demand was harming the progress of population reduction.[41] In Beijing, too, its previously existing resettlement relationships folded up; the farms in the northeast were now undergoing "downsizing" as well and could not absorb surplus workers from the capital.[42] Compounding this, cadres in the cities had apparently become sick of population reduction and often tried to foist it upon other work units. In Shanghai, many urban officials suggested it was the responsibility of only the "alleyway" (里弄 *lilong*) or neighborhood committees, the lowest organizational rung of the party hierarchy. [43]

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[40] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Small Group of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee for Streamlining), untitled report concerning the organization of streamlining offices in Shanghai, July 17, 1963, SMA, A62-1-9, 25-26.

[41] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu jingjian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Situation of Streamlining Work"), September 21, 1962, SMA, A62-1-10, 1-4. See also Untitled notification from the Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Small Group of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee for Streamlining), May 6, 1963, HDA, 26-2-704, 9.

[42] Jia Xingwu, Wan Yi, and Wang Jialiu, "Guanyu canjia Huabei ju da zhong chengshi anzhi gongzuo huiyi qingkuang he women jinnian anzhi benshi buneng shengxue de chuzhong gaozhong biyesheng ji shehui wuye renyuan yijian de baogao" ("Report on Attending the North China Bureau Large and Mid-Sized Cities Placement Work Conferenace and Views on This Year's Placement of Beijing Middle and High School Graduates Unable to Continue their Studies and Unemployed People in Society"), February 4, 1964, BMA, 002-020-01532, 1-12.

[43] Zhonggong Shanghai shi jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal [Committee]), "Guanyu dangqian jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo qingkuang he yijian de jianbao" ("Brief Report and Views on the Present Work related to Urban Population Reduction"), April 17, 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 84-88. See also Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee), "Jianshao chengzhen

The in-fighting within the cities did not sit well with China's central planners, who still expected to see results in urban population reduction in 1963. The Central Committee and the regional party bureaus began circulating criticisms of the cities as a sly way of motivating them. Authorities in Shanghai were, for example, disappointed to learn that they were among the "slowest of the provinces and cities in East China in population reduction work."[44]

After being ridiculed, the Shanghai Downsizing Small Group fretted that it was going to miss its annual reduction benchmark. It announced that the city had to "quickly think of other ways to reduce the urban population" aside from sending laid off workers to the countryside.[45] Because so many rural *hukou* holders and laid off workers had been sent to the countryside by late 1963, young people became the next most vulnerable population segment.[46]

**Population Reduction Work and Urban China's Youth**

It is surprising that it took the campaign so long to reach young people (青年 *qingnian*), in part because there were so many of them.

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renkou gongzuo huibao tigang" ("Report Outline on Urban Population Reduction Work"), April 29, 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 21-30.

[44] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Small Group of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee for Streamlining), "Guanyu dangqian jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo de qingkuang he yijian" ("The Situation of and Views on Current Population Reduction Work"), June 7, 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 45-53.

[45] Zhonggong Shanghai shi jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal [Committee]), "Guanyu dangqian jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo qingkuang he yijian de jianbao" ("Brief Report and Views on the Present Work related to Urban Population Reduction"), April 17, 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 84-88. See also Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee), "Jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo huibao tigang" ("Report Outline on Urban Population Reduction Work"), April 29, 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 21-30.

[46] "Shanghai shi shiqu xiansan laodongli he shehui qingnian de qingkuang ji jinhou sannian anpai de yijian" ("Situation of Idle Labor and Social Social in Urban Shanghai and Planning Proposals for the Next Three Years"), September 10, 1963, SMA, B127-2-233, 49-51.

Chen Linhu (陈琳瑚), the Director of Shanghai's Education Bureau, noted that there had been a huge spike in student enrollment in his city's schools in the mid-1950s, as the baby boomer generation reached schooling age. By 1961, per Chen's tallies, more than 2.2 million students were enrolled in Shanghai's primary, middle, and high schools. While proud that Shanghai could increasingly boast having a "conscious and cultured" (有觉悟有文化 *you juewu you wenhua*) citizenry, this success created new anxieties for Chen. Many these students would not test well enough to advance onto the next level of education, which meant, in turn, the Education Bureau would have to prepare more jobs than it was used to.[47]

Originally, Shanghai had seen no problem with sending middle school graduates, peoples with only modest education, into the workforce.[48] But with industrial downturns, students were the unintended victims of the efforts to strip down factory workforces. Instead of dispatching middle or high school graduates to fill industrial vacancies, the limited number of openings would be filled by college graduates.[49] Officials in Shanghai's Jing'an District complained of ideological challenges in light of the graduation gap and having to now prepare students for a harsh reality: they would neither

[47] Chen Linhu, "Guanyu benjie zhong xiaoxue biyesheng de quanmian anpai wenti" ("Comprehensive Planning for This Year's Primary and Middle School Graduates"), July 1962, SMA, B1-1-852, 17-21.

During these austere times, state investments into education were suddenly cut back, which also explains why fewer students could advance in their studies. Urban officials even complained of overcrowded classrooms and enough beds at student dormitories. See 上海市教育局 Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Education Bureau), "Guanyu jinnian zhong xiaoxue zhaosheng gongzuo he biyesheng anpai wenti de huibao" ("Report on Recruitment Work for Middle and Primary Schoools and Arrangements for Graduates This Year"), June 23, 1963, SMA, B123-5-1305, 22-25.

[48] Chen Linhu, "Guanyu benjie zhong xiaoxue biyesheng de quanmian anpai wenti" ("Comprehensive Planning for This Year's Primary and Middle School Graduates"), July 1962, SMA, B1-1-852, 17-21.

[49] "Shanghai shi shiqu xiansan laodongli he shehui qingnian de qingkuang ji jinhou sannian anpai de yijian" ("Situation of Idle Labor and Social Social in Urban Shanghai and Planning Proposals for the Next Three Years"), September 10, 1963, SMA, B127-2-233, 49-51.

advance in their education nor receive a plum job.[50] Propaganda organs in the city changed tact: instead of telling young people "to have a red heart and be prepared for two things"—that is, school and labor—they were told to "be prepared for many things," an admission that they faced an uncertain future.[51]

Shanghai's Party Secretary Shi Ximin (石西民) pondered out loud, "where will all these young people go? Can all of them find jobs in Shanghai?" That would be "impossible," Shi concluded.[52] This in turn exacerbated the phenomenon of "social youth" or "society's youth" (社会青年 *shehui qingnian*), a descriptive category for someone transitioning from student status to unemployed. Detached from a school and untethered from a workplace, "social youth" were called such because they simply roamed about the cities.[53] Some cities, such as Nanjing, called them "neighborhood youth," reflecting that they were ostensibly now attached to neighborhood-level party committees.[54] Though fairly educated (usually having a middle school diploma or higher), their productive energies were going to waste.[55] The National Ministry of

[50] Jing'an qu biyesheng gongzuo bangongshi (Jing'an District Graduated Students Office), "Gao san biyesheng sixiang qingkuang" ("Ideological Situation of Third-Year High School Graduates"), August 15, 1962, SMA, A30-2-6, 8-10.
[51] Zhonggong jiefang ribao weiyuanhui (CCP *Liberation Daily* Committee)," Guanyu 'yike hongxin, jizhong zhunbei' de kouhao tifa de qingshi baogao" ("Instructing and Reporting on the Set Phrase 'Have a Red Heart and Be Prepared for Many Things'"), June 20, 1964, SMA, A73-1-540, 31.
[52] "Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei shujichu houpu shuji Shi Ximin tongzhi zai Shanghai shi shehui qingnian huodong fenzi huiyi shang de baogao jilv" ("Record of CCP Shanghai Municipal Secretary Comrade Shi Ximin's Report at the Shanghai Municipal Social Youth Activists Meeting"), June 24, 1963, SMA, C21-2-2268, 38-41.
[53] Brown, *City versus Countryside in Mao's China*, 118-119.
[54] Zhonggong Nanjing shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee Streamlining and Settlement Small Group), "Guanyu Xinjiang gongzuo tuan zai benshi shencha jieshou zhishi qingnian gongzuo zhong jige wenti de huibao" ("Report on Several Problems in the Xinjiang Work Delegation's Examination and Acceptance of Nanjing's Educated Youth"), August 5, 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0122, 39-44.
[55] Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu (Shanghai Municipal Labour Bureau Party Group) and Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu jinyibu jiaqiang shehui qingnian de guanli jiaoyu he juban qingnian laodong houbei xuexiao de qingshi baogao" ("Reporting and Instructing on Further Strengthening the Administration and Education of Social Youth and Organizing

Education began collecting statistics on the numbers of students in elementary, middle, and high school with no post-graduation plan, paying special attention to figures from Tianjin, Shanghai, Wuhan, and several other oversized municipalities in China.[56]

Hubei Province reported that it had over 70,000 so-called *shehui qingnian* in 1962, including 35,000 in Wuhan alone (according to some metrics, the number of unemployed youth was as high as 120,000 for the entire province).[57] Hebei Province announced that its seven largest municipalities, including Tianjin, had 124,000 unemployed young people.[58] In Guangzhou, 30,000 young people "idled about in the neighborhoods."[59] Nanjing, for its part, claimed it still had 22,000 unemployed young people in the middle of 1964.[60] Mid-sized cities such as Wuxi reported a much more modest number of unemployed young people—9,000 in 1964—but even these figures frightened local authorities.[61] Education officials in Wuxi claimed that the "majority" of

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Youth Labor Reserve Acadmies"), January 5, 1965, SMA, B127-1-389, 9-17. Also available in SMA C21-1-1094, 30-38.

[56] Untitled letter from the Ministry of Education to education departments in Tianjin, Shenyang, Wuhan, Shanghai, and Xi'an, March 16, 1962, TMA-1, 198-2-1652, 1.

[57] Gongqingtuan Hubei shengwei (CYL Hubei Provincial Committee), "Guanyu jiaqiang chengzhen shehui qingnian gongzuo de baogao" ("Report on Strengthening Urban Social Youth Work"), August 6, 1962, HPA, SZ 27-2-162, 62-68.

[58] Hebei sheng jiaoyu ting (Hebei Provincial Education Department), "Guanyu chengshi shehui qingnian xuexi qingkuang de jianbao" ("Brief Report on the Study Situation of Urban Social Youth"), June 1, 1963, TMA-1, 198-2-1891, 85-88. For figures specific to Tianjin, see Hebei sheng Tianjin shi jihua weiyuanhui (Planning Committee of Tianjin Municipality, Hebei Province), "Tianjin shi yijiuliusan nian zhongxue biyesheng anpai qingkuang he yijiuliusi nian anpai yijian" ("Plans for Tianjin's 1963 Middle School Graduates and Proposals for Plans in 1964"), November 5, 1963, TMA-1, 78-1-591, 275-278.

[59] "Guanyu dongyuan ge fangmian liliang, zai quanshi zuzhi yici qingnian xiaxiang da gaochao de yijian" ("Views on Mobilizing All of Our Strengths and Organizing a High-Tide of Youth Going Down to the Villages across the City [Guangzhou]"), August 19, 1963, Guangzhou shi dang'anguan (Guangzhou Municipal Archives [GMA]), 93-19-306, 84-86.

[60] "Nanjing shi chengzhen renkou he chengshi xuyao jiuye laodongli de anzhi guanli gongzuo qingkuang" ("Settlement and Administration of Nanjing's Urban Population and the Labor Force in the City Requiring Employment"), June 17, 1964, NMA-1, 85-115.

[61] Wuxi shi chengshi renkou xiaxiang anzhi lingdao xiaozu (Wuxi Municipal Urban Population Sent Down Settlement Leading Small Group), "Guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia nongcun shehui zhuyi jianshe de jihua baogao" ("Planning Report for Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in Rural Socialist Construction"), April 6, 1964, WMA, 1-5.

middle and high school graduates would be unable to continue their education.[62] Shanghai counted probably the highest number of "social youth" among all cities: 110,000 in early 1963.[63]

If the existing numbers of "social youth" were discomforting, the future was even more frightening. In Shanghai, population statisticians predicted that the size of this segment would balloon to 300,000 by 1965.[64] The Shanghai Municipal Party Committee anticipated that, going forward, it would need to plan for almost 100,000 young people each year.[65] In Beijing, city planners saw 360,000 young people becoming unemployed between the years 1966 and 1970.[66]

The cities scrambled to come up with alternatives for school graduates who could not enter the industrial workforce. State-run farms on the outskirts of cities, such as Shanghai's Chongming Reclamation Area, Changxing Island, and settlements in

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[62] Wuxi shi jiaoyu ju (Wuxi Municipal Education Bureau) and Zhongguo gongchan zhuyi qingniantuan Wuxi shi weiyuanhui (CYL Wuxi Municipal Committee), "Guanyu Wuxi shi 1963nian zhongxue biyesheng daibiao huiyi qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Meeting of Wuxi Municipality's Middle School Graduates Representatives for 1963"), June 20, 1963, JPA, 4013-003-1847, 92-101.

[63] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu gongzuo bangongshi (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee Area Work Office), "Guanyu 1962nian shehui qingnian anpai gongzuo de qingkuang" ("Situation of Arranging Work for Social Youth in 1962"), February 20, 1963, SMA, C21-1-928, 1-7. For other similar estimates, see "Shiqu shehui qingnian qingkuang he anzhi guanli yijian de huibao tigang" ("Report Outline on the Situation of Shanghai's Social Youth and Proposals for Resettling and Managing Them"), October 24, 1963, SMA, B127-2-133, 10-12.

[64] "Guanyu 1963-1965nian Shanghai shi shehui qingnian anpai qingkuang de ruogan jianyao shuoming (gao)" ("Several Brief Explanations on the Situation of Arranging [Work] for Shanghai's Social Youth, 1963-1965"), August 16, 1963, SMA, B127-1-801, 1-3. See also in ZZQZ, 44-47.

[65] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Pizhuan laodong ju dangzu 'guanyu benshi xiansan laodongli de qingkuang he anzhi guanli gongzuo de yijian" ("Forwarding the [Shanghai Municipal] Labor Bureau Party Group's 'Views on Shanghai's Idle Labor and Resettlement and Administration Work"), July 27, 1963, HDA, 26-2-704, 21-24. See also "Shanghai shi shiqu xiansan laodongli he shehui qingnian de qingkuang ji jinhou sannian anpai de yijian" ("Situation of Idle Labor and Social Social in Urban Shanghai and Planning Proposals for the Next Three Years"), September 10, 1963, SMA, B127-2-233, 49-51.

[66] Beijing shi jihua weiyuanhui (Beijing Municipal Planning Committee), "Guanyu chengshi renkou, laodongli anzhi he ban gong ban du, yi gong yi nong wenti de di san ge wu nian jihua chubu guihua fang'an (caogao)" ("Draft Preliminary Plans for Urban Population and Labor Force Placements, Part-Time Work/Study, and Part-Time Worker/Peasants during the Third Fifth Year Plan"), May 1964, BMA, 133-001-00358, 15-23.

Northern Jiangsum and Zhejiang, happily absorbed some of the surplus youth.[67] Anhui Province also became a municipal dumping ground for excess people (20,000 from Shanghai in 1963), as did the Communist Labor University in Jiangxi Province (9,000 over a five-year period).[68] The military also picked up some of the slack, drafting unemployable high school graduates.[69]

Yet very often these farms were could not funnel enough youth, or permanently house them.[70] Chongming, for example, usually only issued two-year contracts, after which most of the new hires would have to return to urban Shanghai.[71] Even worse, there

[67] Shanghai shi weiken zong zhihui bu (Shanghai Municipal Reclamation General Headquarters), "Guanyu benshi gequ (ju) xumu chang zhaoshou shehui qingnian canjia nong muye shengchan fang'an" ("Plan for Livestock Farms in Shanghai Recruiting Social Youth to Participate in Agricultural and Husbandry Production"), January 15, 1962, SMA, B127-1-504, 20-21; Untitled letter from Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei bangongshi (Office of the CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee) to Shanghai shi caizheng ju (Shanghai Municipal Finance Bureau), June 10, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2529, 18-19; Shanghai shi nongken ju anzhi chengshi zhishi qingnian lingdao xiaozu (Leading Small Group for Resettling Urban Educated Youth of the Shanghai Municipal Reclamation Bureau), "Guanyu dongyuan chengshi qingnian canjia benshi guoying nongchang jianshe de koutou xuanchuan cankao tigang (caogao)" ("Draft Oral Proapganda Reference Points for Mobilizing Urban Youth to Participate in Construction at Shanghai's State-Run Farms"), August 10, 1966, SMA, B180-1-299, 36-45; Fenghua xian huixiang xiaxiang zhigong anzhi bangongshi (Fenghua County Office for Workers Returning to the Village or Being Sent Down), "Guanyu dongyuan chengzhen zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang xinjian shengchan dui de baogao" ("Report on Mobilizing Urban Educated Youth to Go Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages for New Construction and Production Teams"), August 3, 1965, ZPA, J101-22-19, 5.

[68] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Pizhuan shiwei jingjian xiaozu guanyu dongyuan chengzhen jumin qu Anhui chadui luohu de gongzuo zongjie" ("Fowarding the [Shanghai] Municipal Committee Streamlining Small Group's Summary of Mobilizing Urban Residents to Go to Anhui's Villages to Live and Settle Permanently with Production Teams"), September 13, 1963, HDA, 26-2-704, 42-46; "Guanyu dongyuan Shanghai zhishi qingnian qu Jiangxi 'Gongda' xuexi de yixie qingkuang" ("Some Situations of Mobilizing Shanghai's Educated Youth to to Go Study at Jiangxi's 'Labor University'"), March 5, 1966, SMA, C21-1-1140, 76-79.

[69] Guofang bu (Ministry of National Defense) and Jiaoyu bu (Ministry of Education), "Guanyu xiaji zhengji buneng shengxue de gaozhong, chuzhong biyesheng de lianhe tongzhi" ("Joint Notification on Drafting High School and Middle School Graduates unable to Continue their Studies for the Summer"), BMA, 002-015-00513, 9-11; Guofang bu (Ministry of National Defense) and Jiaoyu bu (Ministry of Education), "Yugao 1964nan xiaji zhengji buneng shengxue de gaozhong chuzhong biyesheng" ("Advanced Notice on Drafting 1964 Summer High School and Middle School Graduates unable to Continue their Studies"), April 9, 1964, BMA, 002-020-00908, 10-12.

[70] "Benshi xiansan laodongli de qingkuang he anzhi yijian huibao ziliao" ("Report and Materials on Shanghai's Idle Laborers and Views on Resettlement"), December 18, 1963, SMA, B127-2-133, 58-62.

[71] Shanghai qingnian nongye jianshe dui zhaoshou gongzuo zu (Recruitment Working Group of the Shanghai Youth Agricultural Construction Team), "Shanghai qingnian nongye jianshe dui zhaoshou duiyuan jianzhang" ("Regulations for Recruiting Team Members of the Shanghai Youth Agricultural Construction Team"), October 1962, SMA, B127-2-416, 17-18.

was a terrible gender imbalance. Although young women disproportionately made up the category of "social youth," hiring work-units overwhelmingly wanted young men. [72] Shanghai and other cities concocted other half-measures, but none of the plans could cope with the sheer size of the baby boomer generation.[73]

In lieu of jobs or education, young people were told to stay at home and "self-study" and "rely on their families and friends."[74] Alleyway committees had to begin organizing ad hoc "labor study groups" to keep unemployed youth off the streets. [75] Young women in particular were victimized, told to stay at home and take care of their families. When the population crisis was at its worst, the Communist Party encouraged the market to takeover, admitting that it was not able to provide jobs for everyone. As a result, young people were encouraged to find work "on their own."[76]

Commander Wang Zhen (王震), among other senior leaders, worried intensely about the consequences of the "social youth" phenomenon.[77] Wang called it a "social

[72] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu gongzuo bangongshi (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee Area Work Office), "Guanyu 1962nian shehui qingnian anpai gongzuo de qingkuang" ("Situation of Arranging Work for Social Youth in 1962"), February 20, 1963, SMA, C21-1-928, 1-7.
[73] Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Education Bureau), "Guanyu jinnian zhong xiaoxue zhaosheng gongzuo he biyesheng anpai wenti de huibao" ("Report on Recruitment Work for Middle and Primary Schoools and Arrangements for Graduates This Year"), June 23, 1963, SMA, B123-5-1305, 22-25.
[74] Self-studying quote from Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu gongzuo bangongshi (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee Area Work Office), "Guanyu 1962nian shehui qingnian anpai gongzuo de qingkuang" ("Situation of Arranging Work for Social Youth in 1962"), February 20, 1963, SMA, C21-1-928, 1-7; quote on relying on friends and family from "Guanyu yuanjiao xian shehui qingnian he benjie buneng shengxue de chu, gaozhong biyesheng qingkuang he anzhi yijian (taolun gao)" ("Situation of and Placement Plans for Social Youth and Upcoming Middle and High School Graduates Unable to Continue their Studies in the Suburbs and Counties [Draft Version for Discussion]"), June 12, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01745, 1-3.
[75] "Shiqu shehui qingnian qingkuang he anzhi guanli yijian de huibao tigang" ("Report Outline on the Situation of Shanghai's Social Youth and Proposals for Resettling and Managing Them"), October 24, 1963, SMA, B127-2-133, 10-12.
[76] "Dui wei luqu xuexiao yaoqiu canjia laodong de qingnian jinxing xuanchuan jieshi de cankao yijian" ("Reference Material for Propaganda and Expanations for Youth Not Admitted to School and Demanding to Participate in Labor"), August 24, 1962, SMA, C21-2-2029, 35-36.
[77] Gongqingtuan Hubei shengwei (CYL Hubei Provincial Committee), "Guanyu jiaqiang chengzhen shehui qingnian gongzuo de baogao" ("Report on Strengthening Urban Social Youth Work"), August 6, 1962, HPA, SZ 27-2-162, 62-68.

problem which becomes sharper with each passing day." He warned Zhou Enlai and Tan Zhenlin that a long-term unemployment crisis would nurture laziness, vagrancy, criminality, and harmful ideologies among the junior generation.[78] Other leaders, seemingly in dialogue with Wang, told crowds that China could not bear to have young people loafing about the cities because, "if [you're] idling about, how can you become revolutionary?"[79] In Shanghai, cadres feared that over the long-term, unemployed young people would "become a new class of vagrants and a parasitic class."[80]

The baby boomer generation was coming, but was the Chinese Communist Party ready?[81]

**Developing the Chinese Frontier**

It was a happy coincidence, then, that as urban China coped with unemployed youth, frontier China need more labor. The post-Great Leap semi-reformist Chinese Communist Party leadership prioritized the restoration and eventual expansion of cash crop farming across the country. For the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, this initiative meant increasing the production of cotton and silk, particularly in the Tarim

[78] Untitled letter from Wang Zhen to Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Tan Zhenlin, June 11, 1963, SMA, B127-1-359, 110-116. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)

See also the warnings about "social order and social stability" (社会秩序和社会治安 *shehui zhixu he shehui zhi'an*) stemming from unemployed youth in Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan laodongju dangzu, tuanshiwei guanyu jiaqiang dui shehui qingnian guanli jiaoyu gongzuo de qingshi baogao" ("Municipal Committee Forwards Labor Bureau Party Group and CYL Municipal Committee's Instructing and Reporting on Strengthening Management and Education Work for Social Youth") February 21, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1047, 1-3.

[79] "Zhou mishuzhang zai anzhi gongzuo zuotanhui shang de jianghua" ("Secretary Zhou's Remarks at the Placement Work Conference"), September 14, 1965, CMA, E1-12-50, 25-30. See also BMA 110-001-01738, 1-13.

[80] "Guanyu jiaqiang shehui qingnian guanli jiaoyu gongzuo de baogao (chugao)" ("Draft Report on Strengthening Management and Education Work for Social Youth"), undated but from 1965, SMA, C21-1-1094, 83-90.

[81] "Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan pizhuan zhongyang anzhi gongzuo lingdao xiaozu guanyu chengshi jingjian zhigong he qingnian xuesheng anzhi gongzuo lingdao xiaozu changhuiyi de baogao" ("The [CCP] Central Committee and State Council Forward the Central Committee Resettlement Leading Small Group's Report of the Leading Small Group for Resettling Urban Streamlined Workers and Youth and Students"), August 19, 1963, in ZGWX, 14-22.

Basin in central Xinjiang. These two commodities were important for China's domestic population, were utilized by Chinese industries, and were sold on the global commodities market. As it amped up its farming of these precious materials, the *bingtuan* in Xinjiang became thirsty for labor, technology, and state resources.

As the CCP strove to bring an end to the famine that had already killed millions and restore stability to the countryside, it could not but help emphasize grain and other foodstuffs. But in addition to the "problem of eating" (吃的问题 *chi de wenti*), there was also the "problem of dressing" (穿的问题 *chuan de wenti*).[82] Together, these were known as the two fundamentals: "eating and dressing" (吃饭和穿衣 *chifan he chuanyi*).[83]

Like grain, cotton harvests were over reported. This, in turn, caused the state to requisition so much cotton that peasants in the countryside did not have sufficient supplies for clothing, blankets, other household uses, and sideline production and sales.[84] While this meant that peasants were both hungry and naked, the decrease in cotton production during the Great Leap Forward reverberated far beyond the villages. As Chen Yun pointed out in May 1961, "a cotton shortage had caused many textile factories to cease production" in the cities. Not only were China's peasants in the countryside in tatters and rags, but many there may have also been idle workers in the cities. [85]

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[82] Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee), "Guanyu dangqian gongye wenti de zhish" ("Instructions on Current Industrial Problems"), September 15, 1961, in JYZWX, vol. 14, 613-635.
[83] Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee) and Guowuyuan (State Council), "Guanyu mianhua shengchan gongzuo de jueding" ("Resolution on Cotton Production Work"), October 9, 1963, in JYZWX, vol. 17, 156-160.
[84] Xin Yi, "On the Distribution System of Large-Scale People's Communes," in *Eating Bitterness: New Perspectives on China's Great Leap Forward and Famine*, ed. by Kimberly Enns Manning and Felix Wemheuer (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 135-137; Dikötter, *Mao's Great Famine*, 140, 149, 162.
[85] Chen Yun, "Dongyuan chengshi renkou xiaxiang" ("Mobilize the Urban Population to Go Down to the Villages"), May 31, 1961, in JYZWX, vol. 14, 364-374.

This alarmed Chen Yun all the more because cotton was an important means by which China obtained its grain from abroad. With less cotton available, China had less to trade for food.[86] Chinese leaders even made the claim that domestic cotton production was even more important than domestic food production. As Chen told an audience in February 1962, importing cotton from abroad was simply not an option for China. "To import one ton of cotton costs 700 American dollars, but one ton of grain, that is only 70 American dollars."[87] The implication of Chen's statement was that, in the post-Great Leap political and economic transition, cash crops such as cotton were as important as food.

Aside from cotton, the semi-reformist CCP leadership obsessed over silk and sericulture. As the Ministry of Agriculture concluded, "if you want to eat you must till the land; if you want money you need to raise silkworms" (吃饭靠种田，用钱靠养蚕 *chifan kao zhongtian, yongqian kao yang can*).[88] Because silk could reap even more money than cotton on the international market, the Central Government began calling for a "leap forward in production" of silkworms.[89]

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[86] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei xuanchuanbu (Propaganda Department of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Xuanchuan cankao tigang" ("Propaganda Points for Reference"), September 27, 1961, SMA, A62-1-3, 59-65.

[87] Chen Yun, "Muqian caizheng jingji de qingkuang he kefu kunnan de ruogan banfa" ("On the Current Financial and Economic Situation and Several Ways of Overcoming Problems"), February 26, 1962, in JYZWX, vol. 15, 205-222. See also Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee) and Guowuyuan (State Council), "Guanyu yijiuliusan nian fazhan mianhua shengchan de jueding" ("Resolution on Developing Cotton Production in 1963"), December 26, 1962, in JYZWX, vol. 15, 774-778.

[88] Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongye bu (PRC Ministry of Agriculture), "Fazhan cansang shengchan, cujin liangshi fengshou" ("Develop Production in Silkworm Breeding and Mulberry Growing, Achieve Bumper Harvests in Grain"), November 25, 1961, SMA, A72-2-490, 73-79.

[89] Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongye bu (PRC Ministry of Agriculture), "Qing baogao zai quanguo can cha huiyi shang suoti can chong shengchan cuoshi de guanche zhixing yu luoshi qingkuang" ("Please Report on the Implementation and Fulfillment of Production Measures for Silkworms Presented at the National Silkworm and Tea Meeting"), February 20, 1960, SMA, A72-2-30, 40-41.

The cash crop wind blew heavily upon the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. The XPCC had grown cotton since its founding in 1954, and this crop was supposed to make up one of the central components of the *bingtuan*'s First Five-Year Plan.[90] In China's rush to catch up with Great Britain, however, cotton production plummeted in Xinjiang, even as leaders from the region publicly proclaimed the opposite.[91] The XPCC had intended to reclaim millions of *mu* of wasteland and create vast new farm settlements, particularly in the Tarim Basin in Central Xinjiang, during the Great Leap. But the *bingtuan* not only failed to achieve this ambitious goal, in the process it also exacerbated drought in areas already under cultivation. Cotton production dropped nearly 35-percent between 1959 and 1960.[92]

The *bingtuan*, like all other work units in China, began the process of "adjustment" following the 9th Plenum in early 1961.[93] While the *bingtuan* prioritized grain above all at this time and even called for a decrease in the cultivation of cotton for a short time, by 1962-1963 the XPCC began to reemphasize cash crops, including cotton and silk.[94] The central leadership had high hopes for Xinjiang, believing that it had a competitive advantage vis-à-vis other areas of China. As Zhou Enlai told a visiting North Korean dignitary in 1961, "our per *mu* yield [for cotton] is relatively high in southern

[90] Amy Kardos, "Transformation in China's Northwest Borderland: The Making of an 'Immigrant City,' Shihezi, Xinjiang, 1949-1958," (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2008); Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan fazhan shi* (History of the Development of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps [XSJBFS]) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1998), 131.
[91] "Zhonggong Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu dangwei shuji chu shiji Ceng di, jianwei fu zhuren Yang Rungui tongzhi de shumian fayan" ("Text of the Speeches of CCP Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Committee Secretary Comrade Ceng Di and Construction Committee Vice-Chairman Comrade Yang Rungui "), April 18, 1960, SMA, A54-2-1025, 168-173.
[92] XSJBFS, 148-149.
[93] XSJBFS, 156.
[94] XSJBD, 126-127, 134-135.

Xinjiang and the Yangtze River areas, [but] it seems unfeasible to spread [cotton production] across the entire country because of soil and climate limitations."[95] Zhang Zhonghan gloated that Xinjiang was in fact an "ideal location for cash crops."[96]

The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps found itself with a mandate to produce enough grain for itself while producing bumper cotton crops and jumpstarting the silk industry.[97] Elevated to the "first tier" of cotton producing areas in China, Xinjiang had to deliver.[98] The Tarim Basin, home to the 1st Agricultural Division and purportedly to "bountiful water resources," was to become the hub of economic activity during the Third Five-Year Plan.[99]

The 1st Agricultural Division claimed that as "production develops more and more every day," that it would need to "expand its labor force" by "bringing in personnel from the outside."[100] Zhang Zhonghan, in his negotiations with urban areas, made the Production and Construction Corps' demands more explicit. While in the past it had

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[95] "Zhou Enlai zongli di'er ci jiejian Chaoxian fu shouxiang Li Zhouyuan tanhua jilu" ("Record of Conversation from Premier Zhou Enlia's Second Reception of DPRK Vice Premier Ri Ju-yeon"), December 13, 1961, PRCFMA, 106-01381-06, 17-24, accessible at http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114179.

[96] Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau) et al, "Guanyu qu Xinjiang wei wo shi shehui qingnian xunzhao anzhi menlu he husong zhibian qingnian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Trip to Xinjiang to Find Settlement Opportunities Tianjin's Social Youth and the Work Situation of Escorting *Zhibian* Youth"), February 10, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 1-15. See also in TMA-1 198-2-1979, 1-15.

[97] Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan siling bu, zhengzhi bu (Headquarters and Political Department of the Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps), "Hexin" ("Letter of Congratulations"), April 16, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1021, 165.

[98] Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee) and Guowuyuan (State Council), "Guanyu mianhua shengchan gongzuo de jueding" ("Resolution on Cotton Production Work"), October 9, 1963, in JYZWX, vol. 17, 156-160.

[99] Nong yi shi silingbu (Headquarters of the 1st Agricultural Division), "Nong yi shi cansang shengchan qingkuang jieshao" ("Introduction to the 1st Agricultural Division's Silkworm Production"), July 1963, SMA, C26-2-102, 26-30.

[100] Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de qingkuang" ("Situation of the Mobilization of Society's Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), June 17, 1963, SMA, B127-1-359, 40-47. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.) See also in ZZQZ, 35-41.

taken in rural populations from Jiangsu, Anhui, Hunan, and Hubei, now it only wanted single individuals from the cities.[101] In Zhang's words, Xinjiang was "poor, empty, and backwards," and it needed the human "results of advanced science and technology."[102]

**Instituting Urban-to-Rural Population Resettlement**

While urban population resettlement to Xinjiang had taken place on a small scale prior to June 1963, the momentum for this resettlement relationship picked up considerably at this moment in time. Urban China had come to recognize that it could offload its surplus youth to the far-off provinces on a scale and schedule that suited both sides. The Shanghai Municipal Committee, for example, announced on June 4, 1963, that "Xinjiang, with its lands of plenty but small population, will need a huge labor force as socialist construction develops. It is an excellent route to employment for the young people of Shanghai." This committee determined that urban-to-rural and, especially, urban-to-frontier resettlement would occupy Shanghai over the "long-term," and the relationship with Xinjiang would become a primary means to shed excess people.[103]

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[101] Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau) et al, "Guanyu qu Xinjiang wei wo shi shehui qingnian xunzhao anzhi menlu he husong zhibian qingnian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Trip to Xinjiang to Find Settlement Opportunities Tianjin's Social Youth and the Work Situation of Escorting *Zhibian* Youth"), February 10, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 1-15. See also in TMA-1 198-2-1979, 1-15.

[102] Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan (All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan di'er zhengwei Zhang Zhonghan tongzhi tingqu weiwentuan zai Jiang huodong qingkuang huibao hou de tanhua jiyao" ("Record of XPCC 2nd Political Comissar Comrade Zhang Zhonghan's Remarks upon Hearing the Report of the Goodwill Mission's Activities in Xinjiang"), November 18, SMA, C21-2-2555, 134-139.

[103] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu deng si ge danwei guanyu dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian de baogao" ("Municipal Party Committee forwarding the Report on Opinions regarding the Mobilization of Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction by the Leading Party Group of the Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau and Three Other Work Units"), June 4, 1963, SMA, B76-3-1121, 42-48. Also available in SMA C21-1-982, 1-3; HDA 26-2-704, 34-36; once available in SMA B127-1-359, 1-3. See also in ZZQZ, 29-34.

Shanghai proposed to send 10,000 young people to Xinjiang in 1963 "to gain some experience and set a foundation for mobilizing even more young people to participate in Xinjiang's construction."[104] Other cities soon pitched in as well. Tianjin proposed sending 2,000 young people to Xinjiang in 1964, though this figure spiked to 5,000 later that spring when Tianjin's census on "idle laborers" showed a higher number of unemployed youth than originally anticipated. [105] Cities across Jiangsu Province proudly reported that the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps would soon begin a hiring frenzy and help the province to reduce its youth unemployment problem.[106] As the summer of 1963 wore on, Shanghai's plans for Xinjiang grew. The city now planned to send 20,000 people in 1963, and 40,000 to 50,000 in both 1964 and 1965.[107] Based on these plans, Xinjiang would quickly become the largest recipient of Shanghai's "educated youth," taking on more young people than even work units located in the city.[108]

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[104] Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de qingkuang" ("Situation of the Mobilization of Society's Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), June 17, 1963, SMA, B127-1-359, 40-47. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.) See also in ZZQZ, 35-41.

[105] Tianjin shi dongyuan qingnian canjia nongye jianshe lingdao xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Leading Small Group of Tianjin to Mobilize Youth to Participate in Agricultural Construction) et al, "Guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian zhiyuan Xinjiang jianshe gongzuo zhong ruogan juti wenti de guiding" ("Stipulations on Several Specific Issues in the Work of Mobilizing Educated Youth to Assist Xinjiang's Construction"), March 7, 1964, TMA-1, 198-2-2122, 49-51; Zhonggong Tianjin shiwei (CCP Tianjin Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan shi anzhi gongzuo lingdao xiaozu guanyu jiji dongyuan he zuzhi zhishi qingnian canjia nongcun shehui zhuyi jianshe gongzuo yijian de baogao" ("The [CCP Tianjin] Municipal Committee Forwards the Municipal Settlement Work Leading Small Group's Report on Work Proposals for Actively Mobilizing and Organzing Educated Youth to Participate in Rural Socialist Construction"), March 20, 1964, TMA-1, 198-1-1173, 93-98.

[106] "Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan zhaoshou shehui qingnian jianzhang" ("Brochure about the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps Recruiting Social Youth"), April 21, 1964, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 141.

[107] "Guanyu 1963-1965nian Shanghai shi shehui qingnian anpai qingkuang de ruogan jianyao shuoming (gao)" ("Several Brief Explanations on the Situation of Arranging [Work] for Shanghai's Social Youth, 1963-1965"), August 16, 1963, SMA, B127-1-801, 1-3. See also in ZZQZ, 44-47.

[108] "Shanghai shi shiqu xiansan laodongli he shehui qingnian de qingkuang ji jinhou sannian anpai de yijian" ("Situation of Idle Labor and Social Social in Urban Shanghai and Planning Proposals for the Next Three Years"), September 10, 1963, SMA, B127-2-233, 49-51. See also "Shiqu shehui qingnian qingkuang he anzhi guanli yijian de huibao tigang" ("Report Outline on the Situation of Shanghai's Social Youth and Proposals for Resettling and Managing Them"), October 24, 1963, SMA, B127-2-133, 10-12.

**The Role of Ethnicity**

Previous works have claimed, in passing, that Shanghai's "educated youth" were part of an aggressive, long-term campaign to shift the demographic balance of Xinjiang in favor of Han Chinese. The long-simmering conflicts between Xinjiang's Muslim population and the Chinese state have convinced many authors that the arrival of Shanghai's youth in Xinjiang in the 1960s was an assimilationist policy undertaken by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).[109] The discussion so far has deliberately avoided ethnicity, because the available sources rarely, if ever, broach the issue. Of course, officials from Xinjiang were always sure to mention that Xinjiang was a "multi-ethnic area" (多民族的地区 *duo minzu de diqu*) when they invited young urbanites to relocate to the far northwest.[110] But aside from commenting on Xinjiang's diverse ethnic makeup, they never truly delved into the issue of inter-ethnic relations or explained how the *zhiqing* would serve the party-state's goals for the ethnic makeup of Xinjiang.[111]

This is surprising for several reasons. One reason, of course, is that tensions between Hans, Uyghurs, and other groups in Xinjiang did run high in the early 1960s. According to Comrade Xu Huang (徐晃), who completed on-the-spot inspections of

[109] See, for example, Dreyer, "Go West, Young Han," 353; McLaren, "The Educated Youth Return," 2; Seymour, "Xinjiang's Production and Construction Corps"; Bovingdon, *The Uyghurs*; Amy Kardos, "Transformation in China's Northwest Borderland: The Making of an 'Immigrant City,' Shihezi, Xinjiang, 1949-1958," (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2008); Hauke Neddermann, *Sozialismus in Xiniiang: das Produktions- und Aufbaukorps in den 1950er Jahren* (Socialism in Xinjiang: The Production and Construction Corps during the 1950s) (Berlin: Lit, 2010).

[110] Xinjiang jieyun Jiangsu sheng zhishi qingnian gongzuo tuan (Xinjiang Work Delegation for Receiving Jiangsu Provinces' Educated Youth), "Xinjiang qingkuang jieshao tigang" ("Introductory Outline on the Situation in Xinjiang"), May 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0104, 26-39.

[111] See, for example, "Guanyu Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan nong yishi zhaoshou Shanghai zhishi qingnian peixun cansang jishu gongren de xuanchuan tigang" ("Propaganda Points for the Xinjiang Military District's Production and Construction Corps 1st Agricultural Division Recruting Shanghai's Educated Youth to Train Technical Personnel to Raise Silkworms"), December 6, 1962, SMA, C21-2-2031, 1-4.

Xinjiang on behalf of the Foreign Ministry, "rumors" swirled "that certain persons who led the Three Districts Revolution"—a reference to the East Turkestan Republic (ETR), a short-lived independent regime in northern Xinjiang which existed from 1944-1950—were hiding in a "ravine and ready to lead a Uyghur revolt." To this already serious situation, Xu added that "others say that Säypiddin Äzizi," a long-time minority nationality official in Xinjiang who was then stationed in Beijing, "has capitulated and only Wang Enmao is in charge, [so] the Hans must be killed."[112]

It is also surprising because other population resettlement initiatives often specifically cited inter-ethnic relations in China. Earlier when Jiaxing, a city in Zhejiang Province, sent several thousand of its young citizens to Ningxia, local officials emphasized that the program served the goal of "uniting [Han Chinese] together with the Hui people."[113] In 1963 and 1964, when the Uyghur Autonomous Region recruited several hundred high school graduates from Tianjin and Baoding to teach Chinese language to minority students, the XUAR Department of Education suggested that these pedagogues would help to strengthen Xinjiang's multi-*minzu* fabric.[114] Cadres from

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[112] "Waijiao bu lingshi si fu sizhang Xu Huang tongzhi dianhua huibao yaodian" ("Telephone Reporting Points from Comrade Xu Huang, Deputy Director of the Department of Consular Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs"), April 21, 1962, PRCFMA, 118-01109-02, 3-4.

In order to dispel these rumors, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai immediately called upon Säypiddin Äzizi to head back to Xinjiang and "return to work." Many of the highest policy decisions regarding Xinjiang issued in the subsequent months were done so in Säypiddin's name, perhaps in an effort to establish that the preeminent Uyghur official remained important in Xinjiang's political leadership and decision-making bodies. See "Guanyu Sai Fuding shifou hui Xinjiang gongzuo wenti de piyu" ("Comments on Whether or Not Säypiddin Äzizi should Return to Xinjiang for Work"), April 27, 1962, in Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (CCP Central Committee Party Literature Research Center), ed., *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* (Mao Zedong's Manuscripts since the Founding of the PRC), vol. 10 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1996), 86; Sai Fuding [Saypiddin Azizi], "Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu renmin weiyuanhui mingling" ("Order of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region People's Committee"), August 15, 1962, in XGWX, 214-218.

[113] See, for example, Zhonggong Jiaxing xian weiyuanhui (CCP Jiaxing County Committee), "Guanyu kaizhan 60nian zhi Ning gongzuo jihua de baogao" ("Report on Plans for Beginning Aid-Ningxia Work for 1960"), March 7, 1960, JMA, 001-001-519, 1-5. See also JMA 094-001-029, 8-10.

[114] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu jiaoyu ting Tianjin diqu zhaosheng gongzuo zu (Student Recruitment Work Team for the Tianjin Area of the XUAR Education Department), "Ganxie xin" ("Letter of Thanks"),

Beijing, Shanghai, and other municipalities, too, often invited huge *minzu* delegations from Xinjiang to tour their cities, hoping that such exchanges would improve the overall "happiness of the big [Chinese] family."[115]

To be sure, these airy statements do not lend themselves to sophisticated analysis of the aims or results of China's bringing Han Chinese to non-Han parts of the country and vice versa. But the complete absence of even this boilerplate rhetoric in the case of resettling 100,000 young people to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps makes it difficult to ascribe much significance to the issue of ethnicity without veering into speculative territory. While the "educated youth" of the 1960s were indeed part of the still ongoing demographic shift in which the number of Han Chinese in Xinjiang have come to achieve near parity with (or exceed) the number of Uyghurs, policy goals are not always the same as policy outcomes.[116] No Chinese leader or institution—at least in the declassified materials presently available—argued that the relocation of Han Chinese youth to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps would resolve, or was even related to, the "ethnicities problem" in Xinjiang.

**The Role of External Crises**

January 21, 1964, TMA-1, 198-2-2109, 41-42; Hebei sheng jiaoyu ting (Hebei Provincial Education Department) and Hebei sheng laodong ju (Hebei Provincial Labor Bureau), "Guanyu wei Xinjiang zhaoshou Hanyu jiaoshi de lianhe tongzhi" ("Joint Notification of Recruiting Chinese Teachers for Xinjiang"), July 7, 1964, TMA-1, 198-2-2109, 26.

[115] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi minzu shiwu weiyuanhui (Shanghai Committee for Ethnic Affairs), "Guanyu jiedai Xinjiang zizhiqu shaoshu minzu qingnian xuexi canguantuan jihua" ("Plan for Receiving the Xinjiang Autonomous Region Ethnic Minority Youth Study Delegation"), October 9, 1965, SMA, C21-2-2582, 1-3. Also available in SMA C23-2-260, 9-11.

[116] It is worth keeping in mind that the number of Han Chinese relocated to Xinjiang over this four year period was not large enough to decisively tip the ethnic balance in the region. The number of Han Chinese remained small relative to the number of Uyghurs until the era of Reform and Opening (1979-). See Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 306-310.

Other works argue that external crises were critical to social and economic change on China's peripheries after 1949.[117] This general approach to Chinese history has informed how scholars to see the relocation program: it was, accordingly, a means to shore up China's border security during the climactic Sino-Soviet split and, specifically, following the 1962 Yili-Tacheng Incident.[118] In what appeared to be a fantastic historical irony, the Chinese had finally heeded Joseph Stalin's suggestion from 1949 that a massive resettlement program should be instituted for the sake of "strengthening China's border protection."[119]

In the 1960s, Xinjiang straddled the line between "borderland" and "bordered land." Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron define a borderland as the point at which different regimes meet and struggle for control over territories, peoples, and resources. A bordered land, on the other hand, signifies that the dispute over boundaries and political control has been settled.[120] Applying these two concepts from American history to Chinese history, in the early 1960s, China, the Soviet Union, and India were still

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[117] Covell Meyskens, "Maoist China's Hinterland War Machine: The Cold War, Industrial Modernity, and Everyday Life in China's Third Front, 1964-1980" (Ph.D. diss., The University of Chicago, 2015); Judd C. Kinzley, "Crisis and the Development of China's Southwestern Periphery: The Transformation of Panzhihua, 1936-1969," *Modern China* 38, no. 5 (September 2012): 559-584, doi: 10.1177/0097700411436227; Lorenz Lüthi, "The Vietnam War and China's Third-Line Defense Planning before the Cultural Revolution, 1964-1966," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 10, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 26-51, doi: 10.1162/jcws.2008.10.1.26; Barry Naughton, "The Third Front: Defence Industrialization in the Chinese Interior," *The China Quarterly* 115 (September 1988): 351-386, doi: 10.1017/S030574100002748X.

[118] On the "Yi-Ta Incident," see Danhui Li and Yafeng Xia, "Jockeying for Leadership: Mao and the Sino-Soviet Split, October 1961-July 1964," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 16, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 24-60; Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation*, 101-105; Luthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 213-218; and Jacobs, "'Eggshell Autonomy'"; Anwar Rahman, *Sinicization Beyond the Great Wall: China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region* (Leicester, UK: Matador, 2005), 133.

[119] "Memorandum of Conversation between Stalin and CCP Delegation," June 27, 1949, AP RF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 329, ll. 1-7, reprinted in Radchenko and Wolff, "To the Summit via Proxy-Summits," 171.

[120] Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in between in North American History, *The American Historical Review* 104, no. 3 (June 1999): 814-841, doi: 10.1086/ahr/104.3.814. See also Michiel Baud and Willem van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands," *Journal of World History* 8, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 211-242, doi: 10.1353/jwh.2005.0061.

contesting for sovereignty in Chinese Central Asia. Although neither India nor the Soviet Union could seriously challenge Chinese sovereignty over Xinjiang, they could and did upset China's interests in this area.

The most serious example of this was, of course, the so-called "Yi-Ta Incident" (伊塔事件 *Yi Ta shijian*, short form for "Yili-Tacheng Incident" or "Ili-Qoqek Incident"). In early April 1962, hundreds of individuals from counties in Ili, a prefecture in Xinjiang's far northern tip, began to cross into Soviet Kazakhstan. By the end of the month, the pace of the exodus had quickened, and so had its scale. Thousands upon thousands of people were leaving their homes in Qoqek (Tacheng), Dörbiljin (Emin), Toli (Tuoli), Kobuksar (Hebukesai'er), Usu (Wusu), Saven (Shawan), and Qorghas (Huocheng) counties. Those leaving China first did so quietly and at night, but as the flight swelled in size, the border-crossers became more brazen, jumping the international boundary during daytime and bringing with them livestock, farm tools, and oxcarts (most of which were, by that time, officially the properties of state communes). When the final tally had been made, Chinese officials estimated that 60,000 men and women, mostly Kazakhs and Uyghurs, had fled from Chinese Xinjiang into the Soviet Union. Despite many protests from the Chinese government, these individuals would never return to Chinese soil.[121]

The exodus became an immediate crisis in Sino-Soviet relations. The Central Committee concluded in May 1962 that the Yi-Ta Incident "was a thorough exposure that

[121] For succinct summaries of the events, see Directorate of Intelligence, "Intelligence Report: The Sinkiang Exodus of 1962," February 1967, CIA-RDP84-00825R000100690001-0, CREST; and Hou Songtao, "Minzu xing tufa shijian de yingdui he chuzhi: Yi Xinjiang Yi Ta shijian weilie" ("Responding to and Disposing of Minority Nationality Emergencies: Using the Xinjiang Yi-Ta Incident as a Case Study"), *Beijing kezhi daxue xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 23, no.2 (June 2007): 118-122.

some foreign forces have been conducting long-term subversive activities in Xinjiang."[122] In response, the Chinese Government ordered the closure of all Soviet consulates in Xinjiang and called on all Soviet business and trade offices to withdraw from Xinjiang. [123] In the years that followed 1962, the People's Liberation Army remained vigilant against Soviet military encroachment and closely guarded China's borders.[124] The anti-Soviet struggle in Xinjiang took on nearly comical dimensions. In one instance, a transportation official from Kashgar—invited all the way to Shanghai to speak on the "struggle with revisionism on the border"—hit back at the Soviet Union with a defense of the quality of Chinese automobiles.[125]

Aside from the Soviet Union, tensions with India ran high during this period. In fact, somewhat surprisingly—at least for individuals who do not fully appreciate the consequences of what should be called the "Sino-Indian split"—China often played up the Indian threat to Xinjiang more than it did the Soviet threat. Even while the exodus of some 60,000 individuals to the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic was ongoing in April 1962, national media chose to report the momentary violation of Chinese sovereignty by

[122] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (CCP Central Committee Party Literature Research Center), ed., *Mao Zedong nianpu (1949-1976)* (Chronology of Mao Zedong, 1949-1976), vol. 5 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2013), 108-109.
[123] Waijiaobu (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and Gong'anbu (Ministry of Public Security), "Fudui Su lingguan biguan qianyou youguan gongzuo de bushu he yijian" ("Response to Work Arrangements and Opinions on the Closure of the Soviet Consulates"), July 4, 1962, PRCFMA, 118-01140-02, 22; Draft response to the memorandum from the Soviet Union dated August 9, August 1962, PRCFMA, 118-01767-01, 18-19.
[124] See, for example, Beijiang junqu (Northern Xinjiang Military District), "Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu Habahe xian buhuo Su xiu wuzhuang zhencha zhisheng feiji de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Capture of a Soviet Reconnaissance Helicopter in Kaba County, Xinjiang"), October 25, 1974, SMA, B120-3-45, 171-176.
[125] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei tongzhan bu (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee United Front Department), ed., "Xinjiang zizhiqu shaoshu minzu qingnian xuexi canguantuan Ha-sen-mu tongzhi zai Shanghai tuanxiao tan benren zai guojing xian shang tong xiuzheng zhuyi douzheng qingkuang (jilu)" ("Comrade Ha-sen-mu of the Xinjiang Autonomous Region Minirty Youth Study Delegation's Remarks at the CYL Academy on Struggling with the Soviet Revisionists on the Frontline of the Border"), October 23, 1965, SMA, C23-2-260, 42-44.

Indian forces who slipped into Xinjiang. They did not say a word about the Yi-Ta Incident.[126] The *People's Daily* continued to flag any alleged encroachment into Xinjiang by Indian forces throughout the remainder of the year.[127] Commander Wang Zhen once told an audience that the "Indian reactionaries" had "drool dripping down three *chi* [one meter] from their face" (垂诞三尺 *chui dan san chi*) when they looked at Xinjiang. The Tang Dynasty metaphor which Wang employed implied that India preyed upon Xinjiang and could strike at any moment.[128]

Xinjiang, like the island of Quemoy, was a Cold War frontier in which external conflicts influenced domestic developments.[129] As evidence of this, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps moved dozens of military farms and thousands of soldier/farmers s from the interior of Xinjiang to locations directly situated along the Sino-Soviet boundary, effectively garrisoning and sealing off much of the northern region of Xinjiang.[130] This was an effort to both prevent more Chinese citizens from leaving Xinjiang and to stop "some people from illegally crossing the border" from the Soviet

[126] "Wo zhengfu yanzhong kangyi Yin jun lianxu qinru Xinjiang" ("The Chinese Government Vehemently Protests the Indian Army's Continued Invasions of Xinjiang"), April 26, 1962, in RMRB.
[127] See, for example, articles published on May 3, September 16, and October 5, 1962, in RMRB.
[128] "Wang Zhen jiangjun zai Shanghai shehui qingnian huodong fenzi di'er ci huiyi shang de jianghua" ("Commander Wang Zhen's Speech at the Second Shanghai Youth Activists Meeting"), June 24, 1963, SMA, C21-2-2268, 36-37. Also once available in SMA B127-1-359, 108-109. Reprinted in Yao, *Shanghai zhiqing zai Xinjiang*, 193-196.
[129] Michael Szonyi, *Cold War Island: Quemoy on the Frontline* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[130] Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan dangwei (Party Committee of the Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps), "Guanyu jianshe bianjing nongchang de baogao (jielu)" ("Report on the Establishment of Border Farms [Excerpt]"), August 11, 1962, in XSJBLWX, vol. 1, 237-239.

See also Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan dashiji* (Chronicle of Major Events in the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps [XSJBD]) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1995), 137-139; XSJBFS, 159, 216-229; Zhang Anfu, "Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan yu 20shiji 60niandai Zhong Su bianjing chongtu" ("The Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps and the Sino-Soviet Border Conflict in the 1960s"), *Dangdai Zhongguo shi yanjiu* 18, no. 4 (July 2011): 100-105.

Union into Chinese territory and "engaging in subversion."[131] In one of Commander Wang Zhen's private correspondences to Premier Zhou Enlai and Tan Zhenlin, he remarked that the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps had played a useful role in the Sino-Indian War as well as in the "anti-revisionist struggle on the Sino-Soviet border."[132] But was there a connection between these external crises and the decision to begin moving thousands of urban youth in the early 1960s?

Officials in Xinjiang did see a connection between China's foreign policy challenges and population resettlement—though it usually worked in an opposite of how historians might expect. In correspondences with offices in Hubei Province, Xinjiang blamed the simultaneous tensions with the Soviet Union and India in 1962 for provoking "doubts" among the *zhibian* families who had been resettled. These "doubts" were so serious that people were beginning to pack up and leave.[133] At the same time, because Shanghai was at the frontline of a potential war with the imperialists, educated youth were asked to turn Xinjiang into an "advanced industrial and grain and cotton producing base area."[134] Zhang Zhonghan agreed, telling his counterparts from Tianjin that "while Xinjiang is an anti-revisionist frontline, from a military perspective it is also a rear area;

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[131] Waijiaobu (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), "Wo dui Sulian zai Xinjiang de dianfu huodong de douzheng qingkuang" ("Our Efforts Against the Subversive Activities of the Soviet Union in Xinjiang"), August 1, 1963, PRCFMA, 118-01100-14, 147-149.
[132] Untitled letter from Wang Zhen to Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Tan Zhenlin, June 11, 1963, SMA, B127-1-359, 110-116. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)
[133] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu laodong tiaopei weiyuanhui (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Labor Allocation Committee), "Guanyu fan ji zhibian qingzhuang nian chongfan Xinjiang he jieqian jiashu wenti de han" ("Letter on the Issues of Younger Adults who returned Home returning to Xinjiang and Moving their Families"), December 30, 1962, HPA, SZ 67-2-1044, 1-3.
[134] Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee), "Dongyuan chengshi zhishi qingnian dao bianjiang qu, dao nongcun qu de xuanchuan cankao ziliao" ("Propaganda Reference Materials for Mobilizing Urban Educated Youth to Go to the Frontier and the Countryside"), April 20, 1965, SMA, A62-1-34, 1-4; quote from Shanghai gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan (All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Weiwen jianghua" ("Goodwill Speech"), August 16, 1965, SMA, B127-1-884, 18-22.

it's a good place to develop industry."[135] While China prepared for war with the Soviet Union, Xinjiang began to undertake Third Front construction after 1965.[136]

Yet the beginning of the relocation campaign in the early 1960s was coincidental with—not a consequence of—the fallout between China and the Soviet Union and India.[137] China's foreign policy challenges and the country's national defense, like ethnicity, are not often broached in the available internal government reports, instructions, and memoranda. With few exceptions, the threats posed by the "Soviet revisionists" (苏修 *Suxiu*) are mentioned only in "mobilization" (动员 *dongyuan*) speeches given to audiences of teenagers and their parents. Tao Huanfu (陶桓馥), a leading agricultural official within the State Council, once told an audience of her peers that the "educated youth" in Xinjiang were helping to "safeguard our national defense," but even comments such as these were rare.[138]

The absence of the Soviet threat (and the Indian one, too) in internal reporting suggests that while external crises were important for domestic mobilization purposes, they were not the main catalysts of social, political, and economic change on China's peripheries in the 1960s. The location of the farms where the youth were resettled in

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[135] Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau) et al, "Guanyu qu Xinjiang wei wo shi shehui qingnian xunzhao anzhi menlu he husong zhibian qingnian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Trip to Xinjiang to Find Settlement Opportunities Tianjin's Social Youth and the Work Situation of Escorting *Zhibian* Youth"), February 10, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 1-15. See also in TMA-1 198-2-1979, 1-15. See also "Guanyu dongyuan shehui zhishi qingnian canjia Gansu Hexi diqu, Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de xuanchuan ziliao" ("Propaganda Materials for Mobilizing Social Educated Youth to Participate in Production and Construction in Gansu's Hexi Area and Xinjiang"), May 14, 1964, TMA-1, 198-2-2122, 52-57.

[136] Chen Shi, "Zai yijiuliuwu nian bingtuan dangwei quanwei (kuoda) huiyi shang guanyu bingtuan san xian jianshe de fayan (jielu)" ("Speech at the 1965 *Bingtuan* Enlarged Committee Meeting on the *Bingtuan*'s Third Front Construction [Excerpt]"), June 21, 1965, in XSJBLWX, vol. 1, 330-334.

[137] Yitzhak Shichor, "The Great Wall of Steel: Military and Strategy in Xinjiang," in *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland,* ed. S. Frederick Starr (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), 120-160.

[138] "Tao Huanfu tongzhi de fayan" ("Comrade Tao Huanfu's Remarks"), September 9, 1965, CMA, E1-12-50, 18-24. See also BMA 110-001-01738, 30-43.

Xinjiang also suggests that national defense was not the immediate goal of the program. The majority of Shanghai's "educated youth" were sent to farms owned and operated by the 1st Agricultural Division and the 2nd Agricultural Division, located near Aksu and Korla in central Xinjiang respectively. These two divisions were situated far from the troubled hotspots of the Sino-Soviet border, and neither had lost many workers due to the Sino-Soviet split.

**The Role of Ideology**

The world outside of China did matter to population resettlement, but in a more abstract way than historians have previously imagined. Of course, China's leaders were conscious of the fact that the Soviet Union had in fact once attempted to practice urban-to-rural resettlement, only to fail. "In 1953," one speaker at a national resettlement conference proclaimed, "Khrushchev proudly thought to mobilize young people to go to the frontier to open up wastelands, but now nearly all of the people have run back."[139] Thus, officials in Beijing happily reported that Albanians, North Vietnamese, North Koreans, and even Japanese were coming to China—rather than the Soviet Union—to study the PRC's experience of urban-to-rural population resettlement.[140]

Wanting to embarrass the Soviet Union was only part of the story.[141] By leaving behind a comfortable urban life and building socialism in China's villages, the "educated youth" could provide a powerful example to anti-colonial and revolutionary movements

[139] "Zhou mishuzhang zai anzhi gongzuo zuotanhui shang de jianghua" ("Secretary Zhou's Remarks at the Placement Work Conference"), September 14, 1965, CMA, E1-12-50, 25-30. See also BMA 110-001-01738, 1-13.
[140] "Yijiuliusi nian anzhi gongzuo de jiben zongjie he yijiuliuwu nian de gongzuo yijian (caogao)" ("Draft Summary of Placement Work in 1964 and Proposals for Work in 1965"), February 8, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01735, 1-23.
[141] Mao Zedong noted that the Chinese Communist Party must raise the level of development and quality of life in Xinjiang beyond what had been achieved already in the Soviet Union. See comments made by Mao Zedong to Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, and Wang Enmao, September 29, 1963, in XGWX, 228-229.

abroad.[142] As Shi Ximin, Shanghai's Party Secretary, articulated: population resettlement was "not just a domestic [issue]." According to Shi, China had a "responsibility for the world revolution" and an obligation to fuel anti-imperial "storms" in the Third World. If "[we] lack the ideals" to do so, Shi told an audience of young people, then we would "just have our own interests." While building up Xinjiang was hardly a substitute for "going to Africa or Latin America," it was nevertheless a duty which the "educated youth" should not shirk away from.[143]

Aside from inspiring the Global South, population resettlement, if viewed as a transformative process, would also help to protect China's standing in the world as the true vanguard of socialism. Vice Premier Tan Zhenlin told an audience of population workers from across the country that "[we] must look at the Soviet Union as a warning" and ask ourselves, "how can China avoid becoming revisionist?"[144] According to other speakers who responded to Tan's provocation, the primary reason that revisionism had emerged in the Soviet Union was because they "only built up cities and did not want villages." As a result, young people in the Soviet Union had "swarmed into the cities" (都

[142] Liu Ping, "Jiji canjia nongcun san da geming yundong wei jianshe xin nongcun er yingyong fendou" ("Actively Participate in the Three Major Revolutionary Movements for the Construction of New Villages and the Heroic Struggle"), August 29, 1964, JPA, 3012-001-0084, 1-13.

[143] "Shiwei shujichu shuji Shi Ximin tongzhi zai Shanghai shi shehui qingnian huodong fenzi huiyi shang de jianghua" ("Municipal Party Secretary Comrade Shi Ximin's Speech at the Meeting of Shanghai's Social Youth Activists"), April 30, 1964, SMA, B127-1-162, 7-18. Shi Ximin's comments were reportedly received very well. See "Shanghai shi xiaxiang zhishi qingnian jiji fenzi daibiao huiyi de fanying" ("Responses to the Shanghai Municipal Down to the Villages Educated Youth Activists Representative Meeting"), undated but likely from April 21, 1964, or soon after, SMA, C21-1-1021, 173-176.

For another articulation of the "immense international significance" (有重大的国际意义 *you zhongda de guoji yiyi*) of resettlement, see "Zai Shanghai shi shangshan xiaxiang zhishi qingnian jiji fenzi daibiao huiyi shang de jianghua tigang (caogao)" ("Draft Speech Outline from the Shanghai Municipal Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages Educated Youth Activists Meeting"), undated but likely between April 21 and April 30, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1021, 32-52.

[144] "Tan fu zongli zai anzhi gongzuo zuotanhui shang de jianghua" ("Vice-Premier Tan [Zhenlin's] Speech at the Placement Work Conference"), September 4, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01738, 21-29.

拥入城市 *dou yong ru chengshi*), much to the detriment of Soviet agriculture as well as the ideological health of the nation.[145]

The Soviet Union—having "taught [China] very well by negative example"—provided the PRC with a compelling reason to practice and insist upon urban-to-rural resettlement.[146] By dwelling in the countryside and experiencing the hardships of agricultural work, the "educated youth" would work protect themselves and their country from the temptations of capitalism and modern revisionism. Once "transformed into workers" (劳动化 *laodong hua*), the sent-down youth could help to "intellectualize" (知识化 *zhishi hua*) the peasantry and spark a "cultural revolution" (文化革命 *wenhua geming*) in the countryside.[147] Tan Zhenlin claimed that it was no longer a matter of trimming excess population from the cities, but rather also one of "building new socialist villages."[148] The transformation, to paraphrase Swiss Ambassador to China at this time, was to be reciprocal: the young people would change as a result of their experiences in

[145] "Zhou mishuzhang zai anzhi gongzuo zuotanhui shang de jianghua" ("Secretary Zhou's Remarks at the Placement Work Conference"), September 14, 1965, CMA, E1-12-50, 25-30. See also BMA 110-001-01738, 1-13.
[146] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei tongzhanbu (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee United Front Department) and Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu jiaqiang dui zichan jieji zinv gongzuo huiyi youguan baogao" ("Relevant Reports from the Meeting on Strengthening Work related to the Children of the Capitalist Class"), June 24, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1055, 1-14.
[147] Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Streamlining Small Group of the [CCP Shanghai] Municipal Committee), "Dongyuan chengshi zhishi qingnian dao bianjiang qu, dao nongcun qu de xuanchuan cankao ziliao" ("Propaganda Reference Materials for Mobilizing Urban Educated Youth to Go to the Frontier and the Countryside"), April 20, 1965, SMA, A62-1-34, 1-4.
[148] "Tan fu zongli zai anzhi gongzuo zuotanhui shang de jianghua" ("Vice-Premier Tan [Zhenlin's] Speech at the Placement Work Conference"), September 4, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01738, 21-29. See also "Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan guanyu dongyuan he zuzhi chengshi zhishi qingnian canjia nongcun shehui zhuyi jianshe de jueding (cao'an)" ("Draft Resolution from the CCP Central Committee and the State Council on Mobilizing and Organizing Urban Educated Youth to Participate in Socialist Construction in the Countryside"), January 16, 1964, in ZGWX, 23-30.

the villages, and the villages would change as a result of their interactions with urban youth.[149]

**The Role of Individuals**

China's demographics, developmental agenda, and ideological desires in the post-Great Leap moment all came together in the decision to send 100,000 young people to Xinjiang. Aimed at transforming and improving society, both urban and rural, the program was concocted as an entirely rational and dispassionate response to China's post-Great Leap Forward crises. But whose idea was it? Even the most compelling plans and ideas need champions.

In most narratives, Mao Zedong also emerges as the central figure, the man who (almost) singlehandedly orchestrated the movement of millions of China's young people to the countryside.[150] Mao Zedong did not create urban-to-rural population resettlement in general nor the Xinjiang program in particular. While Mao had made some indirect commentaries on the value of dwelling in rural areas in the 1950s, he did not issue his famous edict that "it is necessary for educated young people to go to the countryside and be re-educated by poor and lower-middle peasants," until December 21, 1968.[151] By this time, a million or more young people had already been mobilized to leave their homes. Thus, Mao's statement was not so much a novel order as it was a re-articulation of

[149] "Freiwillige Deportationen? Zu Chinas Bevölkerungspolitik" ("Voluntary Deportations? On China's Population Policy"), June 22, 1965, in Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv (Swiss Federal Archives [BAR]), E2001E, 1978/84-591. I am grateful to Ariane Knüsel for sharing this source with me.
[150] Bonnin, *The Lost Generation*, xvii, 443; Rene, *China's Sent-Down Generation*, 75; Pan, *Tempered in the Revolutionary Furnace*, 1.
[151] "Zai Mao zhuxi geming luxian zhiyin xia, Huining xian bufen chengzhen jumin fenfen bufu nongye shengchan di yi xian, dao nongcun anjia luohu" ("Under the Guidance of Chairman Mao's Revolutionary Line, Some Urban Residents from Huining County are Going to the Agricultural Frontlines and Settling Down in the Countryside"), in RMRB, December 22, 1968.

preexisting practices and ideas, formulated by individuals situated deep inside in the Chinese bureaucracy.

If not Mao, then who? The Second Political Commissar of the Production and Construction Corps, Zhang Zhonghan, once said that it was a "task given to us by the Premier," that is, Zhou Enlai.[152] Zhou was indeed an important figure, often chairing "resettlement work conferences" (安置工作会议 *anzhi gongzuo huiyi*) for provincial and municipal representatives or providing final approval of annual resettlement quotas. But Zhou was not the inventor of the program, at least as it involved the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. Wang Zhen, the military commander who had led the occupation of Xinjiang in the early years of the PR.C, and in the 1960s the Minister of Land Reclamation, reemerged to play a pivotal role in connecting urban China and Xinjiang and launching the population resettlement program. Without Wang's frequent interventions and encouragement, it seems likely that China's "educated youth" may not have ever been sent to China's most distant frontier.

A frequent visitor and correspondent with the *bingtuan,* Wang Zhen completed an on-site investigation of the 1st Agricultural Division in June-July 1962. He learned that, in the Tarim Basin, the XPCC needed a "new force" (新生力量 *xinsheng liliang*) of labor to adequately meet the expectations of the post-Leap policy adjustments.[153] He subsequently wrote to Zhou Enlai and Tan Zhenlin to endorse a report from the Xinjiang

[152] Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan (All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan di'er zhengwei Zhang Zhonghan tongzhi tingqu weiwentuan zai Jiang huodong qingkuang huibao hou de tanhua jiyao" ("Record of XPCC 2nd Political Comissar Comrade Zhang Zhonghan's Remarks upon Hearing the Report of the Goodwill Mission's Activities in Xinjiang"), November 18, SMA, C21-2-2555, 134-139.
[153] XSJBD, 144. See also Nong yi shi shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nong yi shi zhi* (Gazetteer of the First Agricultural Division) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1994), 12.

Production and Construction Corps calling for the resettlement of college and technical school graduates from East China. He proposed a meeting between himself, the central leadership, and the mayor or party secretary of Shanghai to move the proposal forward.[154]

The Central Committee and the Ministry of Land Reclamation signed off on Wang Zhen's proposal, ordering the *bingtuan* to scale up its silkworm and mulberry cultivation during the Third Five-Year Plan by relying on urban labor from Shanghai, Zhejiang Province, and Jiangsu Provinces.[155] Within only a month's time of Wang's letter, Zhejiang Province began selecting potential sericulture experts among unemployed youth from Zhuji and Jiaxing.[156] The candidates were told to report to their schools for new work assignments; it is not clear if they knew the destination, Xinjiang, until after undergoing their political and health check-ups.[157] In Shanghai, too, authorities quickly began to search for human labor for the Tarim Basin. The Communist Youth League took the lead in identifying promising young people who could help turn Xinjiang into a silk kingdom. [158]

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[154] "Wang Zhen gei Zhou zongli, Tan fu zongli de xin" ("Letter from Wang Zhen to Premier Zhou [Enlai] and Vice Premier Tan [Zhenlin]"), November 19, 1962, in Nong yi shi shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nong yi shi zhi*, 594. See also in ZZQZ, 28.

[155] Zhou Lisan et al, *Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu jingji dili* (The Economy and Geography of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region) (published for internal circulation, 1963).

[156] Zhongguo gongchandang Zhejiang sheng weiyuanhui zuzhi bu (CCP Zhejiang Provincial Committee Organization Department), "Guanyu choudiao cansang jishu renyuan zhiyuan Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan fazhan cansang shengchan de tongzhi" ("Notification to Transfer Silkworm Breeding Mulberry Growing Technicians to Assist the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps with Developing Silkworm and Mulberry Production"), December 1, 1962, JMA, 148-001-122, 22-23. See also in NMA-2 地 3-014-016, 37-38.

[157] Zhonggong Wuxing xianwei zuzhi bu (CCP Wuxing County Committee Organization Department), "Guanyu choudiao Zhuji canxiao, Jiaxing nongxiao huixiang biyesheng xunsu hui yuanxiao baodao lingxing fenpei gongzuo de tongzhi" ("Notification for Graduates from Zhuji Silkworm School and Jiaxing Agricultural School who Returned to their Villages to Quickly Come Back to School to Register for Work Assignment"), December 5, 1962, JMA, 148-001-122, 6.

[158] "Guanyu Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan nong yishi zhaoshou Shanghai zhishi qingnian peixun cansang jishu gongren de xuanchuan tigang" ("Propaganda Points for the Xinjiang Military District's Production and Construction Corps 1st Agricultural Division Recruting Shanghai's Educated Youth to Train Technical Personnel to Raise Silkworms"), December 6, 1962, SMA, C21-2-2031, 1-4.

Shanghai sent only 462 young people in 1962 (it is unclear how many Zhejiang and Jiangsu dispatched), but it was enough to spark a long-term relationship with the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.[159] With Wang Zhen's encouragement, authorities from the *bingtuan* returned to Shanghai in the spring and early summer of 1963 to continue to recruit students for the sericulture industry. They advertised Xinjiang's scientific and technical achievements in recent years, such as the founding of the Tarim River Land Reclamation University,[160] and offered a three-year probationary period of employment, upon which the students could become permanent employees with fixed salaries, benefits packages, and potentials for family visits.[161]

In February 1963, Wang Zhen met with the leadership in Shanghai to discuss scaling up the mobilization of Shanghai youth to go to Xinjiang.[162] From this moment on, the campaign developed quickly. The 1st Agricultural Construction Division of the XPCC formally requested that Shanghai dispatch its surplus populations to Xinjiang in a letter dated March 1963. In the letter, the XPCC announced its intention to expand its foothold in the Tarim Basin through land reclamation, sericulture, and cotton production, initiatives linked to the "general line for production and construction during the Third Fifth Year Plan." The *bingtuan*'s new economic plans were only becoming possible

[159] Untitled letter from the Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan nongye jianshe di yi shi silingbu (Headquarters of the First Agricultural Construction Division, Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps) to the Shanghai shiwei (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renwei (Shanghai Municipal People's Committee), March 2, 1963, SMA, B127-1-359, 102-104. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)
[160] Talimu he nongken daxue (Tarim River Land Reclamation University"),), "Talimu he nongken daxue jianxiao sinian lai de gongzuo gaikuang" ("Work Situation of the First Four-Years of the Tarim River Land Reclamation University"), May 16, 1963, SMA, C26-2-102, 57-61.
[161] "Guanyu nong yi shi zhaoshou qingnian de xuexi gongzhong, qixian de daiyu" ("On the Types, Lengths, and Salaries of Apprenticeships for Youth being Recruited by the 1st Agricultural Division"), June 1963, SMA, C21-1-982, 10. Also available in HDA 26-2-704, 40. Reprinted in ZZQZ, 42.
[162] XSJBD, 151.

because authorities in Shanghai had planned to "give strong human and material support [and] to mobilize those with strong minds and bodies to take part in production and construction."[163]

Wang Zhen wrote a final letter to Premier Zhou and Vice Premier Tan on June 11, 1963.[164] Though this particular letter is much less well-known than his November 1962 missive—in part because it was only briefly accessible at the Shanghai Municipal Archives—it is a much more detailed depiction of Wang's interest in and support for a massive resettlement program from Eastern China to Xinjiang. Wang opened by revealing that his frequent bouts with illness and the time he had spent recuperating in places like Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Fuzhou had given him the opportunity to contemplate the problems facing young people in China. Wang had apparently done his research. He rattled off a series of startling statistics to demonstrate just how many young people could neither continue their education nor expect to find work. "What is to be done about the work and employment of these young students is becoming an increasingly acute social problem," Wang finished one paragraph.[165]

Wang's solution was to get these students out of the cities and "onto the agricultural front." He noted how "Xinjiang, an autonomous region and land reclamation area, is equipped to annually place about 10,000 people." The "virgin fields" (处女地 *chu nv di*) of the Tarim Basin were ready to produce ample amounts of grain, cotton, and silk,

[163] Untitled letter from the Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan nong yi shi (1st Agricultural Division of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps) to the Shanghai renwei (Shanghai Municipal People's Committee), March 2, 1963, SMA, B127-1-389, 102-104.
[164] Untitled letter from Wang Zhen to Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premier Tan Zhenlin, June 11, 1963, SMA, B127-1-359, 110-116. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)
[165] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui, "Shiwei pizhuan Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu deng si ge danwei guanyu dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian de baogao," June 4, 1963, SMA, B76-3-1121, 42-48.

if only its "urgent needs to increase the labor force" could be met. Wang revealed that, over the course of the Third Five-Year Plan, the 1st Agricultural Division could receive upwards of 150,000 people, while the 2nd Agricultural Division handle up to 40,000. [166] By this time, the campaign had already begun, but Wang's continued encouragement certainly influenced others to see it through on a long-term basis.

Commander Wang Zhen, then, probably played the most important individual role on launching urban-to-rural population resettlement to Xinjiang. But it is important to avoid the pitfalls of both Chinese and Western historiography by attributing too much emphasis to one character in particular.[167] As Tania Murray Li argues, revolutionary, over-the-top social reform programs are rarely the will of a single individual.[168] Urban-to-rural resettlement was an idea constructed, piecemeal, at many different offices and institutions across China, over a period of several years. Top-down initiatives collided with grassroots expertise and ideas. Natural scientists and social scientists, for example, played an important role in preparing the ground for population resettlement to Xinjiang. Much as Owen Lattimore had used thick description of Xinjiang and its environs to call attention to the region's potential in the 1940s, Chinese geographers continued this tradition in the 1960s.[169] The noted academic from Hangzhou, Zhou Lisan (周立三), for example, produced *The Economy and Geography of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region* in 1963. In this internally circulated text, Zhou endorsed the "planned continuous

[166] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui, "Shiwei pizhuan Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu deng si ge danwei guanyu dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian de baogao," June 4, 1963, SMA, B76-3-1121, 42-48.
[167] Li Huixing, "40 yu zai qing—Wang Zhen yu Shanghai zhibian zhishi qingnian" ("Wang Zhen and the Shanghai Educated Youth Aiding the Border Region"), *Zhongguo difangzhi* no. 12 (2005): 50-53.
[168] Li, *The Will to Improve*, 6.
[169] Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*.

mobilization" (有计划的陆续动员 *you jihua de luxu dongyuan*) of population segments from Shandong, Henan, Jiangsu, Anhui, Hubei, and Shanghai, believing that the completion of the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway had opened tremendous opportunities to remake Xinjiang. Zhou and other researchers believed that state-run farms, such as those maintained by the Production and Construction Corps, allowed for concentrated labor and investments in scaled-up projects. He proposed cash crops, such as cotton and sericulture, as a means of revitalizing Xinjiang's economy and introducing "all sorts of advanced agricultural technologies."[170]

**Conclusion**

If the above discussion has shown anything, it is that there is no simple answer to the question of who or what caused the Chinese Government to want to dispatch more than 100,000 urban Chinese youth permanently to Xinjiang in the 1960s. Rather than a response to narrow problems such as ethnic tensions or cross-border conflict, urban-to-rural resettlement emerged out of much broader milieu: the post-Great Leap Forward political and economic transition. It was in this moment that the semi-reformist Chinese Communist Party leadership sought to revive agriculture, reduce the burdens on rural areas of the country, and, at least temporarily, scale back the preferential treatment of cities. For the cities, resettlement to Xinjiang was thus always viewed as one only piece of a much larger portfolio of population reduction initiatives: deporting rural *hukou* holders, promoting family planning and delayed marriage education, preventing in-migration, placing a hiring freeze on industries, and relocating retired workers and

[170] Zhou Lisan et al, *Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu jingji dili*, 12, 17, 25-29.

housewives to cooperatives, among many other ideas.[171] For frontier China, receiving urban educated youth was intimately connected to the call of central planners for the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, as well as other likeminded organizations, to ramp up farming of grains, food oils, cotton, silk, and other cash crops. Individuals such as Wang Zhen helped to push these figurative continental plates—urban China and frontier China—together to produce new mountaintops: Xinjiang's 100,000 "educated youth."

Actually Moving 100,000 people from China's urban heart to its remote, underdeveloped periphery, however, was not a simple process. This was not just a matter of transporting bodies cross country. To understand fully the changing motives of urban-to-rural resettlement, it is necessary to look at the "mobilization" of China's "educated youth." Doing so makes clear that while initially the Chinese state sought to transform the landscape of frontier China and the cityscapes of urban China, later, it used urban-to-rural population resettlement to transform the minds and bodies of 100,000 young people.

[171] "Guanyu jinyibu jianshao chengzhen renkou he tuoshan anzhi shehui xiansan laodongli de huibao (caogao)" ("Draft Report on Improving Urban Population Reduction and Resettling Society's Idle Labor"), April 18, 1964, SMA, B127-1-157, 11-15.

Chapter 3: Mobilization

## Introduction

On June 16, 1965, a young Shanghai teenager named Guodong (国栋) received a half-sheet of paper which would change his life forever: an admittance notice to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.

We know very little about Guodong; even his surname, scrawled illegibly on the invitation to the Xinjiang *bingtuan*, is unknown.[1] His notification, moreover, is divorced from an archival context. It was found not in a research repository, but orphaned and alone in a used book market in the People's Republic of China. Practically all we know about this young man, aside from his given name, is that he was to report for duty the following day—June 17—at 2:00 p.m. to learn of his imminent deployment date.[2] The whirlwinds of change apparently came quickly for Guodong.

Guodong, however, was only one among more than 100,000 teenagers to receive such a "Notification of Admittance" in the years between 1963 and 1966,[3] and the documentary record surrounding this phase of urban-to-rural population resettlement—known as "mobilization"—is rich and textured. Through a myriad of activities, diverse mediums, and countless intermediaries, the Chinese state inspired, convinced, and/or coerced huge numbers of young people, including Guodong, to leave behind their urban

[1] Thus Guodong cannot even be accurately identified through the dense, name-by-name compilation of "educated youth" sent to Xinjiang included in Jin Guangyao and Jin Dalu, ed., *Zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shiliao jilu* (Historical Data on the Educated Youth Going Up to the Mountains and Down to the Countryside), vol. 3 (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2014), 1753-2196.
[2] Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan gongzuo zu (Work Team of Chinese PLA Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps), "Luqu tongzhishu" ("Notification of Admittance"), June 16, 1965, AC.
[3] To be sure, these types of notification crop up in many municipal archives. For an undated notification of admittance to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps that was never filled out, see Hangzhou shi dang'anguan (Hangzhou Municipal Archives [HMA]), 036-002-026, 5.

lives and begin anew on the Chinese frontier. The paper trail left behind in the wake of "mobilization" shows why urban-to-rural resettlement began and how it changed over time, as well its successes and failures. But Guodong's certificate of admittance, on its own, reveals a critical element of urban-to-rural population resettlement, one which only became evident when Chinese leaders transitioned for planning to executing this movement. Printed on a pale pink sheet of paper, big and bold Chinese characters proclaimed:

> You have been honorably approved to go to the Production and Construction Corps of the Xinjiang Military District to participate in construction. It is hoped that after you arrive in Xinjiang, you will work earnestly, study hard, and wage an arduous struggle under the Party's leadership, training yourself to become a new type of worker with both cultural knowledge and political consciousness, contributing your energy to the construction and defense of our motherland's frontiers.

At first glance, the text of the "Notification of Admittance" to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps may sound like dull Communist Party boilerplate, but the idea of a reciprocal transformation between people and place—that minds, bodies, and environments would all be changed—became an enduring theme of urban-to-rural population settlement in pre-Cultural Revolution China.

While the previous chapter focused on the "rationalizations" which Chinese leaders relied upon as they concocted urban-to-rural resettlement, it also introduced Neil Diamant's concept of "policy blending," or what Vice Premier Tan Zhenlin (谭震林) called policy unification. This chapter continues to unpack the transformational agenda of rural resettlement, arguing that the longer "mobilization" went on, the more the campaign became about ideology, revolution, and social reform. Indeed, by 1966, in places such as Xuzhou in Jiangsu Province, local authorities ceased from even discussing the practical

aspects of population resettlement, instead framing it merely as a means of "holding high the red banner of Mao Zedong Thought."[4] While initially the Chinese state sought to transform the landscape of frontier China and the cityscapes of urban China, gradually it used urban-to-rural population resettlement to Xinjiang to transform the minds and bodies of 100,000 young people.

**Processes and Plans**

Shanghai was the first Chinese municipality to enter into a population resettlement relationship with the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and, specifically, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. After Shanghai broke ground in 1963, Tianjin and Wuhan cultivated ties with Xinjiang in 1964, while Beijing and dozens of cities in Jiangsu and Zhejiang Provinces began sending young people to the far northwest in 1965.[5]

Regardless of the sending or receiving community, urban-to-rural population resettlement was generally carried out twice annually: once in the spring and early

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[4] Zhonggong Xuzhou shiwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (CCP Xuzhou Municipal Committee Streamlining and Settlement Office), "Guanyu dui dongyuan chengshi zhishi qingnian zhiyuan Xinjiang de juti bushu" ("Specific Arrangements for Mobilizing Urban Educated Youth to Assist Xinjiang"), May 7, 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0122, 52-63. See also in JPA 3030-003-0122, 79-85.

[5] In February 1965, the Central Committee convened its first "Resettlement Work Conference" (安置工作会议 *anzhi gongzuo huiyi*) in Beijing. It was only at this point that Jiangsu Province and Zhejiang Province in sending "educated youth" to Xinjiang. Prior to this, cities in these provinced had practiced *chadui* (插队), or inserting young people into communes, to gain practical resettlement experience.

On the Resettlement Work Conference, see "Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan zhuanfa zhongyang anzhi lingdao xiaozu guanyu anzhi gongzuo huiyi de baogao" ("The CCP Central Committee and the State Council Forward the Central Committee Resettlement Leading Small Group's Report on the Resettlement Work Meeting"), April 22, 1965, in ZGWX, 45-51; Zhonggong zhongyang (CCP Central Committee) and Guowuyuan (State Council), "Guanyu anzhi gongzuo huiyi de baogao" ("Report on the Resettlement Work Meeting"), April 22, 1965, in JYZWX, vol. 20, 170-177; Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., *Zhou Enlai nianpu, 1949-1976* (Chronology of Zhou Enlai, 1949-1976 [ZEN]), vol. 2 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2007), 713-715.

On the participation of the provinces, see Zhonggong Nanjing shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee Streamlining Small Group), "Guanyu yijiuliusi nian dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia nongcun shehui zhuyi jianshe gongzuo de baogao" ("Report on Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in Rural Socialist Construction in 1964"), March 18, 1965, NMA-1, 4054-001-007, 1-9.

summer, and again in the late summer and fall. The earlier iteration usually targeted existing "social youth" in the cities, while the second focused on recently graduated students who did not pass the *gaokao,* or school entrance exams.[6] Because of the slightly different target populations, neighborhood-level committees often participated more during the first phase, while school officials had more responsibilities during the second.[7]

The biannual movement was preceded by consultations between the sending communities, the receiving communities, and officials in Beijing. In March 1964, for example, Shanghai received an order from the State Council to dispatch 35,000 young people to Xinjiang.[8] Likewise, in February 1965, the Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau reported that its mandate for the rest of the calendar year was 15,000 people.[9] At nearly the same time in 1965, Beijing learned that it would have to relocate 37,500 educated young people, including several hundred to Xinjiang, before the conclusion of the calendar year.[10] The Central Committee also soon thereafter instructed Tianjin and

[6] Zhonggong Shanghai Jing'an quwei jingjian bangongshi (Streamlining Office of the CCP Shanghai Jing'an District Committee), et al, "Guanyu dongyuan Shanghai qingzhuangnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian baogao" ("Report on Proposals for Mobilizing Shanghai's Younger Adults to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), March 4, 1964, Jing'an qu dang'anguan (Jing'an District Archives [JDA]), 042-02-379, 1-6.

[7] Untitled letter from Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Zhonggong Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu (CCP Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau Party Group), December 25, 1965, SMA, C21-1-1094, 74-77. See also SMA C21-1-1094, 91-94.

[8] Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau), " Guanyu dongyuan Shanghai qingzhuangnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian (gao)" ("Draft Views on the Mobilization of Shanghai's Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction Work"), March 6, 1964, SMA, B127-2-855, 32-36.

[9] Zhonggong Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu (CCP Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau Party Group), Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), and Shanghai shiwei funv gongzuo weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee Women's Work Committee), "Baosong 'Guanyu yijiuliuwu nian dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang junken de gongzuo yijian" ("Submitting 'Views on the Mobilization of Society's Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Army Land Reclamation Work in 1965'"), February 25, 1965, SMA, B127-1-389, 18-21.

[10] Beijing shi anzhi gongzuo bangongshi (Beijing Municipal Placement Work Office), "Guanyu quanguo anzhi gongzuo huiyi de jiankuang he benshi 1965nian anzhi gongzuo de yijian" ("Situation of the National Placement Work Meeting and Propsoals for Beijing's Placement Work in 1965"), March 13, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01737, 1-5.

Wuhan to each send 4,000 individuals to Xinjiang in 1965 and for Jiangsu to dispatch 10,000 of its *zhiqing*.[11]

The municipalities and provinces involved in urban-to-rural resettlement continued to send these standing orders downward until they ultimately reached the lowest rungs of administration. Provinces, such as Jiangsu, could begin by breaking up the overall quota and distributing it to several cities. Thus, in May 1965, the Jiangsu Provincial Party Committee announced that 4,000 *zhiqing* from Nanjing, 1,500 from Wuxi, 400 from Changshu, 1,000 from Xuzhou, 500 from Suzhou, and so forth—all the way until the target figure for the year, 10,000, had been met—were going to be resettled to Xinjiang.[12] In 1966, Zhejiang Province told its cities their quotas; Ningbo, for

[11] "Guowuyuan zhuanfa zhongyang anzhi chengshi xiaxiang qingnian lingdao xiaozu guanyu yijiuliuwu nian anzhi jihua de baogao" ("The State Council Forwards the Central Committee Leading Small Group for the Resettlement of Urban Sent-Down Youth's Report on the 1965 Resettlement Plan"), April 28, 1965, in ZGWX, 52-54. Also available in BMA, 002-017-00054, 3-6. See also Zizhiqu jieyun Jiangsu zhishi qingnian gongzuo tuan ([Xinjiang Uyghur] Autonomous Region Work Delegating for Moving Jiangsu Province's Educated Youth), "Guanyu jieyun Jiangsu sheng zhishi qingnian youguan juti wenti de guiding" ("Provisions for Various Specific Issues in Moving Jiangsu Province's Educated Youth"), May 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0104, 41-42; Hebei sheng Tianjin shi renmin weiyuanhui (People's Committee of Tianjin Municipality, Hebei Province), "Guanyu jinnian wo shi dongyuan qingnian xiaxiang shangshan he canjia xibei jianshe qingkuang he jinhou yijian de baogao" ("Report on This Year's Mobilization of Tianjin Youth to Go Down to the Villages and Up to the Mountains and Participate in Construction in the Northwest and Proposals for the Future"), October 29, 1965, TMA-1, 53-2-2285, 134-139; Zhonggong Jiangsu sheng weiyuanhui (CCP Jiangsu Province Committee), "Pizhuan shengwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu guanyu yijiuliuwu nian anzhi gongzuo yijian de baogao" ("Forwarding the [Jiangsu] Provincial Streamlining and Settlement Small Group's Report on Proposals for Settlement Work in 1965"), May 22, 1965, WMA, B8-2-181, 1-4.

[12] Zhonggong Suzhou diwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (Office of the CCP Suzhou Regional Committee Streamlining and Placement Office), "Guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian zhiyuan Xinjiang de yijian" ("Views on Mobilizing Educated Youth to Aid Xinjiang"), May 21, 1965, CMA, E01-12-050, 54-58. See also "Guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian zhiyuan Xinjiang de yijian" ("Views on Mobilizing Educated Youth to Assist Xinjiang"), no date but likely sometime in early to mid 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0104, 3-7; Jiangsu sheng Wuxi shi renmin weiyuanhui (People's Committee of Wuxi Municipality, Jiangsu Province), "Jiangsu sheng Wuxi shi renmin weiyuanhui pizhuan shi anzhi bangongshi 'guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian qu Xinjiang canjia nongye jianshe de yijian'" ("The People's Committee of Wuxi Municipality, Jiangsu Province, Forwards the [Wuxi] Municipal Settlement Office's 'Proposals on Mobilizing Educated Youth to Go to Xinjiang to Participate in Agricultural Construction'"), June 25, 1965, WMA, B8-1-38, 12-14.

example, received orders to mobilize 1,000 young people to go to Xinjiang, more than 25 percent of the city's entire "social youth" population.[13]

At the municipal level, the cities would then sub-divide their quotas among individual urban districts (区 *qu*).[14] From here, the district-level party committees could distribute mandates to neighborhoods (街道 *jiedao,* or in Shanghai, often 里弄 *lilong*), which could finally instruct schools, work units, and social/political organizations to mobilize a certain number of people for resettlement to Xinjiang.

The pressures to satisfy the desires of the Central Committee and the State Council at one level and provincial and municipal party committees were immense. Mobilizing enough *zhiqing* to fulfill one's quota required an awareness of the general rates of attrition. While Xuzhou's mandate in 1965 was, as we saw above, to dispatch 1,000 *zhiqing* to Xinjiang in 1965, it tried to mobilize and investigate at least 2,000 young people, recognizing that probably half would not ultimately be accepted by the Production and Construction Corps.[15] Other cities also generally sought to have upwards of twice as many young people mobilized than the actual quota allowed.[16] In Shanghai during the first half of 1964, for instance, the city allowed over 36,000 *zhiqing* to sign up

[13] Zhonggong Ningbo shi laodong ju dangzu (Party Group of the CCP Ningbo Muinicipal Labor Bureau) et al, "Guanyu yijiuliuliu nian dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe de gongzuo fang'an" ("Work Plan for Mobilizing Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Construction in 1966"), July 11, 1966, NMA-2, 194-017-003, 47-53.

[14] See, for example, the individual quotas distributed to Baoshan, Jiading, and other districts and counties in Greater Shanghai in "Guanyu cong jiaoqu dongyuan jianzhu jishu yuangong zhiyuan Xinjiang jianshe de gongzuo fang'an" ("Work Plan for Mobilizing Construction Personnel from the Suburbs to Support Xinjiang's Construction"), April 1964, SMA, B127-2-784, 54. Also available in SMA B127-2-855, 38-40.

[15] Gongqingtuan Xuzhou shi weiyuanhui (CYL Xuzhou Municipal Committee), "Guanyu canjia bianjiang jianshe qingnian shenpi qianhou sixiang jiaoyu gongzuo de jidian yijian" ("Several Proposals for Ideological and Education work during and after the Examinations and Approvals of Youth Participating in Frontier Construction"), June 4, 1965, JPA, 32-35.

[16] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu yijiuliusan nian dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo zongjie" ("Work Summary of Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps in 1963"), February 18, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2266, 1-5.

to go to Xinjiang. Of these, 31,000 met the minimum qualifications and had all necessary documentation. From here, 25,000 individuals registered and passed their political and health inspections. In the end, 22,000 individuals were resettled to Xinjiang.[17]

Based on agreements between the cities and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, only young people between the ages of 16 and 25 *sui* were eligible for mobilization; in practice, the pool of successful applicants skewed heavily in favor of those 18 years old and younger.[18] Aside from paying attention to age, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps also desired only to receive individuals with a "clear political history." It refused any applicant who "was of bad character, had broken the law, or was a gangster or hooligan."[19] Urban officials also looked for "social youth" who did not have any so-called "family burdens."[20] In part, this was guilt by association: cadres generally did not want to recruit the children of purported counterrevolutionaries and thought criminals (as well as ordinary criminals), and were usually nervous about individuals with family members abroad. "Family burdens" was also a judgement of material wealth, often preventing teenagers with financial difficulties from registering.

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[17] "Yijiuliusi nian shangban nian dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe shiji chufa qingkuang de fenxi" ("Analysis of the Actual Departures from Mobilizing Social Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Construction during the First-Half of 1964"), undated but from sometime in mid-1964, SMA, C21-2-2520, 82-83.

[18] See, for example, Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Streamlining Small Group), "Guanyu dongyuan Shanghai qingzhuangnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian" ("Opinions on the Work of Mobilizing Shanghai's Young Adults to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), April 1964, SMA, A62-1-27, 25-31.

[19] "Guanyu anpai weineng shengxue de gao, chuzhong biyesheng canjia shengchan laodong de gongzuo fang'an" ("On the Work Program for Arranging for High School and Middle School Graduates Unable to Further their Studies to Participate in Productive Labor"), July 28, 1964, SMA, A62-1-27, 13-20.

Farms in Northeast China paid close attention to one's political background explicitly because of proximity of the Sino-Soviet border. It is unclear if the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps did the same. See Zhongua renmin gongheguo nongken bu (PRC Ministry of Land Reclamation) and Dongbei nongken zongju (Northeast [China] Land Reclamation Bureau), "Guanyu qieshi zuohao jieshou, anzhi siqian ming Beijing qingnian gongzuo de tongzhi" ("Notification on Conscientously Receiving and Resettling 4,000 Beijing Youth"), May 11, 1964, BMA, 110-001-01615, 7-11.

[20] "Guanyu anpai shehui qingnian jiuye de ruogan zhengce yijian" ("Various Policy Proposals for Arranging Employment for Social Youth"), April 10, 1964, SMA, B127-1-161, 15-16.

For example, in most cases, an only child would be asked to stay back in Shanghai rather than relocate to the Chinese frontier.[21]

On paper, urban districts generally sought to mobilize equal numbers of men and women; in reality, however, there were more barriers to entry for teenage girls. As a result, the number of young men sent to Xinjiang on an annual basis often exceeded the number of young women, at least modestly. The guidelines for mobilization explicitly stated "young men and *unmarried* women" were eligible, thus preventing the sizable population of unemployed, young urban housewives from participating.[22] Moreover, while the criteria for evaluating candidates often stated that they could be of "any cultural level," they stipulated that applicants "must have a healthy body and must be able to participate in normal labor."[23]

Initially, the Production and Construction Corps forbid any applicants who suffered from "mental illness or epilepsy, as well as the crippled,"[24] but overtime this list grew to thirteen specific illnesses and ailments, such as tuberculosis, gastritis and high blood pressure and even weight and height restrictions. While these specific bodily standards were crafted to weed out anyone "unable to participate in physical labor," local

[21] See, for example, "Guanyu dongyuan qu Xinjiang de duixiang, fanwei he shencha tiaojian de yijian" ("Views on the Targets, Scope, and Review Conditions for Xinjiang Mobilization"), April 18, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1050, 30-32. See also in JPA 3030-003-0105, 136-137.
[22] "Guanyu dongyuan qu Xinjiang de duixiang, fanwei he shencha tiaojian de yijian," April 18, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1050, 30-32.
[23] Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu dongyuan Shanghai qingzhuangnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian (gao)" ("Draft Views on the Mobilization of Shanghai's Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction Work"), March 6, 1964, SMA, B127-2-855, 32-36.
[24] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Streamlining Small Group), "Guanyu dongyuan Shanghai qingzhuangnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian" ("Opinions on the Work of Mobilizing Shanghai's Young Adults to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), April 1964, SMA, A62-1-27, 25-31.

authorities occasionally used different benchmarks.[25] In Beijing, for example, cadres tried to assess whether an applicant would be able to handle the "frigid" climates of resettlement areas.[26] Young women by and large were affected most by the health standards described above, as well as the on-the-spot impulses of individual mobilizers.[27] Yet it was these attitudes against, and stereotypes of, young women's bodies which—as we shall see below—eventually became a key component of "mobilization" work and, indeed, the goals of urban-to-rural resettlement writ large.

**Wary Volunteers**

Successfully registering to go to Xinjiang involved a myriad of forms and appointments. Applicants had to undergo medical check-ups, submit documentation to have their *hukou* and grain ration cards transferred to Xinjiang, and describe their family background.[28] They reported on every ailment they had ever had, every address they had ever dwelled, every school they had attended, and even every place their parents had worked. These deeply intimate details were woven into narratives about the applicant, describing whether s/he was physically, emotionally, and politically capable of thriving with the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. Whether s/he would pass the test was an unknown until the pink "Notification of Admittance" to the Xinjiang Production

[25] Ningbo shi weisheng ju (Ningbo Municipal Hygiene Bureau), "Guanyu zuohao zhibian qingnian de tige jiancha gongzuo de tongzhi" ("Notification on Physical Examinations for *Zhibian* Youth"), August 10, 1966, NMA-2, 196-018-003, 36-38. See also "Shanghai shi zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe de tige jiancha biaozhun" ("Bodily Examination Standards for Shanghai's Educated Youth Participating in Xinjiang's Construction"), May 27, 1965, SMA, C21-1-1095, 117.
[26] While this specific document refers to resettlement to the northeast, the same mentality was evident with regards to Xinjiang work. See Beijing shi weisheng ju (Beijing Municipal Health Bureau) and Beijing shi laodong ju (Beijing Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu dui benshi qingnian dao dongbei canjia nongye laodong zuohao tijian gonguzo de tongzhi" ("Notification on Health Check Work for Beijing Youth Going to the Northeast to Participate in Agricultural Labor"), August 18, 1964, BMA, 110-001-01615, 12-13.
[27] "Guanyu anpai weineng shengxue de gao, chuzhong biyesheng canjia shengchan laodong de gongzuo fang'an" ("On the Work Program for Arranging for High School and Middle School Graduates Unable to Further their Studies to Participate in Productive Labor"), July 28, 1964, SMA, A62-1-27, 13-20.
[28] Personal file for a Shanghai youth from Putuo District sent to Xinjiang, 1965-1981, AC.

and Construction Corps was finally handed off by the head of his local neighborhood committee.[29]

None of these plans and prescriptions for state-led resettlement in socialist China, however, would have been possible without willing participants. After all, in principle, every single teenager who moved from a city to Xinjiang in the mid-1960s did so voluntarily.[30] Yet throughout the campaign to move 100,000 young people to Xinjiang, neighborhood and district level cadres across China's cities—as well as workers from the *bingtuan* temporarily stationed in cities—reported varying degrees of enthusiasm for population resettlement.[31] While officials in Luwan District, the site of Shanghai's French Concession, reported that 60 percent of "social youth" living in their vicinity were probably willing to go to Xinjiang in 1963, either because of their "relatively progressive mentality" or because of "family problems," this district was the exception, not the norm.[32] Urban officials across China were typically quite gloomy. In Beijing, local cadres found that the unemployed youth wanted jobs in the city and were utterly unenthusiastic about population resettlement.[33] In Tangshan, Hebei Province, two neighborhood

[29] Contemporary newspaper articles suggest these half-sheet notifications were often hand delivered by leading neighborhood cadres. See "Pizhun qu Xinjiang de tongzhishu kaishi chufa" ("Notifications Approving [Individuals] to Go to Xinjiang Have Begun to Come Out"), June 11, 1965, in *Xinmin wanbao* (Xinmin Evening News [XMWB]).
[30] The principle of volunteerism is mentioned in many archival documents from this period, but for an example see Jia, Wan, and Wang, "Guanyu canjia Huabei ju da zhong chengshi anzhi gongzuo huiyi qingkuang he women jinnian anzhi benshi buneng shengxue de chuzhong gaozhong biyesheng ji shehui wuye renyuan yijian de baogao," February 4, 1964, BMA, 002-020-01532, 1-12.
[31] Nong yi shi zhu Hu gongzuo zu (Work Team of the First Agricultural Division in Shanghai), "Guanyu dongyuan qingnian fu shengchan bing de youguan jiaoyu wenti de baogao" ("Report on Relevant Educational Problems in Mobilizing Youth to Enter the [Xinjiang] Production [and Construction] Corps"), in ZZQZ, 99-102.
[32] "Guanyu dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang cansang shiye de yijian" ("Views on Mobilizing Social Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Sericulture Industry"), May 20, 1963, HDA, 050-1-30, 9-13.
[33] Beijing shi laodong ju (Beijing Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu dongyuan shehui qingnian dao dongbei nongchang de qingkuang jianbao" ("Brief Report on the Situation of Mobilizing Social Youth to Go to Farms in the Northeast"), August 16, 1964, BMA, 110-001-01615, 14-15.

committees reported that while more than 100 social youth were in their grasps, "not a single person was willing to go to the countryside."[34] Many young people proudly proclaimed that because "I was born in Shanghai and I've never left Shanghai, I will stay in Shanghai."[35]

Chinese authorities offered many different explanations for the disinterest in frontier China and population resettlement. In Beijing and Shanghai, locals rationalized that young people were reluctant to go to destinations such as Northeast China and Xinjiang due to the harsh winter climates.[36] In Shanghai, the Municipal Party Committee received reports describing how the extraordinary distance separating Xinjiang from Shanghai—some 4,000 kilometers—was also a major bottleneck in neighborhood-level resettlement work.[37]

In Shanghai's Changning District, young people spread rumors about the awful climate, tainted drinking water, and disgusting food of this seemingly foreign land, Xinjiang. At least one individual reported that they would not go because the local cuisine in Xinjiang caused diarrhea.[38] In Jing'an District, an area with huge

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[34] Hebei sheng jiaoyu ting (Hebei Provincial Education Department), "Guanyu chengshi shehui qingnian xuexi qingkuang de jianbao" ("Brief Report on the Study Situation of Urban Social Youth"), June 1, 1963, TMA-1, 198-2-1891, 85-88.
[35] Shanghai shi gaodeng jiaoyu ju (Shanghai Municipal Higher Education Bureau), "Guanyu zhaokai yingjie gaodeng xuexiao, zhongdeng zhuanye xuexiao biyesheng daibiao huiyi de qingshi baogao" ("Instructing and Reporting on Conveneing a Representatives Meeting to Greet Graduates from Colleges and Specialized Secondary Schools"), no date but probably Augusut 1964, SMA, C21-1-1018, 2-3.
[36] See, for example, "Guanyu dongyuan yingjie buneng shengxue de chu, gaozhong biyesheng he shehui qingnian canjia dongbei guoying nongchang shengchan jianshe gongzuo de anpai yijian" ("Views on the Plans to Mobilize Expected Middle and High School Graduates Unable to Continue their Studies and Social Youth to Go to the Northeast State-Run Farms to Participate in Production and Constructino Work"), September 3, 1963, BMA, 110-001-01460, 4-7.
[37] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu deng si ge danwei guanyu dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian de baogao," June 4, 1963, SMA, B76-3-1121, 42-48.
[38] Shanghai shi zhishi qingnian canjia waidi jianshe Changning qu gongzuo zu (Changing District Work Team for Shanghai Educated Youth Participating in the Construction of Other Areas), "Dongyuan qingnian qu Xinjiang qingkuang huibao (yi)("1st Report on Mobilizing Youth to Go to Xinjiang"), June 29, 1963, Changning qu dang'anguan (Changning District Archives [CDA]), 48-37-52, 55-57.

concentrations of unemployed young people, even more egregious rumors about Xinjiang swirled. According to some "counterrevolutionary and bad elements" in Jing'an, "the ethnic minorities [in Xinjiang] carry knives and kill people; if they see a girl, they'll have her married." Other tales warned young people that because "Xinjiang is close to the border with the Soviet Union, if you go, you'll have to fight in a war."[39]

The anxieties of urban China's "social youth" could clearly be over-the-top, but their concerns about urban-to-rural resettlement were also tied to family, friendships, and careers. Shanghai's Communist Youth League believed its city was full of romantics; boyfriends, fearing heartbreak, did not want their girlfriends to go to Xinjiang.[40] Young women even more so represented challenges to mobilization workers, at least if we are to believe the gendered reports produced during this period. Cadres in Shanghai complained, for example, that "girls" "have a narrow outlook [on life]" and "just aspire to 'eat well, dress well, and have a warm and cozy family.'" They believed none of this would be possible in a rough and dingy place like Xinjiang.[41]

Others simply remained hopeful that their home city would see a "great leap forward" (大跃进 *da yuejin*) in production and that industries would resume hiring in 1964 and beyond, obviating the need for them to go to Xinjiang or anywhere outside of

[39] "Shanghai Jing'an qu dongyuan zhishi qingnian qu Xinjiang canjia zuguo bianjiang jianshe de baogao (gao)" ("Draft Report on Jing'an District's Mobilization of Educated Youth to Go to Xinjiang to Participate in the Motherland's Frontier Construction"), November 8, 1963, JDA, 042-02-1614, 1-11. See also Zhonggong Shanghai shi Jing'an quwei jingjian bangongshi (Streamlining Office of the CCP Shanghai Jing'an District Committee) "Guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian qu Xinjiang canjia zuguo bianjiang jianshe de gongzuo zongjie" ("Summary of the Mobilization of Educated Youth to Go to Xinjiang to Participate in the Motherland's Frontier Construction"), December 28, 1963, JDA, 042-02-1614, 43-51.
[40] Gongqingtuan Shanghai tuanxiao (CYL Shanghai Academy), "Guanyu zhagen chuanlian 'gun xueqiu' gongzuo de zongjie" ("Summary of Work to Strike Roots, Establish Ties, and 'Snowball'"), June 10, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2266, 40-46.
[41] "Dangqian shehui qingnian de sixiang dongtai" ("Current Ideological Trends amongst Social Youth"), May 20, 1965, SMA, C21-1-1094, 173-177. Also available in SMA C21-1-1095, 119-124.

the city.[42] Particularly as the Great Leap Forward receded further into the past, young people saw less and less "relevance" (不适用 *bu shiyong*) to urban-to-rural population resettlement.[43] Even among individuals who expressed a willingness to go to Xinjiang, many insisted that it should be on a purely temporary basis and not involve an exchange of their urban *hukou*. "Perhaps [I] could come back to Shanghai in three years," one applicant allegedly remarked to cadres in Changning District.[44]

In Shanghai, local officials did their best to alleviate and explain away the material concerns of the "social youth." They also did their best to squash rumors which spoke ill of Xinjiang. But, as the campaign wore on, it increasingly became clear to urban officials that the challenges to urban-to-rural resettlement were linked to culture and values, not material desires. In Shanghai, a number of municipal bureaus and political organizations jointly reported that "social youth and their parents look down on agriculture, romanticize the city, and fear hardship."[45] In Shanghai's Zhabei District, the Kaifeng Neighborhood Committee similarly complained that its progeny did not have an appetite for risk and lacked revolutionary ambition.[46]

Even among young people who were enthusiastic about going to Xinjiang, mobilization leaders sometimes found that teenagers did not truly understand what was at

[42] "Shiqu shehui qingnian qingkuang he anzhi guanli yijian de huibao tigang" ("Report Outline on the Situation of Shanghai's Social Youth and Proposals for Resettling and Managing Them"), October 24, 1963, SMA, B127-2-133, 10-12.
[43] "Dangqian shehui qingnian de sixiang dongtai," May 20, 1965, SMA, C21-1-1094, 173-177.
[44] Shanghai shi zhishi qingnian canjia waidi jianshe Changning qu gongzuo zu, "Dongyuan qingnian qu Xinjiang qingkuang huibao (yi),", June 29, 1963, CDA, 48-37-52, 55-57.
[45] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui, "Shiwei pizhuan Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu deng si ge danwei guanyu dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian de baogao," June 4, 1963, SMA, B76-3-1121, 42-48.
[46] Kaifeng jiedao tuanwei (CYL Kaifeng Neighborhood Committee), "Dongyuan qingnian zhiyuan Xinjiang jianshe jiaoyu gongzuo dasuan" ("Education Work Plan for Mobilizing Youth to Support Xinjiang"), March 10, 1965, Zhabei qu dang'anguan (Zhabei District Archives [ZDA]), 047-02-048, 1-4.

stake. According to grassroots reports from Shanghai's neighborhoods, "some people [want to go to Xinjiang] so they can wear a military uniform, play on the train, and eat cantaloupe."[47] The Communist Youth League in Shanghai thus called the entire movement a war against "old ways of thinking and old habits;"[48] the same city's Downsizing Office agreed that population resettlement was a "struggle to change old customs and habits." [49]

None of this was empty rhetoric. If the campaign to resettle millions of young people from urban China to rural China—and 100,000 specifically to Xinjiang—had begun due to anxieties and aspirations about the economy, demographics, and development, it increasingly became tied to the ideological and physical transformation of China's baby boomer generation. The style and content of "mobilization" work gradually reflected these new concerns and underlying motives of urban-to-rural population resettlement.

**Mobilizing the Masses**

The entire process of resettling so-called "social youth" to Xinjiang involved five distinct steps: mobilization (动员 *dongyuan*), registration (报名 *baoming*), inspection and approval (审批 *shenpi*), reporting for duty (报到 *baodao*), and sending off (欢送

[47] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Chongyin dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de jingyan san ze" ("Reprinting Three Experiences Mobilizing Social Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), July 20, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2525, 39-41.
[48] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu yijiuliusan nian dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo zongjie" ("Work Summary of Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps in 1963"), February 18, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2266, 1-5.
[49] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Streamlining Small Group), "Guanyu dongyuan Shanghai qingzhuangnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian" ("Opinions on the Work of Mobilizing Shanghai's Young Adults to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), April 1964, SMA, A62-1-27, 25-31.

*huansong*).[50] During the first stage, grassroots cadres from the neighborhood and alleyway levels coordinated with the Communist Youth League, local women's federations, and schools to convene so-called "activists meetings" and "mass symposia," gatherings of hundreds if not thousands of young people, their families, and senior cadres. Officials also cultivated "backbones," or enthusiastic young people, who could "link-up" and spread the party's gospel about Xinjiang among their peers. In addition to these mass-style meetings, neighborhoods also organized more intimate sessions involving small groups of unemployed young people and model youth returning from Xinjiang. All newspapers, radio and television stations, and youth palaces and clubs were supported the campaign as much as possible.[51]

Early on, much of the rhetoric regarding urban-to-rural population resettlement remained faithful to the original aims of the campaign. Rather than frame resettlement to Xinjiang as a means of achieving ideological transformation and physical rejuvenation, propagandists insisted on the demographic and developmental importance of the campaign. Thus, at Shanghai's first so-called "Social Youth Activists Meeting" on June 23-24, 1963, much of the discussion centered how on the urban and rural economies were far from fully recovered, with overgrown cities sitting at the root of the problem.[52] Other

[50] "Guanyu baoming, shencha, biandui, chufa deng zuzhi gongzuo de yijian" ("Views on Registration, Inspection, Team Formation, Sending Off, and Other Organizational Work"), April 11, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1050, 26-29. See also in JPA 3030-003-0105, 138-139. See also Luwan qu fulian (Luwan District Women's Federation), "Luwan qu fulian dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe jiazhang gongzuo zongjie" ("Summary of the Luwan District Women's Federation's Parents Work in Mobilizing Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Construction"), June 18, 1964, HDA, 042-2-288, 26-35.

[51] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui, "Shiwei pizhuan Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu deng si ge danwei guanyu dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian de baogao," June 4, 1963, SMA, B76-3-1121, 42-48.

[52] Shanghai shi zhishi qingnian canjia waidi jianshe gongzuozu (Work Team for Shanghai Educated Youth Participating in the Construction of Other Areas), "Guanyu dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de xuanchuan tigang" ("Propaganda Points for Mobilizing Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), June 24, 1963, SMA, C21-2-2266, 47-50. Also available in HDA 41-2-766, 14-17. See also "Guanyu shehui qingnian jiuye wenti de xuanchuan cankao cailiao" ("Propaganda

speakers sought to dispel the rumors about Xinjiang by offering a more glamorous introduction to the region's topography, climate, and economy.[53]

Party Secretary Shi Ximin (石西民), for example, asked the teenagers and their families in attendance to recognize that "the distance [between Shanghai and Xinjiang] was shrinking each day" because of innovations and advances in transportation. In other words, while the two locations seemed as if they were worlds apart in 1963, technology would help to conquer both the physical distance and the emotional pain of separation.[54] Commander Wang Zhen (王震) tried to console everyone in attendance: "Is Xinjiang tough or not? I've been everywhere. I don't think so."[55] Chen Pixian (陈丕显), a member of the leading kernel of the communist leadership in Shanghai, told his audience that they must have flexible identities. Delving into his own biography, Chen announced that he had been born in Fujian, and although he had resided in Shanghai for many years, he retained his original identity as a Fujianese.[56] This was a reminder that even if one was resettled to Xinjiang, they would always be at a heart a native Shanghai'er.

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Reference Materials for the Social Youth Employment Issue"), November 20, 1963, SMA, A11-1-78, 41-45. See also Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 7.

[53] "Guanyu dongyuan Shanghai qingnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de xuanchuan ziliao" ("Propaganda Materials for Mobilizing Shanghai Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), undated but sometime in 1963, SMA, C48-2-2479, 28-30.

[54] "Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei shujichu houpu shuji Shi Ximin tongzhi zai Shanghai shi shehui qingnian huodong fenzi huiyi shang de baogao jilv" ("Record of CCP Shanghai Municipal Secretary Comrade Shi Ximin's Report at the Shanghai Municipal Social Youth Activists Meeting"), June 24, 1963, SMA, C21-2-2268, 38-41.

[55] "Wang Zhen jiangjun zai Shanghai shehui qingnian huodong fenzi di'er ci huiyi shang de jianghua" ("Commander Wang Zhen's Speech at the Second Shanghai Youth Activists Meeting"), June 24, 1963, SMA, C21-2-2268, 36-37. Also once available in SMA B127-1-359, 108-109; reprinted in Yao, *Shanghai zhiqing zai Xinjiang*, 193-196.

[56] "Chen Pixian tongzhi zai Shanghai shi xiaxiang shangshan zhishi qingnian jiji fenzi daibiao huiyi de jianghua" ("Comrade Chen Pixian's Speech at the Shanghai Down to the Villages and Up to the Mountains Educated Youth Activists Meeting"), April 21, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1021, 21-24.

While work teams in Changning District praised Wang Zhen, Shi Ximin, and the other speakers for helping to spark a "high-tide" (高潮 *gaochao*) in mobilization work in summer of 1963,[57] some of the language these officials used did backfire. After receiving myriad complaints from resettled youth and their parents about the quality of life in Xinjiang (as evidence in Chapter Four shows), the Shanghai Municipal Downsizing Office chided district-level cadres for not remaining faithful to "reality" as they described Xinjiang to audiences during mobilization work.[58] During subsequent years, mobilization workers were explicitly instructed to introduce the good and bad about life in Xinjiang.[59]

Overtime, however, the content of mobilization work turned away from the concrete and toward abstract ideological goals. As Tan Zhenlin described "placement work" to an audience of senior officials in autumn 1965:

> When we started we thought the cities have too many people, so let's place them in the villages. We started with this mindset. After three years, our work has progressed. It's not just a matter of resettling excess labor from the cities anymore.[60]

While Vice Premier Tan had in mind a reciprocal transformation of urban and rural China, other sources make clear that this was not just a campaign to transform the landscapes of frontier China and the cityscapes of urban China. Rather, the campaign would also transform the minds and bodies of hundreds of thousands of young people.

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[57] Shanghai shi zhishi qingnian canjia waidi jianshe Changning qu gongzuo zu, "Dongyuan qingnian qu Xinjiang qingkuang huibao (yi),"June 29, 1963, CDA, 48-37-52, 55-57.
[58] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Streamlining Small Group), "Guanyu dongyuan Shanghai qingzhuangnian canjia Xinjiang shengchan jianshe de gongzuo yijian" ("Opinions on the Work of Mobilizing Shanghai's Young Adults to Participate in Xinjiang's Production and Construction"), April 1964, SMA, A62-1-27, 25-31.
[59] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Small Group of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee for Streamlining), "Guanyu Xinjiang qingkuang de xuanchuan ziliao" ("Propaganda Materials related to the Situation in Xinjiang"), April 12, 1964, SMA, A62-2-2, 25-28.
[60] "Tan fu zongli zai anzhi gongzuo zuotanhui shang de jianghua" ("Vice-Premier Tan [Zhenlin's] Speech at the Placement Work Conference"), September 4, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01738, 21-29.

The changing rhetoric was in part a result of broader ideological shifts in China in the mid-1960s. Although Mao Zedong had nothing to do with the campaign at its outset, his return to the political stage and his growing influence on Chinese politics crept into the movement. Mobilization experts thus earnestly proclaimed that "all propaganda must be guided by Chairman Mao's idea that educated youth must be united with workers and peasants."[61] Authorities in Tianjin also credited other ongoing ideological-political campaigns concocted by Mao, such as the Socialist Education Movement in 1965, with aiding their mobilization work.[62]

But the change to the campaign was also rooted to the prevailing attitudes, values, and cultures which cadres responsible for mobilization work found in the cities. In Shanghai, the local Downsizing Small Group claimed that "our experiences over the last two years [1963 and 1964]" proved that "mobilizing social youth to participate in Xinjiang's reclamation work must be conducted as a mass ideological-revolutionary campaign."[63] Speakers at mass meetings, the words printed in magazines and newspapers, and the imagery associated with urban-to-rural resettlement emphasized that this campaign was a means to transform the mind and bodies of China's youth.

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[61] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei xuanchuan bu (Propaganda Department of the CYL Shanghai Committee), "Dongyuan chengshi zhishi qingnian xiaxiang shangshan canjia Xinjiang jianshe xuanchuan jihua" ("Propaganda Plan for Mobilizing Urban Educated Youth to Go Down to the Villages and Up to the Mountains and Participate in Xinjiang's Construction"), April 8, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1050, 21-25.

[62] Hebei sheng Tianjin shi renmin weiyuanhui (People's Committee of Tianjin Municipality, Hebei Province), "Guanyu jinnian wo shi dongyuan qingnian xiaxiang shangshan he canjia xibei jianshe qingkuang he jinhou yijian de baogao" ("Report on This Year's Mobilization of Tianjin Youth to Go Down to the Villages and Up to the Mountains and Participate in Construction in the Northwest and Proposals for the Future"), October 29, 1965, TMA-1, 53-2-2285, 134-139.

[63] Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Municipal Party Committee Streamlining Small Group), "Shanghai shi yijiujiuliuwu nian jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo fang'an" ("Shanghai's 1966 Work Program for Reducing the Urban Population"), April 9, 1965, SMA, A62-1-33, 1-9. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)

Physical labor, for example, was increasingly depicted as a means for young urbanites to carry forth a whole slew of struggles, whether anti-feudal, anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, or anti-revisionist. Among students especially, physical exertion and the achievement of a "healthy body" (健康身体 *jiankang shenti*) was portrayed as a primary means of "raising up the proletariat and exterminating the bourgeois" (兴无灭资 *xing wu mie zi*).[64] The campaign became also increasingly tied to eradicating the pernicious aspects of Chinese culture, such as the widespread belief that "it is most noble to be a scholar and everything else is inferior."[65] In Wuxi, the Municipal Education Bureau told those who failed the *gaokao* that they could still become "real successors to the proletariat revolution" by following the Communist Party's directives.[66]

Propagandists also stoked the patriotic impulses of young Chinese, suggesting that resettlement to Xinjiang was a way of putting country first.[67] Some apparatchiks drew explicit comparisons between urban-to-rural resettlement and military service,

[64] "Ba hongqi chabian keyu wenhua shenghuo lingyu: Huadong shida diyi fuzhong tuanwei shuji Chen Bujun fayan (caogao)" ("Put a Red Flag in Culture and Live after Class: Draft Remarks of Chen Bujun, CYL Secretary of the No. 1 Middle School Attached to East China Normal University"), March 11, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2472, 166-173. See also Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu gongzuo bu (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee Regional Work Committee), "Guanyu dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang junken de xuanchuan gongzuo fang'an (cao'an)" ("Draft Plan for Propaganda Work for the Mobilizing Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Military Land Reclamation Work"), March 25, 1966, SMA, C21-2-2898, 11-15.
[65] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu sannian lai dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang junken de gongzuo baogao" ("Work Report on the Last Three Years of Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Military Land Reclamation"), March 28, 1966, HDA, 041-2-871, 4-12.
[66] Wuxi shi jiaoyu ju (Wuxi Municipal Education Bureau) and Zhongguo gongchan zhuyi qingniantuan Wuxi shi weiyuanhui (CYL Wuxi Municipal Committee), "Guanyu zhaokai yijiuliuliu nian gao chuzhong biyesheng daibiao huiyi de gongzuo jihua" ("Work Plan for Convening a Representatives Meeting of Middle and High School Graduates of 1966"), May 4, 1966, WMA, B41-2-476, 1-3.
[67] Changning qu jiaoyu ju (Changning District Education Bureau), "Dongyuan yingjie gao zhong biyesheng canjia Xinjiang jianshe de gongzuo zongjie" ("Summary of Work Mobilizing Upcoming High and Middle School Graduates to Participate in Xinjiang's Construction"), November 20, 1963, CDA, 48-37-52, 5-11.

stating "going down to the villages or up to the mountains" was equivalent to the previous generation's "[service] in the [War] to Resist America and Aid Korea."[68]

**Cultivating Models**

Over time, the cities became more sophisticated with their mobilization work. In Shanghai, for example, neighborhood-level committees began laying the ground work for spring 1966 resettlement work as early as October 1965, several months before even receiving their annual quota.[69] This work included shepherding young people to farms on the outskirts of Shanghai for short durations so that they could get a taste of agricultural work and mentally and physically prepare themselves for life on the frontier.[70]

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[68] "Yijiuliusi nian anzhi gongzuo de jiben zongjie he yijiuliuwu nian de gongzuo yijian (caogao)" ("Draft Summary of Placement Work in 1964 and Proposals for Work in 1965"), February 8, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01735, 1-23.

[69] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu qingnian gongzuo bu (Regional Youth Work Department of the Shanghai Party Committee of the Communist Youth League), "Guanyu jiedao qingnian xuexi ban jiaoyu gongzuo de jidian yijian (caogao)" ("Several Draft Proposals on Education Work related to Sub-District Youth Study Courses"), October 18, 1965, SMA, C21-2-2761, 69-73; Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu qingnian gongzuo bu (Regional Youth Work Department of the Shanghai Party Committee of the Communist Youth League), "Guanyu zai jiedao qingnian zhong shenru kaizhan xuexi Wang Jie huodong de yijian" ("Propsoals for Activities for Sub-District Youth to Deeply Study Wang Jie"), December 28, 1965, SMA, C21-2-2756, 1-6.

Shanghai did not receive instructions to mobilize 30,000 *zhiqing* to go to Xinjiang in 1966 until late February or early March 1966. See Zhonggong Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu (CCP Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau Party Group), Zhonggong Shanghai shi jiaoyu ju weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Education Bureau Committee), and Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Yijiuliuliu nian dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang junken de gongzuo fang'an" ("Work Plan for Mobilizing Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Army Land Reclamation in 1966") March 7, 1966, SMA, B105-4-10, 21-27. Also available in SMA B127-1-400, 2-4; SMA A62-1-36, 22-28.

[70] Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau), Shanghai shi nongken bu (Shanghai Municipal Land Reclamation Bureau), and Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu zuzhi benshi shehui qingnian qianwang benshi ge guoying nongchang lunliu jinxing laodong duanlian de tongzhi" ("Notification on Organizing Shanghai's Social Youth to Go to Local State-Run Farms in Batches for Labor Exercises"), October 19, 1965, SMA, C21-1-1094, 142-144; Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau Party Group) et. al., "Guanyu juban 'Shanghai nongye laodong daxue' he 'qingnian laodong xuexiao' de qingshi baogao (caogao)" ("Draft Instructing and Reporting on Organizing a 'Shanghai Municipal Agricultural Labor University' and 'Youth Labor Academy'"), January 12, 1966, SMA, B180-1-66, 35-38.

For a follow-up report on the ambiguous success of these efforts, see Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu qingnian gongzuo bu (Regional Youth Work Department of the Shanghai Party Committee of the Communist Youth League), "Guanyu Shanghai qingnian nongye jianshe dui dangqian gongzuo zhong de jige wenti de baogao" ("Report on Several Issues in the Current Work of the Shanghai Youth Agricultural Construction Team"), April 27 1966, SMA, C21-2-2755, 118-120.

But the key to successful mobilization, the Chinese Communist Party believed, was rooted to identifying and celebrating model youth.[71] And in the case of Xinjiang, one model youth offered evidence of mental and physical transformation arguably better than any of her 100,000 peers. Born in Shanghai's Jing'an District, Yu Shanling (渔姗玲) was a self-identified member of the bourgeoisie. Having obtained a high school education, Yu registered to go to Xinjiang in August 1963.[72] Inspired by the revolutionary forbearers of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps who were "not afraid to spill blood and sacrifice" (不怕流血牺牲 *bupa liuxue xisheng*), Yu promptly went down to her local registration office and signed up.

Yu was certainly not a typical "social youth." In fact, Yu's decision elicited much criticism from her wealthy parents, who had begged her to relocate to Hong Kong after earning her high school diploma. After learning of their daughter's decision, they reportedly made 20 long distance phone calls to contest Yu's registration. According to Yu's tell all with the magazine *China Youth,* she recognized that a comfortable capitalist lifestyle had made her parents fall out of touch with the Chinese people, and hence their criticisms were misplaced. But her sister raised a more immediate and practical question: "can your body handle it?". After arriving in Xinjiang and completing only one day of work on the farm, Yu's hands became chapped and blistered while her back ached. But

[71] "Canjia Xinjiang jianshe de Shanghai qingnian xianjin renwu suoyin" ("Index of Advanced Shanghai Youth Participating in Xinjiang's Construction"), no date but likely spring 1966, SMA, C21-2-2898, 78-84.
[72] Yu Shanling, ""Shanghai zhishi qingnian xiaxiang shangshan jiji fenzi daibiao huiyi dengjibiao" ("Registration for Activist Meeting of Shanghai Educated Youth Going Down to the Villages and Up to the Mountains"), 1964, SMA, C21-2-3048, 57.

rather than give up, Yu was determined to persevere: "after a few months of training, my body became stronger."[73]

Yu's story was publicized in the periodical *China Youth* and in many other magazines and newspapers, stylized as a tale of personal transformation: a "delicate girl turned into a builder of the frontier" (从娇姑娘到边疆建设者 *cong jiao guniang dao bianjiang jianshe zhe*). In the aftermath of its publication in June 1964, the editorial offices at *China Youth* claimed to have received over 70 response letters; Yu Shanling herself found over 500 letters in her mailbox in Xinjiang. In response, a flattered Yu returned to the pages of *China Youth* to announce that she would continue to "arm her mind with Mao Zedong Thought" and temper her body through physical labor.[74]

Yu Shanling and other model youth like her frequently returned to their home cities to take part in mass mobilization meetings and bring inspiring stories directly into the neighborhoods and homes of young people.[75] Whether these emotional tales of self-transformation were truly persuasive is up for debate, but their content is revealing of the overall aims of urban-to-rural resettlement. By participating in the construction of China's frontiers, young people could work to transform their country and themselves.[76]

**Mobilizing Parents**

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[73] Yu Shanling, "Cong jiao guniang dao bianjiang jianshe zhe" ("From a Delicate Girl to a Builder of the Frontier"),*Zhongguo qingnian* (China Youth) 11 (June 1964): 11-12.
[74] Yu Shanling, "Juebu gufu dang he tongzhimen de qiwang" ("I Cannot Fail to Live Up to the Expectations of the Party and My Comrades"), *Zhongguo qingnian* 17 (September 1964): 22.
[75] Yu Shanling, ""Shanghai zhishi qingnian xiaxiang shangshan jiji fenzi daibiao huiyi dengjibiao" ("Registration for Activist Meeting of Shanghai Educated Youth Going Down to the Villages and Up to the Mountains"), 1964, SMA, C21-2-3048, 57. For other examples, see "Yu Shanling juexin zai Xinjiang gan yibeizi geming (caogao)" ("Draft of 'Yu Shanling is Determined to Make Revolution in Xinjiang All Her Life'"), 1965, SMA, C4-2-7, 128-130.
[76] See, for example, Chen Jinzhu, "Dao bianjiang qu, ba ziji duanlian chengwei jianqiang de geming houdai" ("Go to the Frontier! Train Yourself to become Strong Revolutionary Successors!"), May 23, 1965, SMA, B127-1-883, 32-37.

Mobilizing teenagers was only one small part of the entire process. As described above, young people in the cities often put their emotional attachments and obligations to family above the needs of the state. Even among young people eager to support frontier construction, they often noted a strong desire to gain their parents' approval before leaving home.[77] Some young people contended that they could not go to Xinjiang because they had a familial debt; they needed to "repay" (报答 *baoda*) their parents. As one Shanghainese said, "my parents' hair turned white for me" and they felt a duty to reciprocate these sacrifices.[78] In Lao Jie Alleyway in Jing'an District, one young person remarked that they could not leave Shanghai because "my other's tears are worse than an atomic bomb."[79]

As a result, if mobilization was to succeed, it would have to also penetrate the familial and social circles of the urban youth, persuading parents especially of the merits of urban-to-rural population resettlement. The Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau proclaimed that "youth work" (青年工作 *qingnian gongzuo*) had to be executed in concerted with "parental work" (家长工作 *jiazhang gongzuo*), otherwise the entire movement of urban-to-rural resettlement was bound to fail.[80]

Unfortunately, neighborhood level committees in Shanghai often reported how parents were more difficult to work with than even "social youth," describing them as

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[77] Such young people thus called for "ideological work" (思想工作 *sixiang gongzuo*) to be carried out amongst parents. See Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), "'Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang' zhanlanhui qingkuang huibao (si)" ("Report #4 on the Exhibition 'Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang'"), May 25, 1964, SMA, C26-2-128, 279-284.
[78] "Dangqian shehui qingnian de sixiang dongtai," May 20, 1965, SMA, C21-1-1094, 173-177.
[79] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu qingnian gongzuo bu (Regional Youth Work Department of the Shanghai Party Committee of the Communist Youth League), "Jianbao" ("Bulletin"), April 23, 1966, SMA, C21-2-2897, 14-18.
[80] Zhonggong Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu et al, "Yijiuliuliu nian dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang junken de gongzuo fang'an," March 7, 1966, SMA, B105-4-10, 21-27.

"irritable."[81] The Panjiaku Women's Association, a neighborhood level organization in Shanghai's Changning District, strove to convince "parents to encourage their children," but even within the organization, many cadre mothers complained. "Xinjiang is so far away and cold too. How could parents have their sons and daughters go?", one member of the association asked.[82] Higher up the bureaucratic food chain, Shanghai's Municipal Downsizing Office did not bother to guard its language, ridiculing "parents who dragged their feet" (家长拖腿 *jiazhang tuo tui*) and bogged down mobilization work.[83]

Of course, criticism was not enough to convince parents to accept urban-to-rural population resettlement. Urban Chinese officials therefore expended considerable effort to persuade parents to let go of traditional family ideals and support the resettlement of their children to Xinjiang and other far flung areas of the country.[84] In Shanghai's Luwan District, the local women's federation often brought mothers together to discuss the significance of aiding the development of Xinjiang.[85] At one such forum convened in Huangpu, Shanghai, a woman named Xia Enmin (夏恩敏)—embracing her identity as a "housewife" (家庭妇女 *jiating funv*)—spoke of the emotional challenges of accepting

[81] Luwan qu fulian (Luwan District Women's Federation), "Luwan qu fulian dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe jiazhang gongzuo zongjie" ("Summary of the Luwan District Women's Federation's Parents Work in Mobilizing Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Construction"), June 18, 1964, HDA, 042-2-288, 26-35.
[82] "Panjiaku fudaihui ruhe peihe liweihui zuohao dongyuan qingnian zhiyuan Xinjiang jianshe gongzuo" ("How the Panjiaku Womans Association Can Work with the Alleyway Committee to Mobilize Youth to Support Xinjiang's Construction"), April 1964, CDA, 46-1-159, 17-20.
[83] Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Municipal Streamlining Small Group), "Guanyu dangqian dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang junken gongzuo de qingshi baogao" ("Reporting and Instructing on the Current Mobilization of Social Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Army Land Reclamation Work"), April 30, 1966, SMA, A62-1-37, 1-3.
[84] This is in contrast to the conclusions of Judith Stacey, *Patriarchy and Socialist Revolution in China* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983).
[85] "Luwan qu fulian guanyu zhiyuan Xinjiang jianshe jiazhang gongzuo zongjie" ("Summary of the Luwan District Women's Federation's Work among Parents Aiding Xinjiang's Construction"), August 1, 1963, HDA, 26-2-708, 22-32.

her daughter's duty to aid frontier construction. Xia described a "mental struggle" as she weighed her personal preference for her offspring to stay in Shanghai (or perhaps return to the ancestral village near Suzhou) versus the needs of her country. Ultimately, Xia recognized that the Chinese Communist Party had done much to raise her daughter to become a model citizen, including to read. By resisting the request for young Shanghai'ers to aid Xinjiang, that would be the equivalent of "forgetting" everything the Party had done. "In the end," Xia announced, "I gave my daughter to the Party and to the revolution. I am completely at ease."[86]

Xia Enmin and Sun Zhilan's descriptions of how they triumphed over their own emotions were meant to put other mothers in similar situations at ease. These gendered aspects of mobilization work were often made even more explicit. As one teenage girl from Yangpu District in Shanghai described, "why is my father mobilizing me to go to the frontier?" For this individual, Wo Guoning (沃国宁), there was apparently immense emotional confusion at her father's seeming willingness to discard her. Wo's mother, on the other hand, was said to be extraordinarily reluctant to let go. Of course, Wo's story, which she voiced at a mass mobilization meeting in April 1964, had an encouraging ending. With the support of her friends and helpful local cadres, Wo ultimately recognized why her father had been right all along. She was, moreover, able to convince her mother: "if my generation of youth does not go to aid the frontier, could we really call on our elder mothers and elder fathers to?"[87]

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[86] "Huangpu qu Guling lu jiedao Dingxing fvdaihui zhuren Xia Enmin tongzhi fayan gao" ("Draft Speech of Comrade Xia Enmin, Chairwoman of Womans Association, Dingxing Sub-District, Guling Road, Huangpu District"), April 29, 1964, SMA, B127-1-162, 19-22.
[87] Wo Guoning, "Wo de sixiang xiaojie" ("A Summary of My Ideology"), April 20, 1964, SMA, C23-1-58, 7.

It was also not uncommon for these women, including Xia Enmin, to describe the bodily challenges associated with resettlement to under developed areas of China. Stories of ill and enfeeble children who could not advance in their education but somehow marshalled the strength to participate in Xinjiang's construction proliferated during this period. Sun Zhilan (孙质兰), a mother in Shanghai's Hongkou District, harped on these themes in May 1964 at a farewell ceremony. A grassroots leader in her own neighborhood committee, Sun described how her eldest daughter had "insisted on registering" to go to Xinjiang following her high school graduation, only to have her application rejected during the medical examinations. Undeterred, Sun's daughter tried again in 1964, ultimately triumphing over her health problems.[88] These stories, while of questionable authenticity, reinforced that population resettlement was tied to the total metamorphosis of China's post-war generation and the transformation of both minds and bodies.

Cities used similar language and descriptions of personal triumph with other audiences, including for so-called "capitalist families" (资属 *zi shu*) and parents and children of "industry and commerce" (工商界 *gongshang jie*).[89] Indeed, while the bourgeoisie were hardly the majority class background for individuals being sent to

[88] "Jiazhang Sun Zhilan fayan gao" ("Parent Sun Zhilan's Speech"), May 14, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2520, 21-24.

[89] Luwan qu funv lianhehui (Women's Federation of Luwan District), "Luwan qu fulian zai zi (zhi) shu zhong guanyu dongyuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe gongzuo de qingkuang" ("Situation of Mobilizing Youth to Assist Xinjiang's Construction by the Luwan District Women's Federation among Youth of Capitalist [Educated] Families"), July 10, 1963, HDA, 26-2-708, 33-38; "Hu Juewen zhuren weiyuan zai huansong gongshang jie zidi canjia Xinjiang jianshe zuotanhui shang de jianghua (caogao)" ("Draft of Chairman Hu Juewen's Speech at the Farewell Ceremony for Children of Industry and Commerce Participating in Xinjiang's Construction"), July 27, 1963, SMA, C48-2-2672, 9-17; Shanghai shi Huangpu qu gongshangye lianhehui (Shanghai Huangpu District Association of Industry and Commerce), "Guanyu tuidong chengyuan zhichi guli zinv canjia Xinjiang jianshe de gongzuo dasuan (cao'an)" ("Draft Work Plans for Encouraging Members to Support their Children Participating in Xinjiang's Construction"), April 13, 1964, SMA, C48-2-2769, 32-34.

Xinjiang, this population segment presented rich opportunities to showcase the transformative aspects of population resettlement.[90] During mobilization work, the United Front Department in Shanghai concluded that "the experience of labor is an essential means of educating and reforming the children of capitalists." By working hard to send down these types of young people, the city could simultaneously achieve its population reduction mandates while also eliminating the social basis of capitalism.[91]

Whether the gendered and political aspects of mobilization, particularly the portrayal of emotional struggles and mental anguish, were effective is hard to determine, partially because of the coercive nature of mobilization when it came to parents. After all, mobilization was not just carried out in the alleyways and neighborhoods, but also inside the workplace.

The Shanghai Railway Medical College had received its mandate to reduce the urban population, and it worked earnestly to do so. In addition to discarding 11 workers and having them "return to the village," the college also strove to dispatch the children of its staff to Xinjiang. [92] How did they achieve this? In Wuxi, local officials announced that because such a high percentage of so-called "educated youth" were the sons and daughters of workers, all industries and enterprises had to take steps to enhance

[90] Pan Wenzheng, "Jiaqiang dui zichan jiji zinv de tuanjie, jiaoyu, gaizao gongzuo" ("Strengthen the Work of Uniting with, Educating, and Reforming the Children of Capitalists"), April 11, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1055, 76-81.

[91] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei tongzhanbu (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee United Front Department) and Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu jiaqiang dui zichan jieji zinv gongzuo huiyi youguan baogao" ("Relevant Reports from the Meeting on Strengthening Work related to the Children of the Capitalist Class"), June 24, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1055, 1-14.

[92] Shanghai tiedao yixueyuan 1964nian jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo lingdao xiaozu (Leading Small Group for the Shanghai Railway Medical College's Work for Reducing the Urban Population in 1964), "1964nian jianshao chengzhen renkou gongzuo fang'an" ("Work Plan for Reducing the Urban Population in 1964"), April 20, 1964, SMA, B243-2-429, 18-19.

propaganda and education among their employees.[93] At Tongji University, the personnel department kept files on the children of all school faculty and staff, reporting who had tested into the next levels of education and who was unemployed. Among the latter, Tongji devoted resources to teaching the "social youth" about Xinjiang and working to persuade the university staff to support their children's resettlement to the far northwest.[94] At the Shanghai Institute of Finance, the campaign to move the children of staff members invaded every chalkboard and outdoor newspaper billboard and even the campus radio station. Leading cadres organized so-called study sessions, intimate forums where pressures could be placed on workers to select their child to be among the quota of seven for 1964.[95] Even in Hangzhou, which sent less than 100 young people to Xinjiang in the 1960s, the campaign invaded local work units. At the local water conservancy office, the bureau secretary was determined to set a good example by volunteering his eldest son.[96] All-staff meetings were convened across Shanghai's film and television industry to ramp up the pressure on parents of middle and high school aged children;

[93] Zhonggong Wuxi shi weiyuanhui (CCP Wuxi Municipal Committee) and Jiangsu sheng Wuxi shi renmin weiyuanhui (People's Committee of Wuxi Municipality, Jiangsu Province), "Zhuanfa shi chengshi renkou xiaxiang anazhi bangongshi guanyu yijiuliuliu nian dongyuan chengshi zhishi qingnian xiaxiang chadui he zhibian de yijian" ("Forwarding the [Wuxi] Municipal Urban Population Sent Down Settlement Office's Proposals on Mobilizing Urban Educated Youth Go Down to the Villages and *Chadui* and *Zhibian* in 1966"), February 28, 1966, WMA, B8-1-38, 19-20.
[94] Tongji daxue renshi chu (Personnel Department of Tongji University), "Guanyu dongyuan xiansan zhishi qingnian qu Xinjiang jianshe de gongzuo qingkuang baogao" ("Report on the Work Situation of Mobilizing Idle Educated Youth to Go to Xinjiang for Construction"), June 4, 1964, SMA, B243-2-429, 52-53.
[95] Shanghai caijing xueyuan (Shanghai Institute of Finance), "Shanghai caijing xueyuan guanyu dongyuan fuhe tiaojian de zhigong jiashu huixiang shengchan he fuhe tiaojian de zhigong zinv canjia Xinjiang jianshe de gongzuo jihua" ("Shanghai Institute of Finance Work Plan for Mobilizing Eligible Family Members of Workers to Return Home and for Mobilizing Eligible Family Members of Workers to Participate in Xinjiang's Construction"), May 2, 1964, SMA, B243-2-429, 27.
[96] Li Zuchun, "Zheci qu Xinjiang jianshe bingtuan de qingnian he jiazhang jianyao qingkuang" ("Concise Summary of Youth and their Parents Participating in Xinjiang's Construction Corps"), November 18, 1965, HMA, 036-002-026, 6-8.

when the small group discussions and one-on-one meetings failed to produce more registrations, management offered financial remuneration and small gifts to parents.[97]

Because the campaign infiltrated nearly every work unit and political, economic, gender, and ideological organization in Shanghai, the social pressures to go to Xinjiang were palpable.[98] Thus, while the Chinese Communist Party insisted that every single individual resettled during this period was a "volunteer," making a distinction between a willing participant and a coerced one is nearly impossible.[99] The campaign, moreover, was an inescapable part of everyday life in urban China, penetrating every visual, textual, and performative medium.

**Mobilization on Display**

Through exhibitions, books, television specials, public lectures, and performances, Xinjiang became a visual spectacle put on display in urban China. Texts such as *Beautiful and Rich Xinjiang*, published by the Shanghai Education Press in 1964, aimed to introduce the physical environment of an unfamiliar part of China and to "cause students to broaden their horizons."[100] Made-for-TV specials introduced model "educated youth" who were transforming themselves on the Chinese frontier, while films—often made available to students free of charge—offered evidence of Xinjiang's transformation

[97] Shanghai dianying xitong gongzuo weiyuanhui bangongshi (Office of the Shanghai Film System Work Committee), "Guanyu dianying xitong zhigong zinv zhiyuan Xinjiang qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Children of Workers in the Film System Aiding Xinjiang"), June 25, 1964, SMA, B177-1-185, 15-18.
[98] Shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the Municipal Streamlining Small Group), "Guanyu dangqian dongyuan shehui qingnian canjia Xinjiang junken gongzuo de qingshi baogao" ("Reporting and Instructing on the Current Mobilization of Social Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Army Land Reclamation Work"), April 30, 1966, SMA, A62-1-37, 1-3.
[99] Petersen, "A General Typology of Migration," 256-266.
[100] Untitled letter from Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe (Shanghai Education Press) to Shanghai shi jiaoyu ju (Shanghai Municipal Education Bureau), December 21, 1963, SMA, B167-1-607, 42-43. See also Shanghai shi jiaoyu ju (Shanghai Municipal Education Bureau), "Guanyu tongyi zai 1964nian nei chuban 'hao ernv zhizai sifang' (zanming) deng san ben shu de pifu" ("Agree to Publish *Sons and Daughters Have Lofty Ambitions that Reach the Four Corners of the Earth* [Title TBC] and Two Other Books in 1964"), January 3, 1964, SMA, B167-1-607, 44-45.

in the cinema. [101] In Shanghai, the merits of resettlement were also publicized on a near daily basis in at least three local newspapers, *Liberation Daily, Wenhui Pao,* and *Xinmin Evening News*, as well as national magazines like *China Youth.*

Beyond the written word and the television screen, performances and spoken word were an integral part of mobilization work. The Shanghai Youth Palace often brought "social youth" together to talk about life in Xinjiang and to learn from long-time residents of the far northwest. One speaker in August 1963 named Wang Junhong (王俊宏) used the occasion to dispel prominent myths about Xinjiang. Prefacing nearly every thought by stating "while some people say…," Wang emphasized inter-ethnic unity, hidden riches, and a beautiful climate.[102] Local dance troupes depicted the struggle in Xinjiang alongside performances about the Vietnam War, drawing direct comparisons between state-building on the Chinese frontier and resisting American imperialism abroad.[103] The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, anxious to entertain and enlighten audiences of young people and their parents, brought plays and operas to the cities.[104]

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[101] See Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei xuanchuan bu (Propaganda Department of the CYL Shanghai Committee), "Tongzhi" ("Notification"), April 22, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2439, 45; and "Zai dianshitai qingnian tebie jiemu zhong de jianghua" ("Speech during the Special TV Program for Youth"), April 4, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2439, 1-6; Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu qingnian gongzuo bu (Regional Youth Work Department of the Shanghai Party Committee of the Communist Youth League), "Guanyu mianfei fangying youguan xuanchuan qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe huandengpian de tongzhi" ("Notice to Screen Free Slideshows Publicizing Youth Participation in Xinjiang's Construction"), May 19, 1965, SMA, C21-1-1095, 108-109.

[102] "'Hao ernv zhizai sifang' jiangzuo (qi): Talimu jianwen" ("*Sons and Daughters Have Lofty Ambitions that Reach the Four Corners of the Earth* Lecture #7: Information about the Tarim"), August 25, 1963, SMA, C26-2-88, 82-96.

[103] "Shanghai qingnian xiaxiang shangshan canjia bianjiang jianshe dongyuan dahui wenyi yanchu jiemudan" ("Program for the Performance at the Shanghai Youth Down to the Villages, Up to the Mountains, Participate in Borderland Construction Mass Mobilization Meeting"), May 25, 1965, SMA, C21-1-1095, C21-1-1095, 165.

[104] Shanghai zhishi qingnian canjia waidi jianshe gongzuozu (Work Team for Shanghai Educated Youth Participating in the Construction of Other Areas), "Huiyi tongzhi" ("Meeting Notification"), December 12, 1963, SMA, C21-2-2271, 6; Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan

Like European colonial regimes before it, the People's Republic of China deployed massive, winding displays and exhibits to build public support for distant state-building projects.[105] The visual zenith of mobilization work, exhibitions in Shanghai and other cities aimed to showcase the results of the state's efforts to transform people and place.

In late summer and autumn 1963, the Shanghai Youth Palace organized the first showing of the *Xinjiang is Good Exhibition* (新疆好展览会 *Xinjiang hao zhanlanhui*). Taking place at the Sino-Soviet Friendship Hall in downtown Shanghai, the expo invited students, unemployed young people, and parents to learn more about the environment and society in Xinjiang's Tarim Basin.[106] Indeed, much of the expo was taken up by a segment called "The Colorful Tarim," which introduced the area's natural resources, development progress, and its happy peoples.[107]

The predominant focus on Xinjiang reflected that, early on in the campaign, mobilization officials felt that they had to educate their audiences about life in the far northwest and eradicate the negative associations people tended to have about this part of

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zhengzhi bu yishuju yuan Chu jutuan (Chu Opera Troupe of the Arts and Theater Academy, Political Department, Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps), "'Xi-lin yu Pa-er-ha-te' juqing jianjie" ("Introduction to the Plot of 'Xi-lin and Pa-er-ha-te'"), no date but December 1963, SMA, C21-2-2271, 11.

After the campaign had commenced for several years, the troupes began to feature native Shanghai'ers, who not only returned to entertain, but strengthen the social foundation of urban-to-rural population resettlement. See "Canjia Xinjiang jianshe de Shanghai qingnian xiang qinren yanchu ziji bianren de jiemu" ("Shanghai Youth Participating in Xinjiang's Construction Put on their Own Performance to Loved Ones"), June 4, 1965, in XMWB.

[105] See, for example, work on the 1931 Colonial Exposition in Paris via P.A. Morton, *Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000); Donna V. Jones, "The Prison House of Modernism: Colonial Spaces and the Construction of the Primitive at the 1931 Paris Colonial Exposition," *Modernism/modernity* 14, no. 1 (January 2007): 55-69.

[106] Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), "Tongzhi" ("Notification"), August 31, 1963, SMA, C26-2-102, 11. See also SMA C26-2-102, 15.

[107] "Wanzi qianhong Talimu" ("The Coloroful Tarim"), undated but probably sometime in autumn 1963, SMA, C26-2-101, 157-170.

China. In just a few days in early September, 6,000 people were shepherded through the doors of *Xinjiang is Good* for an exclusive first look. The organizers cheerily reported, based on the responses of their first guests, that the exhibition was "changing some previously held erroneous views about Xinjiang," including many of the exaggerations about the weather, minority peoples, and foods of the region. One spectator from Changning District, for example, revealed their discovery that "Xinjiang is not entirely desert and wilderness."[108]

This praise aside, the first exhibition in Shanghai was hardly perfect. Some spectators criticized the exhibition for being too one-sided and offering only a glowing perspective on Xinjiang. City residents recognized the "difficulties of life" (艰苦生活 *jianku shenghuo*) in the region, and believed *Xinjiang is Good* ought not avoid a discussion of the challenges of urban-to-rural resettlement. Others complained that *Xinjiang is Good* did not introduce the new lives of the urban educated youth in Xinjiang. As one spectator said, "after all, our biggest concern is: how are the Shanghai youth doing there?" This critique invited the organizers to develop new exhibition segments reporting on the work and daily lives of the young Shanghai'ers already in the far northwest, and to demonstrate the ways in which the Chinese youth were being physically and ideologically transformed by the campaign.[109]

From September 7 through October 5, 1963, *Xinjiang is Good* retained a stellar viewership, drawing in a crowd of over 25,000 urban residents. The comments and

[108] Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), "'Xinjiang hao' zhanlanhui (yuzhan) de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Preview of the 'Xinjiang is Good' Exhibition"), September 11, 1963, SMA, C26-2-101, 203-207.
[109] Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), "'Xinjiang hao' zhanlanhui (yuzhan) de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Preview of the 'Xinjiang is Good' Exhibition"), September 11, 1963, SMA, C26-2-101, 203-207.

criticisms of this expanded audience dovetailed with what the organizers had already heard. While some spectators asked sharp questions which state-planners may not have wanted to hear ("are they [ethnic minorities] barbarians?," or "do they bully the Han?"), more often the people begged for more information on the minutiae of everyday life in Xinjiang: transportation, food, and leisure.[110]

With the endorsement of Mayor Cao Diqiu, *Xinjiang is Good* exhibition was revived in 1964 to aid spring mobilization work.[111] Opening on April 12, 1964, the exhibition was now called *Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang* (上海青年在新疆 *Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang*), a reflection that the organizers had heeded some of the demands of visitors.[112] Photographs filled the walls of the exhibit, showing excited *zhiqing* leaving Shanghai by train, young people working diligently on farms in Xinjiang and reaping bountiful harvests, and proud mothers, relieved by the care which their children had received in Xinjiang.[113]

*Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang* attracted 35,000 spectators in its first six days of opening;[114] over the course of its first month, 138,000 individuals walked through the exhibitions doors, including 40,000 "social youth," 56,000 students, and many parents

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[110] "Xinjiang hao zhanlanhui (yuzhan) qingkuang" ("Situation of the Preview for the Xinjiang is Good Exhibition"), October 10, 1963, SMA, C26-2-101, 214-219.

It was sometimes a struggle to get such huge audiences into the exhibition. See the plea sent from the Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace) to Lu jiedao banshichu ([Shanghai Municipal] Sub-District Offices), September 12, 1963, SMA, C26-2-102, 17.

[111] Letter from Wang Ke 陈启林 Chen Jimao to Cao Diqiu, March 12, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2521, 2; letter from Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei bangongting (Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) toWang Ke and Chen Jimao March 13, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2521, 1.

[112] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 21.

[113] Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), "'Meili rufao de Xinjiang' zhanlanhui banmian xiaoyang" ("Page Proofs for the Exhibition 'Beautiful and Rich Xinjiang'"), 1963, SMA, H1-23-18; Planning document for an exhibition about Xinjiang prepared by the Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), no date but from sometime in 1964, SMA, C26-2-101, 41-64.

[114] Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), "'Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang' zhanlanhui qingkuang huibao (er)" ("Report #2 on the Exhibition 'Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang'"), April 21, 1964, SMA, C26-2-128, 267-272.

and family members. According to the organizers at the Shanghai Youth Palace, the "young people who already signed up [to go to Xinjiang] are feeling even better about their decision since seeing the exhibition."[115] By July, the exhibition had reached over 250,000 local citizens. One spectator claimed that:

> During the first visit, I started to understand Xinjiang. During the second visit, the urgency and my resolve to go to Xinjiang strengthened. During the third visit, I had already been approved to become a new soldier of the Xinjiang Construction Corps."[116]

The *Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang* exhibition at the Sino-Soviet Friendship Hall was so successful that its organizers began staging supplementary events at the Shanghai Museum and elsewhere around town.[117] Curators in Jiangsu Province had organized a similar exhibition on urban "educated youth" involved in agricultural labor in Nanjing, and then took it on tour to Wuxi, Suzhou, Nantong, and Changzhou.[118]

While it is unclear if Shanghai and other cities organized exhibitions in 1965, they revived *Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang* in the spring of 1966. Opening on May 4 at the Shanghai Museum, the new iteration of *Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang* featured over 1,000 objects and photographs describing the lived realities of urban-to-rural population

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[115] Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), "'Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang' zhanlanhui qingkuang huibao (san)" ("Report #3 on the Exhibition 'Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang'"), May 12, 1964, SMA, C26-2-128, 273-277. See also Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), "'Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang' zhanlanhui qingkuang huibao (si)" ("Report #4 on the Exhibition 'Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang'"), May 25, 1964, SMA, C26-2-128, 279-284.

[116] "'Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjang zhanlanhui jieshou qingnian huanying jiri qi zhengli neibu zanting zhanchu" ("'Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang' Exhibition Welcomed by Youth but from Today will be Closed for Rearrangements"), July 1, 1964, SMA, C26-2-102, 68.

[117] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei xuexiao gongzuobu (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee School Work Department) and Shanghai qingnian gong (Shanghai Youth Palace), "Tongzhi" ("Notification"), July 10, 1964, SMA, C26-2-102, 69; Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 44.

[118] Gongqingtuan Jiangsu shengwei bangongshi (Office of the CYL Jiangsu Provincial Committee), "Guanyu Jiangsu sheng zhishi qingnian canjia nongye laodong zhanlanhui waidi zhanchu shi jingfei kaizhi wenti de qingshi baogao" ("Instructing and Reporting on the Expenses associated with the Traveling Exhibit on Jiangsu Province's Educated Youth participating in Agricultural Labor"), June 15, 1964, JPA, 3012-003-0268, 78.

resettlement.[119] In less than 10 days, the 1966 showing of *Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang* drew 20,000 spectators. The responses, if we are to believe the press reports, were just as positive as in previous years. The collective response of parents, according to the *Xinmin Evening News*, was one of "more gusto, more happiness, and more relief."[120]

**Success Stories**

Having instituted a diverse set of activities, utilized multiple mediums, and relied upon countless intermediaries, the Chinese state reported great success in inspiring the Chinese youth to leave behind their urban lives and begin anew in Xinjiang. As early as June 1963, following Shanghai's first Activists Meeting, local officials reported that some unemployed youth were so adamant about going to Xinjiang that they had "penned petitions in blood" (写了血书 *xie le xue shu*) to plead their case.[121] In Beijing, cadres at the Municipal Committee boasted that supply far exceeded demand. They reported that many "social youth" whose applications had been rejected had taken to writing to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps directly. While the steady stream of letters annoyed the *bingtuan*, it showed that mobilization was working: young people did want to go to Xinjiang.[122]

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[119] "'Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang' zhanlan mingqi zhanchu" ("The Exhibition *Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang* Opens Tomorrow"), May 3, 1966, in XMWB.
[120] "'Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang' zhanlan shoudao ge fangmian de relie huanying" ("Exhibition *Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang* Warmly Received by All"), May 13, 1966, in XMWB.
[121] Shi laodong ju bangongshi renmin laixin laifang liao (People's Letters and Visits to the Office of the Municipal Labor Bureau), "Dongyuan benshi qingnian qu Xinjiang de dongtai fanying" ("Responses to the Mobilization of Shanghai's Youth to Go to Xinjiang"), July 4, 1963, SMA, B127-1-359, 38-39. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)
[122] "Xuduo qingnian laixin yaoqiu qu Xinjiang huo Beidahuang canjia nongye shengchan" ("Many Youth Are Writing with Demands to Go to Xinjiang or Beidahuang to Participate in Agricultural Production"), April 17, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01754, 36-37; Untitled letter from Shi renwei bangongting laixin ke (Department for Letters Received of the [Beijing] Municipal People's Committee Office) to 市劳动局办公室 Shi laodongju bangongshi ([Beijing] Municipal Labor Bureau), April 23, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01754, 38-41.

In Tianjin, the whirlwind of mobilization activities attracted students to "run down to the neighborhood office and register and demand that they immediately be sent to the frontlines of production and labor."[123] Likewise, in Xuzhou, the Municipal Party Committee gleefully informed higher-ups in the provincial government how their city had exceeded the mandate of dispatching 1,200 young people to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps in summer 1965 by nearly 100 individuals.[124]

Success carried with it some challenges. In Shanghai, for example, scores of young people declared that they would not even bother to take entrance examinations (考试 *kaoshi*) which determined whether they could advance in their studies. This became both a point of pride for the city as well as a point of concern, as Shanghai needed to preserve a steady pipeline of high school and college students. Although praising the eagerness of youth to head off to Xinjiang, the city reminded young people to "obey the needs of the state" (根据国家需要 *genju guojia xuyao*) and to "put the needs of the state first" (把国家需要放在第一位 *ba guojia xuyao fangzai diyi wei*); that is, they still had to take the entrance exams[125] In Ningbo, too, middle school students agitated over and

[123] Gongqingtuan Tianjin shiwei bangongshi (Office of the CYL Tianjin Municipal Committee), "Yingjie gao chuzhong biyesheng sixiang qingkuang" ("Ideological Situation of Upcoming Middle and High School Graduates"), June 20, 1964, TMA-1, 198-1-1173, 122-126.
[124] Zhonggong Xuzhou shiwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (CCP Xuzhou Municipal Committee Streamlining and Settlement Office), "Xuzhou shi dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang nong muye jianshe gongzuo zongjie" ("Summary of Xuzhou Municipality's Mobilization of Educated Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Construction Work"), August 14, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0104, 71-79.
[125] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Quanmian zhengque di tong yingjie biyesheng jinxing 'yike hongxin, liang zhong zhunbei' de jiaoyu" ("Fully and Properly Carry out 'Red Heart and Two Types of Preparation' Education amongst This Year's Graduates"), June 13, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2525, 1-4.

complained about the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps' preference for high school graduates.[126]

Reports of high-paying, secure jobs in Xinjiang were also magnets for rural *hukou* holders, especially when the *People's Daily* or *Xinhua* broadcast news about urban-to-rural resettlement. In Jiangsu Province, the Communist Youth League had to deflect such demands from young people in smaller cities and in the provincial countryside.[127] Poverty also compelled some proper urban residents to demand to go to Xinjiang. In Shanghai in 1963, local cadres delicately tried to handle one case involving a troubled student. While the school rejected his application because he was often truant and had not yet finished his education, the Labor Bureau sympathized more with his plight. Coming from an impoverished single-parent family, it was seemingly understandable why this individual might want to escape to the Chinese frontier.[128]

The eagerness of some young people in the cities to go to Xinjiang thus occasionally reflected a darker side of China's socialist economy. But, these problems aside, urban officials tended to focus on the transformational achievements of urban-to-rural population resettlement, proclaiming that the campaign was succeeding at changing the minds and bodies of the Chinese youth. Teenagers in Shanghai, for example, had

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[126] Ningbo shi jiaoyu ju (Ningbo Municipal Education Bureau), "Guanyu yaoqiu zengjia bufen ying chuzhong biyesheng zhiyuan Xinjiang jianshe renshu de baogao" ("Report on Requests to Increase the Numbers of Upcoming Middle School Graduates Assisting Xinjiang's Construction"), August 24, 1966, NMA-2, 194-017-003, 97-98.

[127] Gongqingtuan Jiangsu sheng weiyuanhui (CYL Jiangsu Provincial Committee) and Zhonggong Jiangsu sheng jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Jiangsu Provincial Streamlining and Placement Small Group), "Guanyu meiyou zhibian renwu diqu zuo hao qingnian laixin, laifang gongzuo de lianhe tongzhi" ("Joint Notification on Doing Youth Letters and Visitation Work Well for the Areas without a *Zhibian* Mandate"), August 12, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0104, 45.

[128] Shi laodong ju bangongshi renmin laixin laifang liao (People's Letters and Visits to the Office of the Municipal Labor Bureau), "Dongyuan benshi qingnian qu Xinjiang de dongtai fanying" ("Responses to the Mobilization of Shanghai's Youth to Go to Xinjiang"), July 4, 1963, SMA, B127-1-359, 38-39. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)

learned to "assault the old way of thinking—passed down over thousands of years—of despising agricultural labor. They hoisted high the revolution's banner of becoming revolutionaries and workers."[129]

**Mobilization Challenges**

While urban officials did earnestly believe in the significance and success resettling the Chinese youth to Xinjiang, moving more than 100,000 individuals across country was hardly a simple process. Inevitably, many problems cropped up during the "mobilization" process.

Dozens if not hundreds of *bingtuan* cadres would descend on the cities in the spring and fall of each year to work in tandem with municipal labor bureaus, education bureaus, Communist Youth League offices, women's committees, schools, and other grassroots organizations.[130] The work teams of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps intimately involved themselves in the "inspection and approval" (审批 *shenpi*) part of the process, scrutinizing the political and health records of registered applicants. While from Xinjiang's perspective, this was sensible and would help to avoid the Production

[129] Zhongong Shanghai shiwei jingjian xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Party Committee Streamlining Small Group), "Dongyuan Shanghai zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang junken de sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo zongjie" ("Summary of the Ideological and Political Work surrounding the Mobilization of Shanghai's Educated Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Army Land Reclamation"), January 1965, SMA, A62-1-33, 61-65. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)

[130] Zizhiqu anzhi bangongshi ([Xinjiang Uyghur] Autonomous Region Settlement Office), "Guanyu jieyun Jiangsu zhishi qingnian youguan wenti de chuli banfa" ("Handling Various Problems in the Receiving of Jiangsu's Educated Youth"), March 26, 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0122, 6-10. See also untitled letter from the Zhonggong Suzhou diwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (CCP Suzhou Regional Committee Streamlining and Placement Office) to the Sheng jingjian anzhi bangongshi ([Jiangsu] Provincial Streamlining and Placement Office), July 4, 1965, CMA, E01-12-050, 59-64. See also in JPA 3030-003-0105, 64-68; Shengwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi ([CCP Jiangsu] Provincial Committee Streamlining and Settlement Office), "Guanyu jiedai Xinjiang gongzuo tuan wenti de qingshi" ("Restruct for Instructions on Receiving the Xinjiang Work Delegation"), April 19, 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0122, 11-12.

and Construction Corps absorbing inefficient or unreliable workers, the demands of the *bingtuan* irked the sending communities.

Individuals in Jiangsu Province especially complained about the stringent demands of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.[131] In Nanjing's Xiaguan and Pukou Districts, for example, local officials became in embroiled in shouting matches with the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.[132] In Wuxi, locals also insisted that Xinjiang's "demands were excessive" (要求过高 *yaoqiu guogao*) and that they were rejecting too many applicants on baseless grounds.[133] Nanjing as a whole had approved 2,500 individuals to go to Xinjiang in 1966, but the *bingtuan* rejected the applications of nearly 1,000 of them, claiming that they did not meet the minimum educational requirements.[134]

Urban officials and frontier officials sparred over other matters. In 1964, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps began preparing a compilation of short

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[131] Zhonggong Jiangsu shengwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Jiangsu Provincial Committee Streamlining and Settlement Small Group), "Guanyu yijiuliusi nian dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang nongken jianshe gongzuo de huibao" ("Report on Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Land Reclamation Construction Work in 1964"), May 13, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0104, 50-57; Zhonggong Nanjing shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee Streamlining and Settlement Small Group), "Guanyu dongyuan zhishi qingnian zhiyuan Xinjiang nongye jianshe de qingkuang baogao" ("Situation Report of Mobilizing Educated Youth to Assist Xinjiang's Agricultural Construction"), July 26, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 1-2.

[132] Zhonggong Nanjing shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee's Streamlining and Settlement Small Group), "Guanyu Xinjiang gongzuo tuan zhu Xiaguan, Pukou gongzuo zu shenpi zhishi qingnian de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Situation of the Xinjiang Work Delegation's Teams in Xiaguan and Pukou [Districts] Examination and Approval of Educated Youth"), August 3, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 3.

[133] Wuxi shi renkou xiaxiang anzhi bangongshi (Wuxi Municipal Office for Sending Down and Settling the Population), "Dongyuan zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang nongken jianshe gongzuo huibao" ("Report on Mobilizing Educated Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Land Reclamation Construction Work"), October 14, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0104, 46-48.

[134] Zhonggong Nanjing shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee Streamlining and Settlement Small Group), "Guanyu Xinjiang gongzuo tuan zai benshi shencha jieshou zhishi qingnian gongzuo zhong jige wenti de huibao" ("Report on Several Problems in the Xinjiang Work Delegation's Examination and Acceptance of Nanjing's Educated Youth"), August 5, 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0122, 39-44.

vignettes called *Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang* (上海青年在新疆 *Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang*) for publication. The book was intended to give audiences in Shanghai a flavor for life in Xinjiang and to inspire young people with tales of labor, personal growth, and self-transformation. After a rigorous bottom-to-top review process, apparently involving nearly ever agricultural division, the Political Department of the Production and Construction Corps sent what it believed was a polished draft of the text to the Children's Publishing House in Shanghai.[135] When the editors in Shanghai received it, they immediately lampooned the text. "Much of the content has nothing to do with reality," remarked one internal critic.[136] The book, unsurprisingly, was not published for more than a year, having to undergo subsequent rounds of view and back-and-forth editorial work.[137]

There were other problems within the cities, including with the responsible cadres themselves. Chen Jiaotong (陈交通), a Communist Youth League Secretary in a Zhabei District neighborhood, revealed that the growing quotas each year to mobilize more youth cultivated mental fatigue. Loyal to the cause, Chen announced that he "did not want to fear that this year's work to mobilize youth to support Xinjiang will be double [what it was last year]."[138] Municipal party committees, labor bureaus, and other urban

[135] Untitled letter from the Shaonian ertong chubanshe (Children's Publishing House) to the Shanghai shi chuban ju (Shanghai Municipal Publishing Bureau), December 14, 1964, SMA, B167-1-729, 161.
[136] Untitled letter from the Shaonian ertong chubanshe (Children's Publishing House) to the Shanghai shi chuban ju (Shanghai Municipal Publishing Bureau), December 18, 1964, SMA, B167-1-729, 158-159.
[137] Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bigntuan zhengzhi bu (Political Department of the Production and Construction Corps, Xinjiang Military District), ed., *Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang* (Shanghai Youth in Xinjiang) (Shanghai: Shaonian ertong chubanshe, 1966).
[138] "Yige tuanwei shuji xuexi Jiao Yulu de fayan: 'Zhua qingnian de sixiang geming, shouxian yao zhua ziji de sixiang geming'" ("A CYL Secretary Studies Jiao Yulu's Remarks: 'To Grasp the Youth Ideological Revolution, You Must First Grasp Your Own Ideological Revolution'"), February 17, 1966, SMA, C21-1-1124, 216-220.

work units had to begin expending considerable effort to keep grassroots cadres motivated, especially as the campaign entered its final year.

Of course, the biggest challenges to urban-to-rural resettlement were not internal bureaucratic frictions, but rather the inevitable problems associated with moving so many young people from relatively developed cities to vastly underdeveloped frontiers. The lived, on-the-ground experiences of the "educated youth" in Xinjiang and elsewhere contrasted sharply with the glowing rhetoric of state-planners. While this line of argument is developed further in Chapter Four, it is important to note that stories of hardship in Xinjiang did threaten to derail mobilization work. In Wuxi, for example, hundreds of sent down individuals abruptly returned to the city in 1965, showing the bankruptcy of state propaganda. The sudden return prompted unemployed young people, the targets of mobilization work, to ask "in the past [the government] said the villages are great, this year they are saying Xinjiang is good. Who knows if it's good or bad?"[139]

The Chinese state's will to transform people and place through urban-to-rural population resettlement was certainly challenged. The campaign to permanently move 100,000 young people to the frontier, while tested consistently by the campaign participants themselves, nearly suffocated under its own weight prior to 1966.

[139] Wuxi shi chengshi renkou xiaxiang anzhi bangongshi (Wuxi Municipal Office for Sending Down and Settling the Urban Population), "Wuxi shi dongyuan chengshi zhishi qingnian canjia bianjiang nongken jianshe qingkuang huibao" ("Report on Wuxi Municipality's Mobilization of Urban Educated Youth to Participate in Frontier Land Reclamation Construction"), July 7, 1965, JPA, 15-16.

Chapter 4: Experience

## Introduction

On July 3, 1965, the Premier of the People's Republic of China, Zhou Enlai, made a much-anticipated visit to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.[1]

On his way back to China from the United Arab Republic, Zhou decided to stop over briefly in Chinese Central Asia.[2] He, like many other members of the Central Committee, had never visited Xinjiang, preferring to govern the region from afar. But visiting now made perfect sense. The Premier could see, first hand, the initial results of a campaign he had helped to engineer: the resettlement of tens of thousands of young people from China's cities to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.

Flanked by Vice Premier Chen Yi (陈毅) and a handful of local officials, Zhou left the regional capital on July 5 to inspect Shihezi. A model planned town several hundred kilometers to the north of Urumqi, Shihezi was purely a Chinese creation. It had arisen from the sands of the Gobi Desert in the 1950s, constructed by the People's Liberation Army as a lifeline and transport hub for the military farms of the 8th Agricultural Division in the vicinity.[3] By 1965, greater Shihezi was also home to about 3,000 "educated youth" from Shanghai, a contingent the Premier planned to meet.[4]

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[1] ZEN, vol. 2, 742-743.
[2] ZEN, vol. 2, 738-741.
[3] Kardos, "Transformation in China's Northwest Borderland," 104-133; Thomas Matthew James Cliff, "Neo Oasis: The Xinjiang *Bingtuan* in the Twenty-First Century," *Asian Studies Review* 33, no. 1 (March 2009): 83-106, doi: 10.1080/10357820802714807.
[4] Nong ba shi Shihezi shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nong ba shi kenqu Shihezi shizhi* (Gazetteer of the Eighth Agricultural Division's Reclamation Area and Shihezi City) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1994), 197. On the number of *zhiqing* at the 8th Agricultural Division, see Jin and Jin, eds., *Zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shiliao jilu*, vol. 3, 1913.

A visual spectacle, Zhou's tour of Shihezi offered tangible evidence that state-led resettlement was ushering in development and progress. Widely-circulated photographs captured the Premier wading through waist-high fields of wheat and enjoying tea and snacks with his protégés—the *zhiqing*—in between rows of towering trees.[5] From this imagery, it was clear that China's investments in Xinjiang, whether made in hard currency or in blood and sweat, were paying dividends. The harsh landscapes of Xinjiang were being tamed; the desert was being conquered.

The Premier's visit made clear that the success of state-led population resettlement was to be measured in other ways as well. The most famous snapshot from Zhou's time on the ground found him standing arms akimbo, surrounded by a group of starry-teenaged girls. These model "educated youth" from Shanghai listened intently—if we are to believe the reporters from *China Youth Daily*—as Zhou Enlai reflected on the physical and ideological transformation of the nation's youth.

To be sure, Zhou did want to learn from his audience. He asked what they had been up to since relocating to Xinjiang, and learned that the *zhiqing* were busily growing cotton, wheat, corn, and a variety of fruits and vegetables. Impressed by their labor, Zhou remarked that they looked well and had probably "grown taller and fatter" (长高了, 长胖了 *chang gao le, chang pang le*) over the past year.[6] The conversation turned more serious, when Zhou, facing the young woman standing closest to him, asked "what does your family do?". The 24-year-old woman, Yang Yongqing (杨永青), replied that she

[5] Yao, *Shanghai zhiqing zai Xinjiang*, 51.
[6] The following paragraphs are derived from *Zhou zongli he Chen Yi fu zongli zai Xinjiang mianli zhishi qingnian* (Premier Zhou [Enlai] and Vice Premier Chen Yi Encouraged the Educated Youth in Xinjiang), November 27, 1965 (printed by the CCP Qingyang Regional Social Education Work Team), AC. See also ZZQZ, 181-186.

had been born into a capitalist family in Shanghai and that her parents now resided in Hong Kong. Yang continued to recount her autobiography: she initially hoped to go to college after finishing her studies in Shanghai, but an illness in 1962 had kept her out of university. After several years roaming about the city and weighing whether to join her family in the British colony, Yang had a moment of self-realization. If she was to become a well-rounded and better person, she had to "give up [on having] a comfortable job." Yang decided that she wanted to be "tempered in a tough place" (艰苦的地方锻炼 *jianku de difang duanlian*), and signed up to go to Xinjiang during the sweltering mobilization drive.

After hearing about another *zhiqing*'s family background, Zhou perked up. The stories he was hearing, per a pair of reporters from the *China Youth Daily,* reminded the Premier that the purpose of resettlement was as much to transform the minds and bodies of young women like Yang Yongqing as it was to tap into Xinjiang's rich landscapes. As Zhou said, Yang and her comrades were proof that:

> an individual may have been born into a family from the exploiting class or have complicated social relations, [but] we should see what they are like today. A person cannot choose what they are born into, but they can choose their future. You can have a bright future, if you can draw a line between yourself and your exploitative family origins, be clear with the organization about your social relations, wholeheartedly serve the revolutionary cause of the proletariat, and constantly practice to transform yourself.

The visual and written record of Premier Zhou Enlai's visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps reassured the nation of the merits of urban-to-rural population resettlement, the health and wellbeing of the "educated youth," and the depth of their contributions to making Xinjiang anew. Such reassurances were sorely needed because, by this time, stories about the difficulty of life on the Chinese frontier abounded.

The hardships of agricultural labor, combined with deteriorating living standards—whether measured in terms of housing, food, or clothing—tested the resolve of the urban "educated youth." The sending and receiving communities took steps to improve the material and social lives of the *zhiqing*, but they could not completely eradicate the sorrows of the "educated youth." Nevertheless, the complaints of the rusticates could not erode the will of the state to transform the frontier and the individual through population resettlement.

**The Train Ride**

The lives of the educated youth began anew as soon as they stepped up onto the train cars which would shepherd them cross country. Most *zhiqing*—at least those traveling from Southeastern China—would take a short-distance train into Jiangsu Province, where they hopped onto the Longhai Line (陇海铁路 *Long-Hai tielu*). Stretching from coastal Jiangsu up through the ancient capitals of Luoyang and Xi'an, the Longhai Line concluded at Lanzhou, a gritty industrial city on the edges of China proper.[7] From here, the "educated youth" had to transfer to new trains traveling the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway (兰新铁路 *Lan-Xin tielu*), a track which would bring them closer to their final destinations, still some 2,000 kilometers away.[8]

Lasting upwards of 10 days, the trip to Xinjiang was often a formative experience in and of itself. Indeed, if resettlement was meant to transform the minds (and bodies) of the *zhiqing,* the long train ride to Xinjiang helped to accomplish that goal. Many of the *zhiqing* did not know a world outside of their home cities and few had experienced life

[7] Piper Rae Gaubatz, *Beyond the Great Wall: Urban Form and Transformation on the Chinese Frontiers* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 54.
[8] Ai Jingshun, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang* (The Children of Shanghai in Xinjiang) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2009), 260-261.

beyond the boundaries of Eastern China. Cross-country travel, then, brought the educated youth into intimate contact with their motherland, China, arousing their nationalist sentiment and stirring them politically in ways which no mobilization activity or school lecture had ever accomplished before.[9] Young people from Tianjin wrote letters back to their families in late 1963 describing—though with some degree of hyperbole—how the train ride had "broadened our horizons and opened our hearts and minds." The Tianjin *zhiqing* exclaimed that during this "journey of almost ten-thousand *li*, we feasted our eyes on our motherland's beautiful rivers and mountains."[10]

Given that so few individuals in Mao's China had experienced cross-country travel, the train ride was always one of the most discussed issues when *zhiqing* returned home to participate in mobilization activities or to visit family. For instance, late in the summer of 1963, an audience of primary and middle school students at the Shanghai Youth Palace listened intently as a returning local named Wang Junhong (王俊宏) rattled off all of the provinces he/she had crossed while *en route* to Xinjiang.[11] Wu Yueying (吴月英), a Shanghai *zhiqing* of the 1st Agricultural Division, spoke exclusively about the train ride during her speech at the 1964 Meeting of Shanghai's Social Youth Activists. "Many of us, from the time we were young until we grew older, had never gone beyond Shanghai's gates, or even taken a train," Wu told her audience. But through the journey

[9] On travel and nationalism, see Paulo Drinot, ed., *Che's Travels: The Making of a Revolutionary in 1950s Latin America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).
[10] Letter dated December 31, 1963, included in Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau) et al, "Guanyu qu Xinjiang wei wo shi shehui qingnian xunzhao anzhi menlu he husong zhibian qingnian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Trip to Xinjiang to Find Settlement Opportunities Tianjin's Social Youth and the Work Situation of Escorting *Zhibian* Youth"), February 10, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 1-15. See also in TMA-1 198-2-1979, 1-15.
[11] "Hao ernv zhizai sifang' jiangzuo (qi): Talimu jianwen" ("*Sons and Daughters Have Lofty Ambitions that Reach the Four Corners of the Earth* Lecture #7: Information about the Tarim"), August 25, 1963, SMA, C26-2-88, 82-96.

to Xinjiang, Wu was exposed to China's "beautiful landscapes" (锦绣河山 *jinxiu heshan*), the very stuff she had previously only ever encountered "in geography books" (过去在地理书上 *guoqu zai dili shu shang*). Wu's description of the landscapes, such as the "flaming mountains" (火焰山 *huoyan shan*) of Turpan (Turfan), alluded to the classic sixteenth-century novel, *The Journey to the West*, and other landmarks of Chinese culture and history.[12]

Wu Jueying's story demonstrated that the train ride did serve the goals of the resettlement program. By making "China" a known reality to the *zhiqing*, the train ride helped to nurture political and emotional attachments to their motherland. But Wu's glowing recollections of her trip across the country also needs to be balanced against other sources. After all, moving over 100,000 people cross country was no easy feat, requiring extensive logistical work and coordinating efforts on both sides of the urban-to-rural population resettlement relationship.[13] Given the enormity of the task, it is not that surprising that there were many hiccups along the way. The problems encountered while moving the nation's youth from one end of the country to the other, however, were not just a faulty start for the campaign; rather, they were emblematic of the challenges facing the entire resettlement scheme. Aboard the trains to Xinjiang, the state's will to move huge numbers of people was tested logistically, materially, and emotionally.

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[12] "Xinjiang nong yi shi shengli jiu chang Wu Yueying dahui fayan gao" ("Draft Speech of Wu Yueying of the Victorious 9th Farm, Xinjiang 1st Agricultural Division, at the Meeting"), April 29, 1964, SMA, B127-1-162, 28-34. Other accounts confirm that the *zhiqing* did sing songs to help keep themselves occupied and pass the time on such a long train ride. See Ai, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang*, 260.

[13] Zhonggong Jiangsu shengwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (CCP Jiangsu Provincial Committee Streamlining and Placement Office) and Xinjiang jieyun Jiangsu zhibian qingnian gongzuo tuan (Xinjiang Work Delegation for Receiving the Jiangsu *Zhibian* Youth), "Guanyu zhibian qingnian huoche yunshu wenti de tongzhi" ("Notification on Railway Transportation for the *Zhibian* Youth"), July 15, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0104, 18-21.

The contrast between rhetoric and reality was made evident immediately. When the *zhiqing* were ready to depart their native places, huge throngs of excited citizens accompanied them to the train stations. Family and friends cheered on the youth, while songs about frontier life belted out loudly from public announcement systems.[14] During the hot summer months, the excitement in the air dissipated as soon as the passengers realized the trains did not have functioning air conditioning. According to cadres from Nanjing who accompanied their city's *zhiqing* to Xinjiang, the temperature in the cars was stifling. The stagnant air soured the mood during the first leg of the trip, while the fact that some of the *zhiqing*'s luggage had been left behind further eroded morale. While one young woman aboard this particular train wept for three days and three nights straight, other educated youth were so frustrated that they declared "[I] will not go to Xinjiang. When we arrive at Zhengzhou, I am switching train cars and going back home!"[15]

The temperature improved after rail workers made some much-needed car repairs in Henan Province, but the educated youth from Nanjing continued to gripe. First and foremost, the trains did not have enough hot water boilers, leading to a short supply of *kaishui* (开水 hot water). The two meager meals served each day were also not received well, especially among girls aboard the train. Finally, as the train neared the terminus of the Longhai line and, especially, after the *zhiqing* transferred to the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway, the temperatures dipped. Many of the young people, however, had packed away

[14] Ai, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang*, 259.
[15] Zhonggong Nanjing shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee's Streamlining and Settlement Small Group), "Guanyu shoupi jin Jiang zhishi qingnian tuzhong qingkuang de huibao" ("Report on the Travels of the First Group of Educated Youth going to Xinjiang"), August 7, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 6-8.

their cotton jackets into their checked luggage and began complaining that they were now uncomfortably cold. [16]

This train ride to Xinjiang was a wake-up call to the sending and receiving communities. Of course, henceforth, officials strove to improve the conditions on board the trains and otherwise do what they could to ensure a smoother journey. *Bingtuan* workers in Nanjing, Shanghai, and other cities made sure to frequently remind the "educated youth" to bring anything they might need—such as thick jackets—on board the train car and not to leave them in their stowaways.[17]

Material deficits were resolved more easily than the emotional pain experienced by the educated youth. The Recruitment Work Team of the Production and Construction Corps in Shanghai noted that "during the march [to Xinjiang], the mentality of the youth will undergo changes." The *bingtuan* officials had even pinpointed the exact locations where they could expect the resolve of the *zhiqing* to waver: "when the train enters the Hexi Corridor in Gansu, the scenery outside of the [train] cars will be different than in Jiangnan [Southeastern China]." As a result, "the youth will start to feel father and father away from their families, becoming uneasy." Once the train had left behind the Yumen Pass, or the Jade Gate, in the far-western reaches of Gansu, the youth would become even more emotionally vulnerable.[18]

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[16] Zhonggong Nanjing shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Nanjing Municipal Committee's Streamlining and Settlement Small Group), "Guanyu shoupi jin Jiang zhishi qingnian tuzhong qingkuang de huibao" ("Report on the Travels of the First Group of Educated Youth going to Xinjiang"), August 7, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 6-8.

[17] Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan Shanghai gongzuo zu (Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps Shanghai Work Team), "Chufa qian de zhunbei gongzuo" ("Preparatory Work for Prior to Departure"), May 1964, SMA, C21-2-2520, 73. See also in Jiangsu Provincial Archives 3030-003-0105, 140. Reprinted in ZZQZ, 96-98.

[18] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei bangongshi (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee Office), "Guanyu zuohao xingjun sixiang zhengzhi gongzuo de anpai" ("On Arranging Ideological-Political Work for the March [to Xinjiang]"), May 15, 1964, SMA, C21-2-2520, 70-72. Reprinted in ZZQZ, 93-96.

It was not just sheer distance which shook the *zhiqing*, but also the scenery. Compared to the bustling cities back east, the vast, empty landscapes of the far northwest inspired loneliness; when the trains did pass through small communities, the contrast to urban life could be jarring. One rusticate named Zhu Genmei (朱根妹) recalled in vivid detail the poverty she witnessed—exemplified by children running in full nude by alongside the train tracks—once the train crossed into Gansu Province. Zhu's realization of her own country's imperfections and the ruggedness of life in the far northwest speaks to the material concerns which the *zhiqing* had for their own future.[19]

While the *zhiqing* were provided with location-by-location details on what to anticipate during the long journey, these words on paper did little to calm the educated youth.[20] Instead, it was up to the chaperones aboard the trains to improve morale at critical points along the journey to Xinjiang.[21] The chaperones from Xuzhou—having identified a similar pattern in the emotional state of the *zhiqing* as their colleagues from the Production and Construction Corps—worked especially hard in the "sparsely populated" areas between the Yumen Pass and Urumqi to cheer up the "educated youth."[22] Chaperones from Tianjin organized sing-alongs, Lei Feng study groups, and

[19] Zhu Genmei, *Talimu de Shanghai zhiqing* (The Tarim's Shanghai Educated Youth) (Wujiaqu: Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan chubanshe, 2013), 4-5.
[20] Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan Shanghai gongzuozu (Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps Shanghai Work Group), "Lvtu zhuyi shixiang" ("Things to Pay Attention to on Your Journey"), May 1964, SMA, C21-2-2520, 74.
[21] Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan Shanghai zhaosheng zu (Shanghai Recruiting Team of the Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps), "Daidui ganbu shouze" ("Rules for Leading Cadres"), April 21, 1964, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 143-144.
[22] Xuzhou shi zhishi qingnian zhiyuan bianjiang dadui bu (Xuzhou Municipal Work Team for Educated Youth Assisting the Frontiers), "Xuzhou shi zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe chufa qianhou de gongzuo yijian" ("Proposals for Work before and after the Xuzhou Educated Youth Depart to Participate in Xinjiang's Construction"), June 11, 1965, JPA, 19-23.

small competitions in an effort to "reduce the loneliness of the journey" and improve the ideological condition of the young people "all along the way."[23]

**The Journey Continues**

After enduring physically and emotionally exhausting journeys lasting upwards of four or five days, the "educated youth" were greeted by cheering audiences at the designated drop-off points in in Xinjiang (Turpan, Qumul, or Urumqi). Party and state leaders, prepared speeches in hand, awaited the newly arriving *zhiqing* at the train stations in Xinjiang. At one such welcoming on May 30, 1964, Liu Yicun (刘—村) told his tired and weary listeners that they had come to break open Xinjiang's vast potentials while simultaneously transforming themselves, physically and mentally.[24]

The "educated youth" were often rewarded with a few days of sightseeing in Urumqi. According to the published diary of Yang Yongqing, the newly arriving young people were most impressed with the regional capital, considering the city had only really been built up in the years since 1949.[25] They also appreciated the lively song and dance performances, the study sessions on Xinjiang's revolutionary martyrs (including Mao Zemin, the brother of Chairman Mao), and the personal greetings offered by senior Production and Construction Corps leaders, including Zhang Zhonghan (张仲瀚).[26]

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[23] Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau) et al, "Guanyu qu Xinjiang wei wo shi shehui qingnian xunzhao anzhi menlu he husong zhibian qingnian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Trip to Xinjiang to Find Settlement Opportunities Tianjin's Social Youth and the Work Situation of Escorting *Zhibian* Youth"), February 10, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 1-15. See also in TMA-1 198-2-1979, 1-15.

[24] ZZQZ, 222-224.

[25] ZZQZ, 474.

[26] Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau) et al, "Guanyu qu Xinjiang wei wo shi shehui qingnian xunzhao anzhi menlu he husong zhibian qingnian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Trip to Xinjiang to Find Settlement Opportunities Tianjin's Social Youth and the Work Situation of Escorting *Zhibian* Youth"), February 10, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 1-15. See also in TMA-1 198-2-1979, 1-15. For an example of Zhang Zhonghan meeting the newly arrived "educated youth," see ZZQZ, 225-226.

While these leisurely activities conducted out in the open air were welcomed after nearly 100 hours spent cooped up inside a train car, the *zhiqing* had yet to reach their final destinations. Many of the "educated youth," in fact, still had quite a bit of distance to cover before reaching their farms. For Ni Haomei (倪豪梅), a 1964 rusticate from Shanghai, it took an additional three days to get from Urumqi to Aksu, the home of the 1st Agricultural Division, and one additional travel day to finally get to her work unit.[27] Chaperones from Suzhou reported an even longer trip: from the time they had disembarked in Turpan, it took another 10 days of traveling by car to get to Khotan, the home of the 14th Agricultural Division.[28] Rusticates heading to the 3rd Agricultural Division in Kashgar, tucked away in Xinjiang's southwestern corner, experienced similarly lengthy trips after arriving in the Autonomous Region.

If the cross-country train rides had exposed the *zhiqing* to China's tremendous size, the bumpy bus rides which followed showed Xinjiang's tremendous proportions, its natural beauty, and its endemic poverty. Wu Yueying, "dazzled" (眼花了 *yanhua le*) by everything she saw, recalled her disbelief as she passed by "a desert with so many trees."[29] Chen Hongsheng (陈鸿生), who traveled two days to get to the 2nd Agricultural Division's Headquarters in Korla, was less impressed with the environs than Wu. When he finally reached his destination, Chen found a village with only a single two-story building. The small shops and houses were built not from cement or brick, but rather

[27] ZZQZ, 262.
[28] Zhonggong Suzhou shiwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (CCP Suzhou Municipal Committee Ofice for Streamlining and Settlement), "Guanyu husong fu Jiang zhishi qingnian de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Situation of the Educated Youth Sent to Xinjiang"), November 22, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 49-53.
[29] "Xinjiang nong yi shi shengli jiu chang Wu Yueying dahui fayan gao" ("Draft Speech of Wu Yueying of the Victorious 9th Farm, Xinjiang 1st Agricultural Division, at the Meeting"), April 29, 1964, SMA, B127-1-162, 28-34.

from clods of soil (a style of house known as 土块房子 *tukuai fangzi*).[30] Chen Xiaosheng (陈效生), a rusticate from Wuxi, similarly recalled that his "so-called 'farm'" on the outskirts of Kashgar was but a few small houses. His new home had no farm equipment, a phone, an infirmary, or even electricity.[31]

**Arriving**

For better and for worse, these new surroundings contrasted sharply with what the *zhiqing* had always known: cities. The Production and Construction Corps, anticipating that the "educated youth" would experience culture shock and feel a profound sense of dislocation, did its best to soften Xinjiang's rough edges for the new arrivals. Just as the *zhiqing* met cheering crowds in Urumqi, they continued to encounter encouraging audiences across the Autonomous Region. A model youth, Wu Yueying, claimed the 1st Agricultural Division offered a heroes-like welcome for the Shanghai youth in Aksu, rewarding them with a buffet of fresh cantaloupes, watermelons, grapes, apples, and pears.[32] Outside of the oasis of Khotan in Xinjiang's far southwest, 1,000 citizens awaited Suzhou's *zhiqing* when they pulled into town in September 1965, despite that only 800 people lived in the vicinity.[33]

The welcoming festivities were but the first step in a long-term integration and acculturation process. When the 5th Agricultural Division in Bole, an area in the far northern reaches of Xinjiang, received 168 middle and high school graduates from

[30] Ai, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang*, 249.
[31] Liu Hailin, ed., *Gebi chunqiu* (Spring in the Gobi) (published for internal circulation, 2006) 34.
[32] Wu Yueying, "Laodong zhong ba ziji duanlian chengwei jianqiang de gemingzhe" ("Turn Oneself into a Strong Revolutionary through Labor"), April 19, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1021, 147-153. Reprinted in ZZQZ, 79-85.
[33] Zhonggong Suzhou shiwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (CCP Suzhou Municipal Committee Ofice for Streamlining and Settlement), "Guanyu husong fu Jiang zhishi qingnian de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Situation of the Educated Youth Sent to Xinjiang"), November 22, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 49-53.

Shanghai in 1963, the division headquarters assigned dedicated cadres to monitor the "ideological, educational, and livelihood" (思想、教育、生活 *sixiang, jiaoyu, shenghuo*) wellbeing of the group. Aside from this personalized care, the headquarters regularly convened division-wide meetings in which the "elder comrades" told stories about "our division's glorious fighting traditions." Aimed at boosting morale, the speakers also reminded the *zhiqing* that these "glorious fighting traditions" were ready to be passed down to them, the next generation.[34]

Following traditional military organization, upon arriving at their respective agricultural divisions, the "educated youth" would be assigned to a farm (the equivalent of a regiment [团 *tuan*]). At this level and below, the *zhiqing* were organized along company (连队 *liandui*), platoon (排 *pai*), and, finally, squadron (班 *ban*) lines. As the "educated youth" became accustomed to military-style life, stories about the personal interventions of veteran cadres proliferated. Newspapers in Xinjiang frequently reported that old soldiers at the farms were sparing few efforts to make their young protégés feel at ease and to set positive examples. Whether mending the damaged clothing of a young girl, offering consolation when a *zhiqing* yearned for home, or even volunteering one's comfortable dorm room so that the teenagers did not need to dwell in a decrepit mud hut (地窝子 *dowozi*), veterans practiced self-sacrifice and generosity.[35]

Shanghai, for its part, published books of letters ostensibly written by the *zhiqing* which spoke to the successes of resettlement to Xinjiang. One letter from a group of

[34] Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan wu nong shi silingbu (Headquarters of the 5th Agriculturla Division, Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps), "Nong wu shi guanyu Shanghai xuesheng anzhi gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report of the 5th Agricultural Division on Resettling the Shanghai Students"), November, 19, 1963, in ZZQZ, 54.
[35] ZZQZ, 227-231.

Shanghai youth at a farm operated by the 5th Agricultural Division in Qumul (Hami) highlighted the care which the *bingtuan* offered to Shanghainese, such as food, clothing, and housing, as well as the personal growth which rustication to Xinjiang had fostered.[36] Wu Yueying, the *zhiqing* who spoke so glowingly of her travels to Xinjiang, praised her work unit during a homecoming to Shanghai in April 1964. "After going through rounds and rounds of labor," Wu dramatically stated, "[I] am gradually understanding the tremendous significance of these two words: 'revolution' and 'labor'."[37]

While receiving a "traditional revolutionary education" from the veterans, the educated youth were entitled to a modest financial and social safety net. They received monthly grain rations in the amount of about 35 *jin,* or almost 40 pounds, free dormitory housing, and organized leisure activities, such as two films per month, as was the case at the 1st Agricultural Division.[38] Other visiting officials from the East Coast reported that, in addition to these provisions, "educated youth" also received vegetable and meat rations, toilet paper, copies of *China Youth Daily,* and other daily necessities.[39] Visitors from Tianjin were certainly pleased: for "dwelling in the Gobi Desert," the lives of the *zhiqing* were "quite active" (相当活跃 *xiangdang huoyue*).[40]

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[36] *Xinjiang lai xin* (Letters from Xinjiang) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1966), 5-6. For another example of letters published, see *Shanghai qingnian zai Xinjiang*.
[37] Wu Yueying, "Laodong zhong ba ziji duanlian chengwei jianqiang de gemingzhe" ("Turn Oneself into a Strong Revolutionary through Labor"), April 19, 1964, SMA, C21-1-1021, 147-153.
[38] Shanghai shi fu Jiang fangwentuan (Delegation of Shanghai in Xinjiang), "Guanyu fangwen Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo baogao" ("Work Report on the Visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), December 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 140-151.
[39] Zhonggong Shanghai shi Jing'an quwei jingjian bangongshi (Streamlining Office of the CCP Shanghai Jing'an District Committee) "Guanyu zhishi qingnian fu Xinjiang canjia zuguo bianjiang jianshe de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Mobilization of Educated Youth to Go to Xinjiang to Participate in the Motherland's Frontier Construction"), December 10, 1963, JDA, 042-02-1614, 35-41.
[40] Tianjin shi zhishi qingnian bangongshi (Tianjin Municipal Educated Youth Office), "Guanyu weiwen Tianjin shi canjia nongjian shiyi shi zhishi qingnian de qingkuang baogao" ("Report on the Goodwill Visit to the Tianjin Educated Youth Participating in the 11th Agricultural Construction Division"), November 13, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 27-41.

Early on, the *zhiqing* studied farming techniques and served as apprentices. They worked only four hours each day until they had built up enough stamina and practical knowledge, at which point they proudly would begin to work the same number of hours as the "old workers."[41] During his first spring planting, Chen Xiaosheng (陈效生) felt gratification that he had been put in charge of measuring out 100 *mu* of land and determining where to plant his cash crop (cotton), his crops for the state (grain), his experimental crops (rice and sorghum), and crops for the dining hall (melons and vegetables).[42]

Farm duty, of course, was never easy in Mao's China, but in Xinjiang, where the party-state was attempting to change the soil and prevail over nature, it was especially backbreaking. *Zhiqing* historian Xie Min'gan's description of Hu Erpu (胡尔朴), a 1965 rusticate from Shanghai to the 1st Agricultural Division, shows how painful and exhausting this labor could be:

> In the vast wastelands on the banks of the Tarim River, Hu Erpu went over the land and turned them into fields, he dug canals and made mudbricks, he harvested wheat and picked cotton, he drove a tractor and rode an oxcart…[sic] during the busy farm season, they implemented the one-day-out-of-ten rest system, what the workers called the 'fortnightly day of worship.' But there was no guarantee that there would be one day of rest every ten days. Sometimes [Hu] wouldn't rest for one or two months. Everyday [he'd] work for 10 hours or so, and with what was left he'd dig for 'potential.'.[43]

Outside of Kashgar, cotton was king, according to Chen Xiaosheng, but, given the local climate, it required advances in scientific knowledge, receive hands-on training, and,

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[41] Shanghai shi fu Jiang fangwentuan (Delegation of Shanghai in Xinjiang), "Guanyu fangwen Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo baogao" ("Work Report on the Visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), December 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 140-151.
[42] Liu, ed., *Gebi chunqiu*, 35.
[43] Xie Min'gan, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian mingren lu* (Who's Who among the Shanghai Educated Youth in Xinjiang) (Shanghai: Zhuhai chubanshe, 2008), 107.

most of all, significant "manual labor."[44] Toiling away in the fields, the "educated youth" quickly became acquainted with the dry, dusty environment. Tang Yufang (唐宇放), who was resettled to 3rd Agricultural Division in Kashgar on the eve of the Cultural Revolution, later recalled how the sands of the Gobi Desert were always blowing in his/her face.[45]

While it is probably impossible to determine the extent of the *zhiqing*'s contributions to economic development in Xinjiang, the period coinciding with the arrival of the 100,000 young people did see strong growth.[46] Output of grain, cotton, plant based oils, and vegetables increased significantly from 1961 through 1965.[47] From 1963 through 1966, the Production and Construction Corps expanded its cotton acreage from 380,000 *mu* to 640,000 *mu*, and saw both total output increase as well as output per *mu* increase. Grain output rose from 450 million kilograms in 1963 to 720 million kilograms in 1966.[48] Total agricultural and industrial output in the 1st Agricultural Division, which received 45,000 *zhiqing* from Shanghai, rose significantly during the years concurrent with the rustication. It later dropped precipitously during the early period of the Cultural Revolution.[49]

From the party-state's perspectives, the economic statistics introduced above were only one way to measure the results of the population resettlement program. The moral leadership and physical training which the *bingtuan* provided to the rusticates was

[44] Liu, ed., *Gebi chunqiu*, 35.
[45] Ai, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang*, 404-405.
[46] Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 304-307.
[47] "Tiaozheng shiqi jihua zhixing" ("Plan Implementation during the Adjustment Period"), n.d., in XSJBLWX, vol. 1, 347-366.
[48] XSJBFS, 169.
[49] Nong yi shi shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nong yi shi zhi*, 127.

intended to sculpt the nation's youth into true revolutionaries. If the minds and bodies of the *zhiqing* could be changed as much as the landscapes of Xinjiang, then the program could be said to be a resounding success. Commander Wang Zhen, upon inspecting the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang in May 1964, made sure to highlight the physical and ideological changes which they were undergoing. The "Shanghai educated youth," he said, "have not only seen great improvements in their ideological consciousness and productive techniques, but their bodies have also been tempered, becoming healthier and stronger." Wang claimed that, one on farm, *zhiqing* had seen an average increase in weight of 10 kilograms.[50]

**Culture Shock**

Population resettlement did change Xinjiang and the "educated youth" in measurable ways. But just as we had to balance the glowing narratives of the train ride to Xinjiang against contradictory evidence, we also need to bring in other sources which shows the disappointment and displeasure associated with resettlement. The hardships of agricultural labor, combined with deteriorating living standards—whether measured in terms of housing, food, or clothing—tested the resolve of the urban "educated youth," who in turn challenged the wills of state planners.

While many farms did offer the *zhiqing* warm welcomes, not every work unit was so endearing. One Shanghainese recalled how, in October 1963, the leadership at his/her farm rather brusquely warned the new arrivals to be prepared: "unlike the winters in Shanghai, it's terribly cold here in Xinjiang."[51] Worse than the curt attitudes, initially the *bingtuan* distributed cold-weather items, such as cotton jackets, quilts, bed sheets,

[50] ZZQZ, 234-236.
[51] Ai, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang*, 261.

sweaters, shirts, socks, and towels, in extremely limited quantities.[52] Nonetheless, for rusticates such as Luo Zhongqi (骆中启), who came from poor families and had only tattered clothing to begin with, the state's stingy disbursements were not a trivial matter.[53]

For its first group of 168 Shanghainese, the 5th Agricultural Division reported that it had not always recognized the emotional, physical, and material needs of "youth who had only just come to the borderlands from our nation's interior." For example, the 5th Division did not have enough sewing machines to prepare "bedding and clothing" (被服 *beifu*) for the newly arrived *zhiqing* in a timely fashion. Moreover, while *bingtuan* authorities were initially only concerned with the size of the clothing, the *zhiqing* did care about appearances. According to the 5th Division, "the youth all want good [clothing]; girl comrades pay special attention to beauty and are much pickier."[54]

Aside from clothing, the biggest challenges for the urban educated youth in Xinjiang were often dietary. A tremendous number of sources, particularly the memoirs and oral history testimonies of the *zhiqing*, focus on food. Day-in-and-day-out, the young rusticates ate a menu consisting mostly of corn-based porridge (包谷糊糊 *baogu huhu*), corn buns (包谷馍馍 *baogu momo*), calabash gourds (葫芦瓜 *hulu gua*), radishes (萝卜 *luobo*), and pumpkins (南瓜 *nangua*). Plain in flavor and often coarse in texture, the cuisine available at the *bingtuan* farms in Xinjiang was nearly indigestible for Shanghai

[52] Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan wu nong shi silingbu (Headquarters of the 5th Agriculturla Division, Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps), "Nong wu shi guanyu Shanghai xuesheng anzhi gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report of the 5th Agricultural Division on Resettling the Shanghai Students"), November, 19, 1963, in ZZQZ, 54-55.
[53] Ai, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang*, 412.
[54] Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan wu nong shi silingbu, "Nong wu shi guanyu Shanghai xuesheng anzhi gongzuo qingkuang de baogao," in ZZQZ, 55.

natives used to eating plentiful amounts of *benbang* (本帮, or Shanghai style food) and rice.[55]

The first meals at the canteens were shocking. At one farm, a plate consisted of stir fried calabash with a smidgen of meat and a simple bun. The new arrivals hesitated to ask the line cook, "what, no rice?" (有没有米饭? *youmeiyou mifan?*).[56] One young man named Zhou Jilan (周吉兰) recalled the daily drudgery of shredded cabbage soup (菜汤面 *can tangmian*), a main course which contained no meat, eggs, or oil, let alone noodles. Disgusted by the cuisine, Zhou claimed that he never had "enough to eat" (吃不饱 *chu bubao*).[57] Visiting cadres from Shanghai, after tasting the "coarse grain" (粗粮 *culiang*) being served up at canteens, agreed with Zhou's review.[58]

Detestable cuisine was one reason that being selected to return home to participate in mobilization activities was so exciting. Aside from the opportunity to see friends and family, zhiqing seized the chance to stock up on local snacks and staples from back home. Chen Lan (陈岚), for instance, recalled how he filled his luggage with copious amounts of Shanghai snacks to bring to Xinjiang.[59] Even model youth who returned home for overtly political purposes took the opportunity to indulge their taste buds and smuggle a bounty of local treats back to Xinjiang.[60]

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[55] ZZQZ, 298, 309.
[56] Ai, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang*, 262.
[57] ZZQZ, 311.
[58] Shanghai shi fu Jiang fangwentuan (Delegation of Shanghai in Xinjiang), "Guanyu fangwen Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo baogao" ("Work Report on the Visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), December 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 140-151.
[59] ZZQZ, 312.
[60] Zhu, *Talimu de Shanghai zhiqing*, 24-25.

Educated youth from Tianjin and Beijing had apparently complained so much about the food—presumably in letters written home—that their parents began accosting cadres from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region who visited their city. While the youth from northern China took issue with "the bread and minority cuisine" served up at farms, their other complaints were not merely matters of custom. The youth in general reported a lack of drinking water at farms, while girls added that the bath houses did not have enough hot water for washing up. Young people from both Tianjin and Beijing also told their parents that "paper products for studying" and even "feminine hygiene paper products" were in seriously short supply. [61] Officials from the south echoed these complaints. Reports from Shanghai's Jing'an District as well as from Suzhou indicate that that dormitories at the farms did not always have urinals or even bed pans.[62]

While the Production and Construction Corps boasted that they offered monthly film screenings and other leisure activities, the "educated youth" did not always have enough to keep them busy during downtime. They reported back to friends and family that the farms did not have books, magazines, or even newspapers to go around. The dearth of state-sanctioned reading material was even more alarming to visiting officials,

[61] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu jiaoyu ting (XUAR Education Department), "Guanyu Jing Jin Hu jin Jiang xuesheng jige youguan wenti de tongzhi" ("Notification on Relevant Issues amongst Students from Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai coming to Xinjiang"), April 17, 1964, TMA-1, 198-2-2109, 62-63.
[62] Zhonggong Shanghai shi Jing'an quwei jingjian bangongshi (Streamlining Office of the CCP Shanghai Jing'an District Committee) "Guanyu zhishi qingnian fu Xinjiang canjia zuguo bianjiang jianshe de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Mobilization of Educated Youth to Go to Xinjiang to Participate in the Motherland's Frontier Construction"), December 10, 1963, JDA, 042-02-1614, 35-41; Zhonggong Suzhou shiwei jingjian anzhi bangongshi (CCP Suzhou Municipal Committee Ofice for Streamlining and Settlement), "Guanyu husong fu Jiang zhishi qingnian de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Situation of the Educated Youth Sent to Xinjiang"), November 22, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 49-53.

because, allegedly, some unhappy educated youth were "propagating a bourgeois way of life" and sharing "obscene books and humming decadent songs."[63]

The "educated youth" also had their fair share of complaints about labor. According to personnel from Jing'an District in Shanghai, many *zhiqing* believed they had been misled about the job opportunities available at the Production and Construction Corps. Promised glamorous jobs as technicians on silk farms, most educated youth became simple farm hands, not sericulture experts. Aside from challenging agricultural work, the *zhiqing* argued that that their pay was insufficient. The Tianjin Personnel Bureau was overwhelmed with letters from Xinjiang demanding increases in salary and benefits.[64] To make ends meet, some *zhiqing even* began stealing and re-selling clothing and other state property.[65]

These material and fiduciary concerns aside, the distance separating Xinjiang from Eastern China was also overwhelming. Many *zhiqing* heard of deaths in the family only after the fact; some of them lived with a great deal of grief that they could not be home to see mothers and fathers one last time before passing away.[66] The "educated youth," however were generally entitled to only one family visit (探亲 *tanqin*) after they completed a three-year probationary period with the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. Even more draconian, married couples were told that, according to

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[63] Shanghai shi fu Jiang fangwentuan (Delegation of Shanghai in Xinjiang), "Guanyu fangwen Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo baogao" ("Work Report on the Visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), December 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 140-151.
[64] Tianjin shi renshi ju (Tianjin Municipal Personnel Bureau), "Guanyu souji zhi Jiang ganbu youguan wenti de tongzhi" ("Notification on Collecting the Problems of Cadres Assisting Xinjiang"), May 4, 1965, TMA-1, 198-2-2224, 38.
[65] Zhonggong Shanghai shi Jing'an quwei jingjian bangongshi (Streamlining Office of the CCP Shanghai Jing'an District Committee) "Guanyu zhishi qingnian fu Xinjiang canjia zuguo bianjiang jianshe de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on the Mobilization of Educated Youth to Go to Xinjiang to Participate in the Motherland's Frontier Construction"), December 10, 1963, JDA, 042-02-1614, 35-41.
[66] ZZQZ, 314-316.

the regulations of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, they could make but one visit home every 10 years.[67] Owing to these restrictions, one visiting delegation from Shanghai reported, the *zhiqing* badly longed to return home, and not a few were plotting to do so, even if it meant breaking the rules.[68]

The emotional fragility of the *zhiqing* occasionally boiled at the farms belonging to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. At one work unit attached to the 11th Agricultural Division located in Gansu Province (but still administered by the Xinjiang *bingtuan*),[69] for instance, 500 Tianjin *zhiqing* protested the mysterious death of one of their comrades, a young girl named Qi Yuying (齐玉英), in 1964. With demands for an investigation into Qi's death growing, authorities at the 11th Agricultural Division and in Tianjin coordinated how to handle the situation. Slow to respond, the 11th Agricultural Division began reporting instances of drunkenness, disorderly conduct, and assaults on cadres and cooperative employees—coping mechanisms for aggrieved "educated youth."[70]

**Problem Solving**

Whether large or small, these acts of protest not escape the attention of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps as well as the sending communities. But

[67] Untitled letter sent from Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau) to Yangpu qu laodong ju (Yangpu District Labor Bureau), October 27, 1964, HDA, 050-2-153, 63.
[68] Shanghai shi fu Jiang fangwentuan (Delegation of Shanghai in Xinjiang), "Guanyu fangwen Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo baogao" ("Work Report on the Visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), December 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 140-151.
[69] "Zhonghua renmin gongheguo nongken bu banbu Gansu sheng Hexi zoulang shengchan jianshe budui mingcheng" ("The PRC Ministry of Land Reclamation Promulgates the Name of the Gansu Hexi Corridor Production and Construction Unit"), October 30, 1963, in XSJBLWX, vol. 1, 300.
[70] Tianjin shi gong'an ju (Tianjin Municipal Public Security Bureau), "Guanyu wo shi canjia bianjiang jianshe de qingnian Wang Jiagui deng daitou naoshi de diaocha baogao" ("Investigative Report on the Wang Jiagui Led Disturbances among Tianjin Youth Participating in Frontier Construction"), October 12, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 73-80.

rather than see these complaints as symptoms of a much larger problem, the responsible authorities did their utmost to compartmentalize and/or rationalize them. Officials from Shanghai, for example, argued that they should anticipate material grievances and emotional pain. After all, of the "20,000 Shanghai youth who came to Xinjiang this year, most are children, just 16 or 17 *sui*. They are so far from their families and, having come from a big city to villages in the border region, this is a tremendous change in their lives."[71] The highest organs of the Communist Youth League and the Chinese Communist Party also rationalized complaints about urban-to-rural population resettlement in this fashion. "When urban educated youth go from being students to farmers," the CYL and the CCP announced in 1964, "they will experience a complicated transition in their mentalities, feelings, lives, and habits."[72]

While generally overly optimistic about population resettlement, the sending and receiving communities were not completely callous. After receiving a steady stream of complaints, the Headquarters of the Production and Construction Corps, for example, issued new regulations intended to benefit the "educated youth" in October 1965. In this instance, the *bingtuan* was prepared to offer a 30-yuan clothing subsidy for resettled youth (a sum well more than the subsidy offered to demobilized soldiers) so that they

[71] See Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan Wang Ke deng tongzhi guanyu fangwen Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo baogao" ("The Municipal Committee Approves and Forwards Comrade Wang Ke's Work Report on the Visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), January 28, 1964, SMA, A62-1-19, 128-139. Also in ZZQZ, 57-68.

[72] "Zhonggong zhongyang pizhuan qingniantuan zhongyang shujichu guanyu zuzhi chengshi zhishi qingnian canjia nongcun shehui zhuyi jianshe de baogao" ("The CCP Central Committee Forwards the CYL Central Committee Secretariat's Report on Organizing Urban Educated Youth to Participate in Socialist Construction in the Countryside"), April 25, 1964, in ZGWX, 31-38.

would have enough funds to purchase winter wear. The headquarters also reminded farms that should have functioning kitchens and enough beds for all *zhiqing*.[73]

By foregoing recruitment of *zhibian* families from rural areas and focusing instead on unmarried urban teenagers, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps hoped to reduce the expenditures associated with rustication. The organization found, however, that the demands of the "educated youth" still exceeded what it could financially commit. Unable to pay salaries which fully satisfied the *zhiqing*, the Production and Construction Corps educated its employees about developing "frugal" (俭朴 *jianpu*) spending habits.[74] It also worked with officials from Shanghai and the other cities to manage salary and livelihood expectations among new recruits.[75]

Aside from these approaches, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps did its best to extract financial support from the sending communities. In November 1963, for instance, Chen Mingchi (陈明池), a member of the *bingtuan's* inner circle of leaders, asked that Shanghai send technical specialists as well as 30-40 million *yuan* each year because "[we] lack goods and materials" necessary for taking care of the "educated youth." With the Production and Construction Corps expected to receive huge numbers of young people from Shanghai, Jiangsu, and elsewhere into the foreseeable future, Chen

[73] Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan silingbu (Headquarters of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, Xinjiang Military District, PLA), "Bingtuan guanyu anzhi fei shiyong wenti de tongzhi" ("Notification on the Use of Resettlement Funds"), October 5, 1965, in ZZQZ, 124. See also ZZQZ, 108, 109.
[74] Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan silingbu zhengzhi bu (Political Department of the Headquarters of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, Xinjiang Military District, PLA), "Guanyu Shanghai qingnian pingding gongzi dengji yijian baogao de pifu" ("Reply to Report on Views of Wage Scales for the Shanghai Youth"), February 1, 1966, in ZZQZ, 137-138.
[75] Shanghai shi fu Jiang fangwentuan (Delegation of Shanghai in Xinjiang), "Guanyu fangwen Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo baogao" ("Work Report on the Visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), December 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 140-151.

said that it will become "difficult to respond to and meet their [the *zhiqing*'s] needs for some daily necessities [lit. "living materials"]."[76]

Authorities in Tianjin were also asked to subsidize the resettlement program in various ways. While preparing to send just over 1,000 educated youth to Xinjiang in late 1963, the Municipal Labor Bureau declared that, due to the "relatively cold weather in Xinjiang," the city ought to provide cotton-padded jackets and other clothing items to the rusticates. This was a burden worth absorbing, the Labor Bureau rationalized, because of the "great significance" which resettlement had in "reducing our city's population."[77]

**Goodwill Missions**

The myriad complaints about everyday life which circulated between the receiving community, Xinjiang, and the various sending communities alarmed officials on both sides of the resettlement relationship. The Beijing Labor Bureau warned in late 1964 that "because the mentalities of many of the youth are not yet stable," their contributions to construction are not only "so-so" (一般 *yiban*), but that it was likely many would desert their work units during the Chinese New Year. In order to dispel the notion that returning to Beijing was an option, the city proposed to send what it called

[76] Untitled letter sent from Chen Mingchi to officials of the Shanghai Municial Labor Bureau, November 21, 1963, SMA, B127-2-784, 19-20.

[77] Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau), "Qing ziezhu jiejue canjia Xinjiang jianshe de shehui qingnian mianyi, bupiao, mianhua piao buzhu wenti" ("Please Assist with the Resolution of Cotton-Padded Clothes, Cloth Coupons, and Cotton Coupons for Social Youth Participating in Xinjiang's Construction"), December 5, 1963, TMA-1, 470-1-283, 106. See also Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu zhiyuan Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan deng danwei jishu gongren de bupiao he mianhua piao buzhu wenti de tongzhi" ("Notification on Cloth and Cotton Subsidies for the Technical Workers Assisting the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps and Other Work Units"), September 19, 1964, TMA-1, 98-1-570, 24. See also in TMA-1 196-1-1350, 16.

"goodwill missions" (慰问团 *weiwentuan*) to visit its educated youth scattered across the country.[78]

Beijing was hardly the only city mulling the use of the so-called "goodwill missions." After all, these visits were encouraged by the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. As a result, Tianjin, Suzhou, and, especially, Shanghai began forming and dispatching fact-finding, entertainment, and conciliatory groups to Xinjiang.[79] The sending communities believed that these delegations would allow them to check up on and motivate their youth, confer with Xinjiang's authorities on improvements or changes that could be made, discover success stories which could be shared back home, and, lastly, make plans for future resettlement exchanges.[80]

In September-October 1964, 40 cadres from Tianjin inspected the 11th Agricultural Division. Upon returning to Tianjin, the group provided local leaders with extensive information concerning the food, clothing, housing, healthcare, and education made available to their city's "educated youth." While intent on showing that the resettlement program was a success, the delegation also noted areas for improvement. The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, for example, continued to rely on mud

[78] Beijing shi laodong dangzu (Beijing Municipal Labor Bureau Party Group), "Guanyu zuzhi weiwen shangshan xiaxiang zhishi qingnian de qingshi" ("Instructions on Organizing a Goodwill [Delegation] for the Youth Up in the Mountains and Down in the Villages"), November 15, 1965, BMA, 110-001-01643, 13-14.

[79] Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau) et al, "Guanyu qu Xinjiang wei wo shi shehui qingnian xunzhao anzhi menlu he husong zhibian qingnian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Trip to Xinjiang to Find Settlement Opportunities Tianjin's Social Youth and the Work Situation of Escorting *Zhibian* Youth"), February 10, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 1-15. See also in TMA-1 198-2-1979, 1-15.

[80] Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau Party Group) and Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu zuzhi weiwentuan qu Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan weiwen de baogao" ("Report on Organizing a Goodwill Mission to Go to the Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps"), July 21, 1965, SMA, B127-2-791, 1-3. Also available in SMA C21-2-2555, 1-3.

brick structures, or *diwozi*, to house the *zhiqing.* Vulnerable to the elements, *diwozi* were hardly a suitable replacement for brick-and-mortar dormitories.[81]

Shanghai cast a wide net with its "goodwill missions." Usually larger in size and greater in frequency than those sent by other cities, Shanghai made sure to dispatch its investigators to as many of Xinjiang's agricultural divisions as possible. A preliminary plan for one such visit, written in July 1965, called for a team of 50 people to travel to Urumqi together before splintering off into small groups and scattering across almost the entirety of the *bingtuan.* Holding large assemblies, smaller group chats, dorm room inspections, and performances at dozens of farms, Shanghai aimed to reach as many of its "educated youth" as possible. This approach, too, would allow authorities from Shanghai to liaise with a sizable group of leading cadres.[82]

In anticipation of Shanghai's first major "goodwill mission" to Xinjiang, planned for August 1965, the Municipal Communist Party Committee penned an open letter to its progeny in the far northwest. An inspiring piece of prose, the letter praised Shanghai's "educated youth" for both their material and ideological contributions to the Chinese and world revolutions. Although some young people had complained that their work lacked meaning, Shanghai's leadership claimed that the *zhiqing* "had actively participated in scientific experiments, carrying out high-yield activities." And despite the feelings of social alienation in the far northwest, the Municipal Committee insisted that the *zhiqing*'s

[81] Tianjin shi zhishi qingnian bangongshi (Tianjin Municipal Educated Youth Office), "Guanyu weiwen Tianjin shi canjia nongjian shiyi shi zhishi qingnian de qingkuang baogao" ("Report on the Goodwill Visit to the Tianjin Educated Youth Participating in the 11th Agricultural Construction Division"), November 13, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 27-41.

[82] Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu and Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui, "Guanyu zuzhi weiwentuan qu Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan weiwen de baogao," July 21, 1965, SMA, B127-2-791, 1-3. See also the updated report: " (草稿) Shanghai shi ge jie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan gongzuo jihua (caogao)" ("Draft Work Plan for the Shanghai All Peoples Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang"), August 5, 1965, 1965, SMA, B127-2-791, 4-8. Also available in SMA C21-2-2555, 4-8.

work was deeply embedded in national and global currents. At a time when "the Asian-African-Latin American regions were everywhere burning with a raging anti-imperialist struggle" and as the Americans began a doomed war in Vietnam, building socialism in Xinjiang was more important than ever.[83]

Led by Vice Mayor Song Richang (宋日昌), the "goodwill mission" continued to spread the gospel when it arrived in Urumqi on August 16.[84] Upon disembarking from his train car, Vice Mayor Song offered praise for the Production and Construction Corps. He proclaimed that the organization's assistance, "the face of Xinjiang has changed greatly." The once arid and empty desert was, in Song's words, now a "fertile farmland" (一片片良田 *yi pianpian liangtian*). The Vice Mayor, turning to the "educated youth" in his audience, then noted that not only had the landscapes been transformed, but so had the people responsible. "In just a few short years of arduous work, building the frontier," Song commented, "you've changed so much. You've made so much progress."[85] The open letter and Song Richang's statements at the Urumqi train station blended seamlessly into party-state's overall assessment of population resettlement. A force for good, moving people from the cities to the countryside helped to achieve the simultaneous transformation of people and place.

[83] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renmin weiyuanhui (Shanghai Municipal People's Committee), "gei canjia Xinjiang jianshe de Shanghai qingnian de weiwenxin" ("Goodwill Letter to the Shanghai Youth Participating in Xinjiang's Construction"), August 12, 1965, SMA, B127-1-884, 37-38. Also available in Yao, *Shanghai zhiqing zai Xinjiang*, 201-204; ZZQZ, 133-136.
[84] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 36-37.
[85] Shanghai gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan (All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Weiwen jianghua" ("Goodwill Speech"), August 16, 1965, SMA, B127-1-884, 18-22.

But what did the "goodwill mission" do and what did they find after so much self-lauding? With several days in the regional capital under its belt, the "goodwill mission" from Shanghai split off into small groups and fanned out across the Autonomous Region. Casting a wide geographic net, the teams ended up in Aksu, Korla and Yanqi, Shihezi, Wusu, and as far north as Altai. [86]

Of course, the small groups kept up their efforts to motivate and inspire the *zhiqing*. While visiting the 2nd Agricultural Division, the delegation from Shanghai organized song and dance performances as well as film showings. As parting gifts, the delegations left behind films, newspapers, magazines, and books, hoping such items would resolve the material and cultural deficits earlier reported by the "educated youth."[87] Once morale ran high, the group members began to call upon cadres, veteran soldiers, and the "educated youth" for meetings and one-on-one discussions about the achievements and problems of rustication. They made a special point to interview and work closely with anyone said to be "ideologically backwards" (思想落后 *sixiang luohou*), a basket description which encompassed people who complained about toiletries all the way to those who doubted the wisdom of the Chinese Communist Party.[88]

The open discussions held between the *zhiqing* and the visitors from Shanghai occasionally shifted into delicate or sensitive territory. While the work teams wanted to

[86] See SMA C21-2-3049 for eight individual reports on the visits to different *bingtuan* units.
[87] Shanghai shi laodong ju dangzu (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau Party Group) and Gongqingtuan Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CYL Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Guanyu zuzhi weiwentuan qu Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan weiwen de baogao" ("Report on Organizing a Goodwill Mission to Go to the Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps"), July 21, 1965, SMA, B127-2-791, 1-3. Also available in SMA C21-2-2555, 1-3. See also the updated report: "Shanghai shi ge jie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan gongzuo jihua (caogao)" ("Draft Work Plan for the Shanghai All Peoples Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang"), August 5, 1965, SMA, B127-2-791, 4-8. Also available in SMA C21-2-2555, 4-8.
[88] "Di'er fentuan zai nong er shi weiwen huodong de qingkuang xiaojie (caogao)" ("Draft Summary of the 2nd Group's Goodwill Activities at the 2nd Agricultural Division"), October 13, 1965, SMA, C21-2-3049, 38-40.

demonstrate that Shanghai still cared for its offspring, they also had to fend off too many questions about life back east in the booming socialist city. Speaking about Shanghai beyond what was "appropriate" risked aggravating the young people's "faith in borderland construction" and their willingness to continue dwelling in Xinjiang. [89] When prompted to revel in Shanghai's development over the past several years, the delegations were always sure to remind their audience that such advances carried with them social responsibilities. As China's most prosperous city, Shanghai was obligated to spread the wealth—in part by sharing its people.[90]

The motivational work continued even after the "goodwill missions" returned home, part of an effort to put parents at ease and discredit the tales of hardship which circulated in the community. In Suzhou, for example, the returned cadres from Xinjiang broadcast the results of their inspections over the city-wide radio, neighborhood public address (PA) systems, and through face-to-face meetings with over 900 parents and neighborhood leaders.[91] To support this work conducted by the sending community, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps dispatched its opera and dance troupes. The free entertainment programs for parents aimed to demonstrate that the *bingtuan* was fully invested in the resettlement program.[92]

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[89] "Shanghai shi ge jie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan gongzuo jihua (caogao)," August 5, 1965, SMA, B127-2-791, 4-8.
[90] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei and Shanghai shi renmin weiyuanhui, "Gei canjia Xinjiang jianshe de Shanghai qingnian de weiwenxin," August 12, 1965, SMA, B127-1-884, 37-38.
[91] Zhonggong Suzhou shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Suzhou Municipal Committee Streamlining and Settlement Small Group), "Guanyu husong jin Jiang qingnian hui Su hou xiang jiazhang huibao de qingkuang huibao" ("Report on What Youth who went to Xinjiang are Telling their Parents after Returning to Suzhou"), December 18, 1965, JPA, 3030-003-0105, 145-147.
[92] Seethe files from December 1963 on the visit of a Chu Opera Troupe (楚剧团 *Chu jutuan*) from the Xinjiang Production and Constructions in SMA C21-2-2271.

The "goodwill missions" were probably more successful at public relations work than they were at assessing and reporting on problems associated with the resettlement program. Indeed, many of their reports simply echoed the talking points fed to the work teams by the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.[93] One Shanghai delegation, moreover, admitted that even though it visited Aksu, an area with the largest concentration of *zhiqing* in all of Xinjiang, it had not actually engaged very much with any young people. The team was reportedly "only able to meet [the *zhiqing*], shake their hands, see their dorms, and say hello."[94]

The superficial and staged encounters between the "goodwill missions" and the participants in population resettlement themselves ensured that the findings of such visits did not stray far from past assessments. The visitors of Shanghai proudly reported evidence of ecological, social, and individual change in Xinjiang, claiming, for example, that the "educated youth" had become "extremely healthy and strong" (十分健壮 *shifen jianzhuang*) since relocating. (Working outdoors all day long on farms, the one-time urbanites now also sported "sun tans" [皮肤晒黑 *pifu shaihei*] but still managed to have full bellies.)[95] Whatever problems did exist were not irreconcilable. After all, they were probably rooted to the pernicious influence of a small number of people.[96] Thus, in the final report concerning the 1965 Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang, the authors

[93] Qi Guo, "Guanyu Xinjiang de yixie jiben qingkuang" ("On the Basic Situation of Xinjiang"), August 20, 1965, SMA, C21-2-2555, 30-43.
[94] Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan di yi fentuan (1st Group of the All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Yi fentuan weiwen gongzuo zongjie" ("Sumary of the 1st Good Will Group's Work"), November 8, 1965, SMA, C21-2-3049, 23-37.
[95] Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan (All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Fu Jiang weiwentuan zongjie ziliao" ("Summary Materials on the Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang"), November 25, 1965, SMA, C21-2-2556, 20-41.
[96] Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan di yi fentuan, "Yi fentuan weiwen gongzuo zongjie," November 8, 1965, SMA, C21-2-3049, 23-37.

concluded that the crux of the issue going forward was mobilization and thought work—not earnest change to the population resettlement agenda. [97]

**Conclusion**

Although the reality of the on-the-ground experiences of the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang clashed with the state's promises, the complaints and protests of the educated youth did not deter state planners. In other words, the emotional displeasure and physical discomfort experienced by the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang in the 1960s was not the undoing of state-led population resettlement as a comprehensive, highly "rationale" state-building tool. The Chinese Communist Party remained invested in using population resettlement as a means of achieving the transformation of both people and place. Indeed, after visiting Shihezi in July 1965, Zhou Enlai prodded the Production and Construction Corps to receive 30,000 young people from Shanghai, 10,000 from Tianjin, and 10,000 from Wuhan on an annual basis, believing they could be a formidable force in Xinjiang's socialist construction.[98]

As we saw in earlier chapters, however, Zhou was not the singular figure in this movement. Neither the product of a single individual or a single document, the decision to remove and relocate hundreds-of-thousands of young people grew out of dozens of institutions and locales across China. The "goodwill missions" were complicit in this process. Only paragraphs removed from describing some of the serious problems associated with resettlement, one Shanghai mission to Xinjiang in 1963 announced that

[97] Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan (All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Guanyu Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Work of the All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang"), December 5, 1965, SMA, C21-2-2555, 148-163.
[98] Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan dangwei (Party Committee of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, "Guanyu jianjue guanche zhixing Zhou Enlai zongli, Chenyi fu zongli dui bingtuan zhongyao zhishi de baogao" ("Report on Resolutely Implementing the Important Instructions from Premier Zhou Enlai and Vice Premiere Chen Yun to the *Bingtuan*"), July 11, 1965, in XSJBLWX, vol. 1, 336.

35,000-40,000 young people should be sent to the Production and Construction Corps the following year.[99] In 1964, the same cadres from Tianjin who struggled to keep morale high aboard the trains to Urumqi gushed over Xinjiang's willingness "to find employment opportunities for our city's youth."[100]

While greeting visitors from the east, Xinjiang Party Secretary announced he would be pleased to see 150,000 Shanghainese come over a period of five-years and 300,000 over a period of ten years. Zhang Zhonghan was even more ambitious.[101] The Second Political Commissar of the Production and Construction Corps, Zhang told a visiting Shanghai goodwill delegation in November 1965 that "the *bingtuan* wants nearly 100,000 young people every year."[102] Shanghai's goodwill mission was certainly listening, as they soon announced that the city would send "an unending stream [of young people] to build the frontier."[103]

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[99] Shanghai shi fu Jiang fangwentuan (Delegation of Shanghai in Xinjiang), "Guanyu fangwen Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo baogao" ("Work Report on the Visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), December 1963, SMA, A62-1-19, 140-151. See also Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), "Shiwei pizhuan Wang Ke deng tongzhi guanyu fangwen Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan de gongzuo baogao" ("The Municipal Committee Approves and Forwards Comrade Wang Ke's Work Report on the Visit to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), January 28, 1964, SMA, A62-1-19, 128-139. Also in ZZQZ, 57-68.

[100] Tianjin shi laodong ju (Tianjin Municipal Labor Bureau) et al, "Guanyu qu Xinjiang wei wo shi shehui qingnian xunzhao anzhi menlu he husong zhibian qingnian gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Trip to Xinjiang to Find Settlement Opportunities for Tianjin's Social Youth and the Work Situation of Escorting *Zhibian* Youth"), February 10, 1964, TMA-1, 53-2-2005, 1-15. See also in TMA-1 198-2-1979, 1-15.

[101] Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan (All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Guanyu Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan gongzuo qingkuang de baogao" ("Report on the Work of the All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang"), December 5, 1965, SMA, C21-2-2555, 148-163.

[102] Shanghai shi gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan (All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan di'er zhengwei Zhang Zhonghan tongzhi tingqu weiwentuan zai Jiang huodong qingkuang huibao hou de tanhua jiyao" ("Record of XPCC 2nd Political Comissar Comrade Zhang Zhonghan's Remarks upon Hearing the Report of the Goodwill Mission's Activities in Xinjiang"), November 18, SMA, C21-2-2555, 134-139.

[103] Shanghai gejie renmin fu Jiang weiwentuan (All Shanghai Goodwill Mission to Xinjiang), "Weiwen jianghua" ("Goodwill Speech"), August 16, 1965, SMA, B127-1-884, 18-22. See also Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei and Shanghai shi renmin weiyuanhui, "Gei canjia Xinjiang jianshe de Shanghai qingnian de weiwenxin," August 12, 1965, SMA, B127-1-884, 37-38.

Chapter 5: Disavowal

## Introduction

On May 17, 1966, Zhang Zhonghan (张仲瀚) gazed upon a sea of "educated youth." Standing at the front of Shanghai's Cultural Square, the Second Political Commissar of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps counted a crowd of over 13,000 *zhiqing*. Anxious to come face-to-face with "so many inspiring Shanghai youth," Zhang later learned that his audience was even larger: 30,000 more young people around the city had tuned in via radio broadcast to hear what the *bingtuan*'s second-in-command had to say.[1]

Despite his rank, Zhang was not an imposing figure. Contemporary photographs of Zhang capture a straight-faced, expressionless man. Aside from appearance, he was also an incredibly long-winded speaker. Zhang's prepared remarks for his May 17 speech, written in small type, sprawled across 18 entire pages. How was this man, delivering the keynote speech at probably the largest "Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages" mobilization event ever convened in Shanghai, going to rouse such a huge audience?

Easy: simply by saying something new. Boastful and candid, Zhang rarely indulged in the type of dull boilerplate that his audience was so accustomed to hearing on

[1] Gongqingtuan Shanghai shiwei diqu qingnian gongzuo bu (Regional Youth Work Department of the Shanghai Party Committee of the Communist Youth League), " Shanghai diqu zhishi qingnian ting le Zhang Zhonghan tongzhi zai 'dongyuan Shanghai zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe baogao dahui' baogao hou de fanying" ("Responses among the Shanghai Region's Educated Youth who Listened to Comrade Zhang Zhonghan's Report at the 'Conference for the Mobilization of Shanghai's Educated Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's Construction'"), May 18, 1966, SMA, C21-1-1141, 242-245. See also Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 45.

these occasions. Zhang, for instance, did not shirk from admitting that the *zhiqing* were embarking for hostile territory: "some ethnic minorities" despised the Han, Zhang casually remarked. He also playfully ridiculed the so-called "Soviet revisionists," stating that the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps "must absolutely put on a show against them." Besides Zhang, no one else dared to speak to the on-the-ground realities of Xinjiang with such candor.

The most remarkable aspect about Zhang's speech was the vision for the future which he laid out. Zhang proclaimed that Xinjiang was a "blank piece of paper" (一张白纸 *yizhang baizhi*), ready to be transformed and made anew by his nearly 45,000 listeners.[2] Evoking the type of authoritarian high-modernism that had birthed the campaign in the first place, Zhang showed that he—even on the eve of the Cultural Revolution—remained a faithful believer in using state-led, urban-to-rural population resettlement to achieve ambitious goals. He mused over Xinjiang's thirst for more sweat and blood, commenting that the *bingtuan* was prepared to absorb 30,000 *zhiqing* from Shanghai in 1966 alone. Yet what of the years still to come? Zhang fantasized aloud: "what if it could be 40,000 or 50,000 in the future?" Why stop there, Zhang asked: "even better, what if 100,000 or 200,000 people could go in a year?"[3]

[2] See also the fragmented memoirs which Zhang penned on his deathbed, in which he wrote of his awe at Xinjiang's landscapes but his faith in "man's unsurpassable willpower" to tame the "huge deserts [and] the grand Gobi" and to endure "the immense storms, temperatures below negative 10 degrees, and the other abominations of Xinjiang." See Zhang Zhonghan, "Yi Xinjiang" ("Recalling Xinjiang"), 1979, in Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Hun xi Tianshan: Mianhuai Zhang Zhonghan tongzhi* (Spirit of the Tianshan: Cherishing the Memory of Comrade Zhang Zhonghan (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1992), 320.

[3] "Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan di'er zhengwei Zhang Zhonghan tongzhi zai 'Dongyuan Shanghai zhishi qingnian canjia Xinjiang jianshe baogao dahui' shang de baogao jilu" ("Record of the Report of Second Political Commissar of the Chinese People's Liberation Army Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps Comrade Zhang Zhonghan at the "Conference for the Mobilization of Shanghai's Educated Youth to Participate in Xinjiang's

Although, as we have seen from the preceding chapters, the reality of the on-the-ground experiences of the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang clashed with the state's promises, the complaints and protests of the educated youth did not deter state planners such as Zhang Zhonghan. The emotional displeasure and physical discomfort experienced by the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang, at least at this stage, would not be the undoing of state-led population resettlement as a comprehensive, highly "rationale" state-building tool. After several years of successful experimentation with urban-to-rural resettlement, state leaders were more determined than ever to carry on with the campaign. The spring of 1966 was, in Zhang and many others' minds, just the beginning of a grand project to color in that blank piece of paper, Xinjiang, with the youth of the nation.

Unfortunately for Zhang Zhonghan, his proposal for a dramatic scale-up in population resettlement to Xinjiang was voiced one day too late. On May 16, 1966, Mao Zedong issued his famous "notification" (通知 *tongzhi*) launching the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.[4] Over the next three years, Mao's campaign to purge the Chinese Communist Party of "capitalist roaders" and "revisionists" would disrupt and ultimately destroy urban-to-rural population resettlement, at least as it had been practiced since 1962.

The start of Mao's "last revolution" in the spring and summer of 1966 handicapped resettlement work, preventing Shanghai and other cities from dispatching additional young people to Xinjiang.[5] The temporary hiatus in mobilization work became

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Construction"), May 17, 1966, SMA, B105-4-25, 74-82. Also available in SMA C21-1-1141, 94-111. Reprinted in ZZQZ, 146-173, and in XSJBLWX, vol. 1, 381-406.

[4] Roderick MacFarquhar and Michael Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2006), 39-43.

[5] "Last revolution" is of course borrowed from MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*. For overviews of the Cultural Revolution in Xinjiang, see Sandrine Emmanuelle Catris, "The Cultural

permanent as the Cultural Revolution progressed, leading to a total collapse of institutional linkages between Xinjiang and the sending communities. Many *zhiqing* already in Xinjiang, moreover, opted to return to the cities to "carry out revolution" (闹革命 *nao geming*), while many other young people felt compelled to flee Xinjiang due to the extreme violence of Mao's great political-ideological campaign. As the human footprint of population resettlement receded, the central leadership disavowed resettlement to Xinjiang and shuttered the entire Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. After years of championing population resettlement to the far northwest, the campaign ended abruptly.

This chapter unpacks these and other consequences of the Cultural Revolution on state-led population resettlement to Xinjiang. After first setting the scene through a narrative of the early Cultural Revolution in the far northwest and inside the *bingtuan*, the chapter then plots out how and why Zhou Enlai and other central-level leaders decided to disown rustication to the far northwest. With the collapse of institutional linkages between Xinjiang and the sending communities, Shanghai and other cities built up new population resettlement networks and devised other means of dealing with their "excess" youth populations. In the meantime, the radicalism of the era prompted many *zhiqing* to leave Xinjiang and return home, both for the sake of revolution and as an act of quiet revolt.

**The Cultural Revolution Begins**

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Revolution from the Edge: Violence and Revolutionary Spirit in Xinjiang, 1966-1976" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2015); Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 308-325. For an overview of the Cultural Revolution inside of the Xinjiang *bingtuan*, see Li Fusheng, ed., *Xinjiang bingtuan tunken shubian shi* (History of the Xinjiang *Bingtuan* Opening Up Wastelands and Garrisoning the Frontier), vol. 2 (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang keji weisheng chubanshe, 1997),769-817.

Mao Zedong's May 16, 1966, purges cut deeply into the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. While the clean-up in Beijing marked the beginning of a "Great Cultural Revolution" at the level of elite politics, Mao's infamous May 16 "notification" reverberated across China.[6] In every corner of the country in the summer and fall of 1966, Mao loyalists carried out aggressive leadership struggles and purges, modeling their actions on Beijing's public shaming of "capitalists" and other anti-Party elements.[7]

The situation was no different in Xinjiang. Young Chinese, inspired by the Chairman's call for a cultural revolution, made fierce accusations against the long-time Party Secretary of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Wang Enmao (王恩茂). Calling him Liu Shaoqi's "agent" (代理人 *daili ren*) on the ground in the far northwest,[8] in the summer of 1966 radicals accused Wang of remaining "silent" on Mao's May 16 notification. Even worse, some Maoists claimed that the Party Secretary was deliberately trying to "extinguish the raging fire of the Cultural Revolution."[9]

If Wang was extinguishing Mao's fire, agitated students at Urumqi's No. 1 Middle School were reigniting it. Young Han Chinese in the capital pushed the Cultural Revolution forward on August 30, 1966, proclaiming that "revolution is no crime; there

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[6] Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 315.
[7] This was a nationwide phenomenon. See Andrew G. Walder, *China Under Mao: A Revolution Derailed* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 200-201.
[8] Zhongguo renmin jiefangjun Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan Akesu "Bing gong si" "Xinjiang fengbao" bianjibu and Shanghai waiguoyu xue hong weibing "fan xiu shanshi" "Shang wai shuguan" bianji bu, eds., *Xinjiang dang nei zui dade zou zipai—Wang Enmao shi zui da de litong waiguo fenzi* (The Biggest Capitalist Roader inside the Party in Xinjiang: Wang Enmao has Treasonous Relations with a Foreign Country) (Shanghai, 1967), AC.
[9] Xinjiang hong er si fu Hu xuexi diaocha tuan (Xinjiang 2nd Red Headquarters Study and Investigation Team in Shanghai) ed., "Xinjiang hong er si douzheng jianjie" ("Brief Introduction to the Struggle of the Xinjiang 2nd Red Headquarters") (1967), 1, AC. See also Wu Guang, *Bushi meng: Dui 'wenge' niandai de huiyi* (Not a Dream: Memories of the 'Cultural Revolution' Era) (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 2000), 5-6, 12-14.

is reason to rebel" (革命无罪，造反有理 *geming wuzui, zaofan youli*). While "big character posters" or *dazibao* (大字报) went up inside of Urumqi's walled campuses, the first group of Red Guards from Beijing arrived in the city to "link-up" (串联 *chuanlian*) and exchange revolutionary experiences with local youth.[10]

The attacks on Party Secretary Wang Enmao grew in severity following the so-called "September 3rd Incident." The previous day, Wang had made a major public address in which he allegedly admitted to the errors of his ways, yet when the *Xinjiang Daily* printed the text of Wang's speech, the Party Secretary's self-criticisms had been removed. Radicalized local youth, aided by the Beijing Red Guards, surrounded the Party headquarters and demanded to see Wang Enmao.[11] While the Party Secretary initially chose to seclude himself in his eighth floor office, the crowd below grew larger and more belligerent. When the Red Guards began a hunger strike, Wang allegedly responded by sending 90 PLA soldiers to deal with them.[12] These defensive efforts did not get Wang very far. In fact, his use of the military backfired, as the rebels now accused the Party Secretary of using the PLA—and, by extension, the *bingtuan*—to "suppress the masses."[13] By mid-October, the radical youth declared an open split with Wang Enmao's "bourgeois reactionary line." After forming the "Xinjiang Red Guard Revolutionary Headquarters," or the 2nd Red Headquarters (红二司 *Hong er si*), the Red Guards aimed to topple the existing leadership and assert their own control over Xinjiang.[14]

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[10] Xinjiang hong er si fu Hu xuexi diaocha tuan, ed., "Xinjiang hong er si douzheng jianjie," 1. See also Wu, *Bushi meng*, 5-6, 12-14.
[11] Wu, *Bushi meng*, 5-9.
[12] Xinjiang hong er si fu Hu xuexi diaocha tuan, ed., "Xinjiang hong er si douzheng jianjie," 1.
[13] Handwritten tract from the Hong er si Ke fenbu (Karamay Division of the 2nd Red Headquarters), May 1967, AC.
[14] Xinjiang hong er si fu Hu xuexi diaocha tuan, ed., "Xinjiang hong er si douzheng jianjie," 1-2.

**Leadership Cleavages in Xinjiang**

The Party Committee of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region faced a revolution from below, but what of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps? In spring and summer 1966, the *bingtuan*'s problems were from within. The organization splintered into factions: an "old" faction which included long-time veterans such as Zhang Zhonghan, and a "new" faction represented by Ding Sheng (丁盛) and Pei Zhouyu (裴周玉), two men appointed to the *bingtuan* only in 1964.

Recent Chinese historiography tends to blame Ding and Pei for catapulting the *bingtuan* into turmoil, but other sources show how these two men drew on the language of the Cultural Revolution for the sake of their own self-preservation. According to the Hong Kong-published memoirs of Ding Sheng, he and Pei Zhouyu were branded by Zhang Zhonghan as the "black hands" (黑手 *heishou*) of General Luo Ruiqing (罗瑞卿), a man famously purged by Mao earlier in 1966. Over the course of the summer, they were repeatedly summoned to the *bingtuan*'s headquarters, presumably to be ridiculed and attacked in front of audiences of their peers. Whey they avoided these forums as much as possible, Ding recalled that he was also the object of much *dazibao* scorn on the streets of Urumqi.[15]

On July 22, 1966, Zhang Zhonghan convened a leadership conference to study Mao Zedong's so-called "May 7th Instructions," which the Chairman had dictated to Lin Biao. While the meeting primarily was to ensure that the *bingtuan* followed Mao's directives, Zhang also took the opportunity to lambast Ding Sheng for disputing the

[15] Ding Sheng, *Luonan yingxiong: Ding Sheng jiangjun huiyilu* (Distressed Hero: The Memoirs of General Ding Sheng), ed. Yu Ruxin (Xianggang: Xin shiji chuban ji chuanmei youxian gongsi, 2011), 123-124.

Production and Construction Corps' rich history.[16] Under these circumstances, Ding, as well as Pei Zhouyu, began to defend themselves. They announced that the Xinjiang and Production Corps was a revisionist organization led by Guomindang reactionaries—a reminder that the head of the *bingtuan*, Tao Zhiyue (陶峙岳), was a reformed member of the Nationalist Army who had been stationed in Xinjiang long before the 1949 Communist Revolution.[17] These criticisms of General Tao easily extended to the Production and Construction Corps commander's self-described friends, Zhang Zhonghan and Wang Zhen.[18]

After these stinging attacks on the leadership, Ding Sheng and Pei Zhouyu proceeded to create "Cultural Revolution Small Groups" within the *bingtuan*.[19] While Tao Zhiyue and Zhang Zhonghan fought back, Ding and Pei prevailed—at least temporarily.[20] On August 21, they had gained enough support to temporarily discharge Zhang Zhonghan, announcing that he had fallen ill and would be recuperating in a hospital for the foreseeable future. In the interim, Pei Zhouyu was placed in charge of the *bingtuan*'s day-to-day affairs. His first move, unsurprisingly, was to anoint Ding Sheng as the leader (组长 *zuzhang*) of the Production and Construction Corps' Cultural Revolution Leading Small Group.

While Zhang Zhonghan was already sidelined, the rival faction did not cease in its attacks. At a major cadres meeting held on August 26, 1966, Ding Sheng claimed that

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[16] Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 321.
[17] Feng Shou, *Zhen bian jiangjun: Zhang Zhonghan* (Zhang Zhonghan: A General on the Edges) (Beijing: Zuojia chubanshe, 2005), 472.
[18] Tao Zhiyue, *Tao Zhiyue zishu* (Tao Zhiyue in His Own Words) (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1985), 213-214. See also Hu Yongyang et al, *Tao Zhiyue jiangjun* (General Tao Zhiyue) (Beijing: Dangjian duwu chubanshe, 1994).
[19] XSJBD, 188-189.
[20] XSJBFS, 280-281.

Zhang Zhonghan was the head of an "anti-Party clique" which included several leaders spread-out across the Production and Construction Corps. Over the next several weeks, Ding cleared the ranks and ousted many of Zhang's ostensible associates from power.[21] When, for example, Lin Haiqing (林海清), Commander of the 1st Agricultural Division in Aksu, made a public stand against violence and parading perceived enemies around in dunce caps, he was accused of being a capitalist roader who represented neither the wills of the Party or the people.[22]

**Ending Resettlement to Xinjiang**

In the summer of 1966, the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps informed authorities in Shanghai that the *bingtuan* could receive 5,000 more young people before the end of the year. Asking for recruits who were "determined to go to Xinjiang and carry forth the revolution," the Production and Construction Corps cautioned that the *zhiqing* would need to arrive in Xinjiang before the start of winter in October, cotton quilts in hand.[23]

But the Cultural Revolution was changing state-led resettlement to Xinjiang in surprising and unexpected ways. For its part, Shanghai found it difficult to identify and mobilize 5,000 promising youth due to the influence of Mao's "last revolution." The leading Communist Youth League official in Shanghai, Zhang Haobo (张浩波) explained that "students linking up en masses," or freely heading off to other cities to exchange revolutionary experiences, was a major impediment to state-led rural-to-urban

[21] XSJBFS, 281. See also Feng, *Zhen bian jiangjun*, 472-473.
[22] Nong yi shi shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nong yi shi jianshi* (A Brief History of the First Agricultural Division) (Wulumuqi: Xinjiang remin chubanshe, 2002), 189-190.
[23] Zhonggong Shanghai shi laodong gongzi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Labor-Wage Committee), letter to the Municipal Party Committee, September 12, 1966, SMA, A11-2-71, 11-13. Reprinted in ZZQZ, 174-176.

resettlement.[24] A local labor office added that while patriotic youth had once been content to go to Xinjiang, "now they are joining the Red Guards and are busy with the Cultural Revolution movement." Instead of the great northwest, Shanghai youth were now "heading off to Beijing for the revolution and to link-up."[25]

Other cities along the east coast reported similar problems. Hangzhou, which had only sent 94 individuals to Xinjiang to date, planned to dispatch 2,000 young people to Xinjiang after May 1966. In the end, it sent zero.[26] In October, the office in charge of youth resettlement in Changzhou, Jiangsu Province, announced that "because the Great Cultural Revolution Movement is reaching a high-tide in schools," they could had problems mobilizing students to go to Xinjiang.[27] Indeed, educated youth in Shanghai proclaimed that "no one should be mobilized to aid the frontier during the Cultural Revolution" and, as such, they refused to go to Xinjiang.[28]

Aside from the radicalization of urban youth in Shanghai and other eastern cities, the chaos of the movement in the far northwest also complicated efforts to move *zhiqing* to Xinjiang. Aside from the leadership struggles inside of the Xinjiang Party Committee and Production and Construction Corps, railway blockades posed an immediate and

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[24] ZZQZ, 283.
[25] Zhonggong Shanghai shi laodong gongzi weiyuanhui, letter to the Municipal Party Committee, September 12, 1966, SMA, A11-2-71, 11-13.
[26] Hangzhou shi laodong ju (Hangzhou Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu yijiuliuliu nian shehui laodongli anzhi gongzuo de yijian (taolun gao)" ("Draft Views for Discussion on Resettling Social Labor in 1966"), May 4, 1966, HMA, 094-001-224, 14-23.
[27] Zhonggong Changzhou shiwei jingjian anzhi xiaozu bangongshi (Office of the CCP Changshou Municipal Committee Streamlining and Settlement Small Group), "Changzhou shi zhishi qingnian xiaxiang shangshan gongzuo qingkuang huibao" ("Report on Changzhou Municipality's Work for Educated Youth to Go Down to the Village and Up to the Mountains"), October 11, 1966, JPA, 3030-003-0122, 29-31.
[28] Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau) and Shanghai shi laodong ju jianweihui (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau Supervision Committee), "Guanyu Xinjiang jixie gongye ju weituo Shanghai peixun de xuetu qu Xinjiang fenpei gongzuo de qingshi baogao" ("Instructing and Reporting on Job Placements in Xinjiang for the Apprentices Entrusted to Shanghai for Training by the Xinjiang Machine Industry Bureau"), April 5, 1967, SMA, B227-2-35, 21-22.

irreconcilable challenge. Some youth who had received orders to go to Xinjiang could not leave Shanghai because the trains to Urumqi were no longer running (many complained that their luggage had been sent in advance). Owing to these and other difficulties, authorities in Shanghai announced in 1966 that "no more students should be approved to go to Xinjiang during the second half of this year" and all appointments should be delayed until spring 1967.[29] On October 8, 1966, Shanghai's Municipal Committee reluctantly agreed to a temporary halt to the population resettlement campaign.[30]

**The Cultural Revolution Deepens**

The simultaneous revolutions brewing outside of the party-state and within the *bingtuan* finally collided in December 1966 following the death of Zhang Zhonghan's closest aide, He Zhenxin (贺振新). A Long March veteran and, in 1966, the Deputy Political Commissar of the Production and Construction Corps, He Zhenxin became wrapped up in the factional struggle inside the *bingtuan.* After reportedly enduring struggle sessions led by Ding and Pei's accomplices for over three months, He suffered a heart attack and died on December 12. When his passing was announced, thousands of young people from the Agricultural Institute, the Tarim Reclamation University, and other *bingtuan* work units assembled in Urumqi and demanded that Ding Sheng show himself. Rather than appear, Ding flew to Beijing, provoking the young *bingtuan*'ers to stage a hunger strike (known as the December 19th Sit-In Hunger Strike).[31]

[29] Zhonggong Shanghai shi laodong gongzi weiyuanhui, letter to the Municipal Party Committee, September 12, 1966, SMA, A11-2-71, 11-13.
[30] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), letter to the Municipal Labor-Wage Committee, October 8, 1966, SMA, A11-2-71, 2. Reprinted in ZZQZ, 177.
[31] XSJBFS, 281-282; XSJBD, 192; Wu, *Bushi meng*, 17-23.

This incident revealed that, despite seizing control over the Xinjiang and Production Corps, Ding Sheng and Pei Zhouyu hardly enjoyed public support.[32] Huang Heqing (黄河清), who was a *zhiqing* in Xinjiang during the Cultural Revolution, claimed while Ding and Pei had done much to jumpstart the Cultural Revolution inside of the *bingtuan*, they were seen by radical youth as capitalist roaders just as much as Wang Enmao.[33] Pei Zhouyu's memoirs also feature passages demonstrating how the various factions were so often subject to the same brands of attack—"capitalist roaders," "agents of Liu Shaoqi," and so forth—from radicalized Red Guards.[34]

The 2nd Red Headquarters thus wasted little time to bridge the struggles against Wang Enmao and Ding Sheng.[35] The rebel organization announced that Ding, as the chief representative of the reactionary bourgeois line within the *bingtuan*, had fled Urumqi "under Wang Enmao's protection."[36] The Party Committee and the Production and Construction Corps were now both beleaguered from within and from below.

**Xinjiang's Cultural Revolution Comes to Beijing**

Just as readers today may find it difficult to keep track of the twists and turns of the Cultural Revolution's first year in Xinjiang, so too did Beijing's leaders. Kang Sheng (康生), a close confidant to Chairman Mao, rather comically expressed his confusion when he spoke with representatives of Xinjiang's 2nd Red Headquarters in November:

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[32] Several Chinese sources imply the opposite. See Zhao Han and Tang Jingfei, "Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan zaoqi wenge shu'e" ("On the Early Cultural Revolution within the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), *Jiyi* no. 76 (September 2011), 14-17.
[33] "Huang Heqing tan 'Xinjiang shengchan bingtuan zaoqi wenge shu'e' yiwen" ("Huang Heqing on 'A Brief Account of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps during the Early Cultural Revolution'"), *Ji yi* no. 77 (October 2011): 87-88.
[34] Pei Zhouyu, *Pei Zhouyu huiyilu* (Memoirs of Pei Zhouyu) (Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 1996), 326-327.
[35] Pei, *Pei Zhouyu huiyilu*, 326.
[36] Xinjiang hong er si fu Hu xuexi diaocha tuan, ed., "Xinjiang hong er si douzheng jianjie," 3.

> I'm not very clear [about what's happening in Xinjiang]…there's this 'September 3rd Incident,' what was that? I'm not still not clear on this.[37]

Kang Sheng's comments showed the Central Committee's ignorance without revealing their hesitations about the Cultural Revolution in Xinjiang. But the central leadership was stricken with fear. Premier Zhou Enlai, at least, agonized over the Cultural Revolution in the far northwest: would Red Guards attack minority nationalities in Xinjiang and foment Han-Uyghur conflict? Would they make trouble along the Sino-Soviet border? Would they infiltrate military installations in Xinjiang?[38]

Wanting to avoid these potential developments, the Central Committee dipped its toes into Xinjiang in the weeks following Ding Sheng and Pei Zhouyu's coup. Beijing's leaders first decreed that the Cultural Revolution in Northern Xinjiang had to be carefully managed to "safeguard border security and prevent the Soviet revisionists from having something to take advantage of." To maintain state control, the Central Committee encouraged Red Guards to leave Xinjiang as quickly as possible.[39] While the printed text of this resolution made the rounds, Premier Zhou Enlai orally conveyed its contents whenever there was an appropriate opportunity to do so. In October, he reprimanded some of the Red Guards involved in the September 3rd Incident in Urumqi for leaving

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[37] "Kang Sheng dui Xinjiang shaoshu pai 'hong er si' zhanshi de jianghua" ("Kang Sheng's Remarks to the Warriors of Xinjiang's Minority Faction the '2nd Red Headquarters'"), November 16, 1966, in Song Yongyi, ed., *Zhongguo wenhua dageming wenku* (Chinese Cultural Revolution Database [ZWDW]), 3rd ed. (Hong Kong: Universities Service Centre for Chinese Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2013).

[38] ZEN, vol. 3, 58.

[39] "Zhonggong guanyu bianjing diqu wenhua da geming youguan wenti de jueding" ("Decisions of the Central Committee on the Cultural Revolution in Border Areas"), September 4, 1966, in *Hong rizhao tianshan: Guanyu Xinjiang wenti zhonggong zhongyang wenjian ji zhongyang shouzhang de jianghua* (Red Sunshine over the Tianshan: CCP Central Committee Documents and Addresses of Central Committee Leaders on the Xinjiang Issue [HRT]) (October 1968): 1.

Beijing in the first place: "the entire country cannot go around the country to exchange revolutionary experiences."[40]

The December hunger strikes in Urumqi, the simultaneous attacks on the leadership of the Party Committee and the Production and Construction Corps, and Ding Sheng's fleeing to Beijing all complicated Zhou Enlai's careful attempts to manage the Cultural Revolution in Xinjiang. By continuing to back the existing power structures in the far northwest, the Central Committee risked losing the confidence and support of the masses in Xinjiang. It was for this reason that, on December 23, the Central Committee and the State Council formally offered their "vigorous support" for the 2nd Red Headquarters in Xinjiang. Accordingly, Beijing blamed the Xinjiang Party Committee and the *bingtuan* Party Committee for provoking the students to stage "sit-ins, hunger strikes, and lockouts."[41]

Still, Premier Zhou sought a peaceful resolution to the political crisis in Xinjiang. He phoned the leaders of the protests in Urumqi and asked them to call of the hunger strike; if they would comply, the Premier would broker a meeting in Beijing between the protestors and Wang Enmao.[42] The 2nd Red Headquarters indulged Zhou's pleas, and sent a delegation to Beijing in January 1967.

Zhou opened the meeting by reiterating the Central Government's "support for the revolutionary rebels" in Xinjiang. After his pro forma remarks, the Premier called for caution and patience in the far northwest. He insisted, for example, that it would not be

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[40] "Zhou zongli jiejian 'jiu san' shijian fu Jing huibao daibiaotuan" ("Premier Zhou's Meeting with the Delegation Visiting Beijing to Report on the September 3rd Incident"), October 28, 1966, in HRT: 6; ZEN, vol. 3, 84.
[41] "Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan gei Xinjiang guanyu pipan zi fan luxian de dianwen" ("Cable from the CCP Central Committee and the State Council to Xinjiang Criticizing the Bourgeois Reactionary Line"), December 23, 1966, in ZWDW.
[42] XSJBD, 192.

appropriate for the People's Liberation Army to carry-out a Cultural Revolution to protect the "all-important interests of the motherland." He also asked his guests from the 2nd Red Headquarters to offer Wang Enmao and other leaders enough "time to transform" themselves.[43]

Zhou was straddling a thin line. While he preached stability, the Premier could not outright disavow the Cultural Revolution in Xinjiang. The visiting rebels from Xinjiang recognized as much, and used the meeting as an opportunity to receive formal approval to carry the Cultural Revolution forward. The delegation, appreciating Zhou's concern for stability among PLA ranks, asked what of the Production and Construction Corps: "should there be a Cultural Revolution within the *bingtuan*? If so, how?" Zhou responded that the most of the Production and Construction Corps could in fact be treated the same as "an ordinary school or an ordinary land reclamation area." Except for "armed units" and farms directly adjoining the Sino-Soviet border, the *bingtuan* need not be shielded from the Cultural Revolution.[44]

Premier Zhou's offhand remarks to the 2nd Red Headquarters from January were turned into a formal policy statement on February 11, 1967. Known in Chinese historiography as the "12 Articles",[45] the joint statement from the Central Committee, the State Council, and the Central Military Commission once again attempted to maintain the state's initiative over developments in Xinjiang.[46] The policy document decreed the

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[43] "Zhou Enlai jiejian Xinjiang geming zaofan pai daibiao jianghua jiyao" ("Summary of Zhou Enlai's Remarks at the Meeting with the Representatives of Xinjiang's Revolutionaries and Rebels"), January 27, 1967, in ZWDW. See also ZEN, vol. 3, 117-118.
[44] "Zhou Enlai jiejian Xinjiang geming zaofan pai daibiao jianghua jiyao" ("Summary of Zhou Enlai's Remarks at the Meeting with the Representatives of Xinjiang's Revolutionaries and Rebels"), January 27, 1967, in ZWDW. See also ZEN, vol. 3, 117-118.
[45] See, for example, Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 50-51; XSJBD, 193-194.
[46] Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 310; ZEN, vol. 3, 124.

*bingtuan* would carry out a Cultural Revolution under "the military's control" and without interference from "revolutionary mass organizations." The order allowed the formation of revolutionary organizations within the Production Construction Corps, though they were to be supervised by military and party organs.[47]

**Disavowing Urban-to-Rural Population Resettlement**

Ending the temporary prohibition on resettlement to Xinjiang hinged, in large measure, on the peacemaking efforts of Zhou Enlai. Although the Central Committee had already called on the military and party organs to guard the Cultural Revolution in Xinjiang closely, much remained to be done to preserve the peace in the far northwest. Even Chairman Mao himself recognized the delicate nature of the Cultural Revolution in Xinjiang. He complained after reading a report on the situation on the ground in early February 1967 that "some problems are handled much too slowly." Chiding Lin Biao and Zhou Enlai, the Chairman announced the "the Xinjiang issue should be resolved quickly."[48]

Mao's comments were made much too late. The Cultural Revolution in Xinjiang was already slipping dangerously out of control. In January 1967, rebels within the *bingtuan* attempted to replicate Shanghai's January Storm by seizing control over Shihezi, an important *bingtuan* municipality attached to the 8th Agricultural Division. They clashed with armed units attached to the Production and Construction Corps at

[47] "Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan, zhongyang junwei guiding" ("Provisions of the CCP Central Committee, State Council, and CMC"), February 11, 1967, in HRT: 3-4.
[48] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., *Jianguo yilai Mao Zedong wengao* (Mao Zedong's Manuscripts since the Founding of the PRC [JYMW]), vol. 12 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1998), 218; ZEN, vol. 3, 123.

several factories and farms inside of Shihezi, leading to 27 deaths and more than 78 other injuries.[49]

Understanding what happened in Shihezi and why is not presently possible due to a paucity of unbiased source material. The outcomes and consequences of the violence, however, are much clearer. In the aftermath of the so-called "January 26th Incident," Ding Sheng and Pei Zhouyu returned to the forefront of the Cultural Revolution inside of the *bingtuan*. More importantly, they formally gained the backing of Zhou Enlai and the Central Committee.

The two men turned Zhang Zhonghan into a scapegoat. Already in December 1966, while temporarily exiled in Beijing, Ding had argued to the Central Committee that Zhang was a man "against Mao Zedong thought," a "revisionist," and the chief organizer of the Urumqi hunger strikes. He won the sympathies of Lin Biao and Jiang Qing, who agreed that the Second Political Commissar was "a bourgeois dandy" (资产阶级花花公子 *zichan jieji huahua gongzi*).[50] The January violence in Shihezi provided Ding and Zhou with additional ammunition to indict Zhang formally and oust him from the ranks of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. According to their politicized judgement:

> The January 26th Incident was a counterrevolutionary incident against the seizure of power and against the seizure of military power orchestrated by Wu Guang and Zhang Zhonghan, colluding with old Guomindang officers, old soldiers, and social monsters who adhere to reactionary positions.[51]

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[49] Wang Nianyi, *Da dongluan de niandai* (The Era of Great Tumult) (Zhengzhou: Henan renmin chubanshe, 1988), 212-213; Nong ba shi Shihezi shi difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nong ba shi kenqu Shihezi shizhi*, 506; XSJBFS, 282; Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 312; Wu, *Bushi meng*, 35-38.
[50] XSJBFS, 282.
[51] XSJBFS, 282-283; Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 312-313.

Zhang Zhonghan was captured and detained in January and forced to sit through a show trial in March.[52] The event was capstoned by a nearly 9,000-character exposé of Zhang's crimes read aloud by Zhou Enlai.[53] The purging of other *bingtuan* leaders loyal to Zhang, such as Lin Haiqing of the 1st Agricultural Division, unfolded over the course of spring and summer 1967.[54]

The imprisoning of Zhang Zhonghan and the tarnishing of his legacy—all with the formal backing of Beijing—mattered to the future of population resettlement to Xinjiang. As we saw above, Zhang was the chief proponent of urban educated youth coming to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps. By formally ousting Zhang, Ding Sheng and Pei Zhouyu also brought a permanent end to the campaign.

By this stage of the Cultural Revolution, Premier Zhou consented to and encouraged these developments. He explained to visiting radicals from Xinjiang in 1967 that Zhang Zhonghan, an "extravagant and wasteful" (铺张浪费 *puzhang langfei*) man, was not worth "saving."[55] The Premier not only rebuked Zhang for not "holding high the red banner of Mao Zedong thought" and "committing such serious crimes," but proceeded to distance himself from population resettlement to Xinjiang—a campaign which, as will be recalled, Zhou had helped to invent several years earlier. As Zhou explained at Zhang Zhonghan's show-trial in March, "[we] must analyze the X-thousands of persons making up the foundations of the Production and Construction Corps," if we

[52] XSJBFS, 283.
[53] XSJBD, 194.
[54] Nong yi shi shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nong yi shi jianshi*, 195.
[55] "Zhou Enlai jiejian Xinjiang geming zaofan pai daibiao jianghua jiyao" ("Summary of Zhou Enlai's Remarks at the Meeting with the Representatives of Xinjiang's Revolutionaries and Rebels"), January 27, 1967, in ZWDW. See also ZEN, vol. 3, 117-118.

are to understand why the *bingtuan* required a Cultural Revolution, as "the composition is not so healthy."[56]

Disaggregating the Production and Construction Corps, Zhou found four constituent parts which did not quite make a whole. He outlined them as follows:

> First there are X-thousand reform-through-laborers. Of course, this is not to say that the reform-through-laborers are bad people. Quite a few have remade themselves, some are even inventing and creating. But the foundation will always be a bit worse [because of this group].

Aside from criminals, convicts, and ideological foes, Zhou continued to describe a second group constituting the Production and Construction Corps:

> There are X-thousands [of people] who blindly came [to Xinjiang]. Of course, [we] cannot say they are all bad. When China Proper was having difficulties [during the Great Leap Forward], some heard that Xinjiang was a good place. All their friends and relatives had come. We want to divide [this group] into two: the majority are good, but it will always have a small portion which is bad.

Zhou's third category centered on the more than 100,000 young people who had been resettled to Xinjiang by the state since 1961:

> There are X-thousands of youth who are aiding the border regions, [including] X-thousand from Shanghai. [In terms of] family backgrounds, many are from the exploitative class of families. You can't say that one cannot be transformed just because they came from a bad class family background; through long-term revolution, one can be transformed.

Here Zhou was calling back to his famous July 1965 site visit in Shihezi, during which, as we saw in Chapter 4, he had encouraged the ideological and social transformation of the Shanghai *zhiqing.* But at Zhang Zhonghan's show trial, Zhou appeared to change tact. The Premier continued to say that:

> When I was at Shihezi [in 1965] I encouraged some youth of bad family backgrounds and called on them to transform [themselves], but the writing of that essay was not done in two parts; I did not see it prior to publication.

[56] "Zhou zongli zai pipan Zhang Zhonghan zongjie huiyi shang de jianghua" ("Premier Zhou's Remarks at the Wrap-Up Session for the Criticisms of Zhang Zhonghan"), March 3, 1967, in HRT: 14-20.

> At the time, to encourage them, I didn't want to interfere. It's hard to transform the youth aiding the border region of bad family backgrounds. Some went on hunger strike and demanded to return to Shanghai.

In other words, while Zhou Enlai's remarks to Yang Yongqing had been published and re-published over-and-over again, the Premier now wanted to distance himself from them. He no longer believed that the urban educated youth from Shanghai and other eastern cities could truly be transformed, even after many years of hard labor on the frontiers of China.

After introducing the fourth group making up the *bingtuan*, Zhou proceeded to offer an apology on behalf of the Central Committee.[57] As he stated:

> The entirety of the Production and Construction Corps has come from all over. X-thousand have complicated backgrounds and need to be paid attention to. You must thoroughly analyze every aspect and then you will understand [why] we must transform this foundation. The Central Committee will be responsible for this over a certain period, say five years, or an even longer period.

The Premier continued to disavow the practice of urban-to-rural resettlement:

> [We] won't give you reform-through-laborers; there's already too many. [If we] continued to give [you] more it'd create more baggage [for you]. [We] won't necessarily send the people with bad family backgrounds to you. In the past we had Shanghai give them to you, but in the future, [we'll] want to find a new place. Of course, Shanghai can change through the Cultural Revolution. In general, as you're undergoing political-ideological transformation, we'll organize to give you some help...we won't give you reform-through-laborers for some time.

Zhou Enlai expressed similar regrets on several occasions over the next several years. In May 1968, Zhou, referring to the various social constituencies of the *bingtuan*, once again criticized the practice of sending urban youth to Xinjiang. Apologizing, Zhou

[57] The fourth group included soldiers who had once worked for the Guomindang but, in 1949, had pledged their allegiance to the Communist Party. This included Tao Zhiyue, the leader of the Production and Construction Corps.

stated the entire practice "was correct from the perspective of Shanghai, but it increased the burden on you."[58]

In March 1968, the Production and Construction Corps received orders from the Civil Office and Armed Offensive Headquarters, a temporary Cultural Revolution institution, to shutter its liaison office in Shanghai.[59] Recalling its personnel from Shanghai, the *bingtuan* had now fully divorced itself from the urban-to-rural population resettlement relationships it had across the eastern seaboard. But the connectivity between Xinjiang and Shanghai persisted, but much of it now out of the hands of the Production and Construction Corps.

**Abandoning Post**

On September 5, 1966, the Central Committee and the State Council called on "representative" university students, secondary school students, and workers to descend up Beijing to "exchange revolutionary experiences" (交流革命经验 *jiaoliu geming jingyan*) and thereby accelerate the Cultural Revolution's development. While the leadership had in mind a relatively organized, short-term gathering in which each province, autonomous region, and major city would send a small number of delegates, the idea of "linking-up" spread quickly by word of mouth. In addition to attracting rural youth, educated youth also responded enthusiastically to the September 5 call.[60]

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[58] "Zhou zongli yiji Wu Faxian, Qiu Huizuo deng tongzhi wu yue si ri jiejian bingtuan zai Jing fuze tongzhi shi de zhongyao zhishi" ("Importance Instructions from Comrade Premier Zhou, Wu Faxian, and Qiu Huizuo's May 4th Reception of the Responsible Cadres of the *Bingtuan* in Beijing"), May 4, 1968, in HRT: 31-38.

[59] Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan silingbu (Headquarters of the Xinjiang Military District Production and Construction Corps), "Guanyu jinhou yu Shanghai jinxing jingji xiezuo yewu lianxi wenti de han" ("Letter on Future Economic Cooperation and Business Contacts with Shanghai"), March 4, 1968, SMA, B74-1-1732, 30-31.

[60] Ding, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi*, 257; Yang Su, *Collective Killings in Rural China during the Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 173.

Notifications posted across the farms inhabited by the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang proclaimed that "the entire nation must be thoroughly mobilized," prompting the rusticates to ask whether this meant they should leave Xinjiang and bring the Cultural Revolution back to their home cities. Several hundred took the opportunity to go to Beijing to complain about mistreatment and hardships.[61] Others individuals used the Cultural Revolution merely as a pretext to rejoin their families. But there were also some *zhiqing* who did in fact earnestly believe in the movement. When the captain at one farm in the Tarim Basin chastised a group of Shanghainese for announcing their intent to leave, the group pushed their demand up the leadership hierarchy. Even when higher ranking *bingtuan* personnel disputed the meaning of the Central Committee's Cultural Revolution announcement and refused to allow the *zhiqing* to leave Xinjiang, many did so regardless.[62]

The disastrous situation on the ground in Xinjiang probably motivated more educated youth to leave than earnest revolutionary desires. Although the leadership over the *bingtuan* had stabilized somewhat in 1967, the same could not be said for the Xinjiang Party Committee. Zhou Enlai kept up his mediation efforts in Xinjiang in the spring of 1967, meeting, for example, Party Secretary Wang Enmao in the morning and with the 2nd Red Headquarters later the same day.[63] The 2nd Red Headquarters continued to organize massive demonstrations in Urumqi, demanding the resignation and imprisonment of Xinjiang's core leadership.[64] A detachment of the 2nd Red Headquarters

[61] Ziyou xiongdi, *Zhongguo zhiqing bange shiji de xuelei shi* (A History of the Chinese *Zhiqing's* Half Century of Blood and Tears), vol. 4 (Taibei: Duli zuojia, 2015), 12.
[62] Ai, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang*, 272-273.
[63] ZEN, vol. 3, 140-141.
[64] Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 311.

called on Uyghurs to Urumqi in May 1968, for example, to "bring down Wang Enmao's big Han chauvinism."[65]

Zhou Enlai believed he had brokered a truce between the rebels and the loyalists on October 1, 1968.[66] Later that month, he even suggested to the 2nd Red Headquarters that they should appoint Wang Enmao to the Revolutionary Party Committee.[67] But at the same time, Lin Biao accused Wang Enmao and He Long of wanting to "turn Xinjiang into an independent kingdom." The accusations against Wang, still technically Party Secretary, rippled through the bureaucracies in Xinjiang. He was routinely criticized at party and military meetings in fall and winter 1968, so much so that he fled the Autonomous Region in spring 1969.[68]

These were not mere rhetorical struggles. In May 1967, the warring factions physically fought for control over *Xinjiang Daily*. The violence surrounding the right to control information marked the beginning of full-blown civil war in Xinjiang.[69] At the end of the month, the rebels and the Wang Enmao loyalists fought for control over a coal plant and a power plant; without the intervention of armed forces, the struggle over these two buildings threatened to knock power out for the entire city.[70] Infighting was so intense in Xinjiang that the Xinjiang People's Press could not even produce copies of Mao's *Little Red Book* in 1967.[71] Urumqi became a police state in which 6,000 armed

[65] Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 323.
[66] ZEN, vol. 3, 250.
[67] ZEN, vol. 3, 254.
[68] Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 317-318.
[69] Zhu, *20shiji Xinjiang shi yanjiu*, 315-316.
[70] ZEN, vol. 3, 156.
[71] Mao zhuxi zhuzuo chuban bangongshi (Publication Office for Chairman Mao's Works), "Yaoqiu Xinjiang renmin chubanshe liang pai shixian lianhe tongyi he zhongyang youguan bumen lianxi Mao zhuxi zhuzuo chuban gongzuo" ("Demand that the Two Factions inside the Xinjiang People's Press Unite and Work with the Relevant Departments of the Central Committee on Publication Work related to Chairman Mao's Works"), November 1, 1967, SMA, B244-2-116, 37; Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu Mao zhuxi zhuzuo

guards patrolled the city and occupied all street corners. The entire city came to a halt in summer 1967.[72] The civil war outside of Urumqi was just as intense. In Kashgar, fighting between groups prompted the shutdown of the Southern Xinjiang Highway, a key transit link, for 50 days.[73]

From 1966 through 1969, the *bingtuan*'s productivity cratered along all measurable benchmarks. In 1966, the Production and Construction Cops produced 720,300 tons of grain; two years later, they produced only 459,800 tons. Compared to 1966, cotton production in 1968 was down over 37 percent, while the output of plant based oils was nearly cut in half.[74] Within individual divisions, such as the 1st Agricultural Divisions in the Tarim Basin, total output of certain cash crops from 1967 through 1969 could not even eclipse the amount produced in the single year of 1965.[75]

For *zhiqing,* then, the reasons to leave their work unit were often obvious. Dai Zemin (戴泽民), a 1965 rusticate from Beijing, recalled that "youth aiding the region from all over the country fled Xinjiang to avoid resorting to violence. Dai went to Shanghai under the pretext of setting up a *bingtuan* "liaison office" (联络处 *lianluochu*) for rebels, but this was just "an empty name" (空名而已 *kongming eryi*). Dai merely wanted a reason to get out of Xinjiang.[76]

One 1966 rusticate, Tang Yufang (唐宇放), recalled how many *zhiqing* participated in Mao Zedong study groups as a shield against any potential attacks. During

chuban bangongshi (Publication Office of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region for Chairman Mao's Works), "Guanyu huihu Mao chuxi zhuzuo chuban bangongshi gongzuo de baogao" ("Report on Reviving the Publication Office for Chairman Mao's Works"), November 23, 1967, SMA, B244-2-116, 8.
[72] XSJBFS, 286-287.
[73] ZEN, vol. 3, 195.
[74] XSJBFS, 465.
[75] Nong yi shi shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nong yi shi jianshi*, 204.
[76] Zhao, ed., *Tianshan jiaoxia de Beijing zhiqing*, 285.

a drive to "clean up the class ranks" in August 1968, however, even individuals who had faithfully spread the Mao gospel were subject to attack if they came from tainted family backgrounds. Tang as well as ten others from the same company within 3rd Agricultural Divisions were thrust into a "bald head brigade" (光头班 *guangtou ban*): accused of being counterrevolutionary, each member of the group had their head forcefully shaved. The humiliation did not end here. They were forced to work long hours completing harder work their peers who were deemed to be purer.[77]

Many other *zhiqing* had unjustly suffered because of the Cultural Revolution, sometimes for surprising reasons. Ma Tianlin (马天林), for example, had been persuaded to go to Xinjiang by the proliferation of pro-resettlement propaganda in her Beijing neighborhood in spring 1966. During the Cultural Revolution, she, along with several other zhiqing, were publicly reprimanded by the leader of their socialist education team: "the students from Beijing are counterrevolutionary gangs and are no good at all." The elder did not like the Red Guards from Beijing coming to Xinjiang to "link-up," such as those who arrived early in summer 1966 *dazibao* in hand, and he accused the educated youth of "agreeing with and supporting them [the Red Guards]." He extended the criticisms backward, claiming Ma's parents had worked with enemy soldiers and were landlords. [78]

As early as January 1967, thousands of *zhiqing* had come to Shanghai from Xinjiang. The Municipal Grain Bureau estimated that as many as 8,000 had come back "owing to practical difficulties in Xinjiang." The Grain Bureau worried that most the

[77] Ai, ed., *Shanghai ernv zai Xinjiang*, 405-406.
[78] Zhao, ed., *Tianshan jiaoxia de Beijing zhiqing*, 260-262.

young people did not have grain coupons. While families could provide for the children over a short period of time, the Grain Bureau believed that the returning *zhiqing* would eventually be a great burden on the city.[79] The new revolutionary government in power thus insisted that "all of the workers aiding the interior and aiding the frontier," including those in Xinjiang, "who have returned to Shanghai must immediately go back [to their posts] and carry out the revolution there."[80] Other documents issued in spring 1967 called on rusticates to "immediately return to Xinjiang" and "grasp revolution while boosting production" in the far northwest.[81] Even the extraordinarily small cities which had participated in urban-to-rural resettlement, such as Huangyan in Zhejiang Province, anxiously told dozens if not hundreds of returned *zhiqing* to return quickly to Xinjiang.[82]

Initially, the State Council proposed that the fleeing workers and educated youth were responsible for paying their own ways back to the frontier, but it quickly became apparent that such a punitive measure would not motivate *zhiqing* to travel across the country.[83] Liaising between the *bingtuan* and officers in Eastern China produced a mostly improved solution: the Production and Construction Corps was willing to pay for the

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[79] Shanghai shi liangshi ju (Shanghai Municipal Grain Bureau), "Guanyu fan Hu zhijiang qingnian liangshi wenti de qingshi baogao" ("Instructing and Reporting on The Grain Issue for Zhijiang Youth who Returned to Shanghai"), January 24, 1967, SMA, B248-2-9, 79.

[80] Shanghai renmin gongshe fandui jingji zhuyi lianluo zongbu (Liaison Headquarters of the Shanghai People's Commune Against Economism) et al, "Jinji tonggao" ("Emergency Notification"), February 18, 1967, SMA, B246-1-22, 5-6. See also SMA B112-5-35, 2-3; SMA B246-1-22, 7-8.

[81] Untitled letter from Shanghai shi geming weiyuanhui laodong gongzi zu (Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee Labor-Wage Group) to district-level labor offices and factories, April 6, 1967, SMA, B227-2-35, 20.

[82] Zhonggong Taizhou shi Huangyan quwei dangshi yanjiushi (Research Office of the Party History of the Huangyan Regional Committee, CCP Taizhou Municipal Committee), ed., *Zhongguo gongchandang Huangyan lishi dashiji* (Chronicle of Major Events in the History of the CCP in Huangyan) (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 1997), 185.

[83] "Guowuyuan guanyu zhiyuan neidi, bianjiang jianshe de zhigong he shangshan xiaxiang de zhishi qingnian fanhui yuan danwei de lufei wenti gei Shanghai shi geweihui houqin de fudian" ("Response from the State Council to the Rear Service of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee on Transportation Costs for Workers and Sent-Down Youth Aiding the Interior and Frontier Construction returning to their Work Unit"), February 27, 1967, in ZGWX, 67.

travel of some educated youth, if Shanghai and other cities could front the bills up front.[84] Authorities in Shanghai added that while, in principle, families should bear the responsibility to feed the deserting *zhiqing* while in the city and en route back to Xinjiang, the city was compassionate enough to step in when the situation warranted.[85]

Simultaneous with these concrete measures to end the "return to the city wind", state authorities also sought to turn public opinion strongly against the fleeing *zhiqing*. The youth who had left their posts on the frontier were said to be "whipped up and blinded by" capitalist forces; their departures were "causing undue losses to [China's] socialist construction" and harming the country's model image for the "world revolution."[86]

The Party-state also eulogized *zhiqing* who stayed on in Xinjiang, even at great personal risk and/or against the wishes of their families. Though probably apocryphal, factories in Shanghai circulated the story of Cao Deyou's daughter (曹德友), who insisted on staying behind in Xinjiang despite the violence ongoing around her in Urumqi. While Cao had written for his daughter to come home, she stayed on at her post

[84] Shanghai shi geming weiyuanhui laodong gongzi zu (Shanghai Municial Revolutionary Committee Labor-Wage Group), "Guanyu lai Hu tanqin de zhijiang qingnian fan Jiang lufei wenti de tongzhi" ("Notification on the Return Trip Transportation Costs for Zhijiang Youth Visiting Family in Shanghai"), August 1, 1967, SMA, B227-2-14, 1. See also "Guowuyuan guanyu zhi Jiang qingnian fan Jiang lufei wenti gei Shanghai shi geweihui de dafu" ("Response from the State Council to the Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee on Transportation Costs for *Zhijiang* Youth Returning to Xinjiang"), April 3, 1968, in ZGWX, 72; also available in ZWDW.

[85] Shanghai shi liangshi ju (Shanghai Municipal Grain Bureau), "Guanyu zhijiang qingnian deng lai hu hou zanjie kouliang wenti de yijian" ("Proposals on Temporary Providing Grain Rations to Zhijiang Youth Coming to Shanghai"), August 2, 1967, SMA, B246-1-69, 98.

[86] Shanghai shi geming weiyuanhui (Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee), "Guanyu jiji dongyuan zhinei, zhijiang, zhinong fan Hu renyuan xunsu fan hui yuandi zhua geming, cu shengchan de tongzhi" ("Notification on Mobilizing Aid the Interior, Aid the Borderland, and Aid Agriculture Personnel Who Returned to Shanghai to Go Back to Where they Came From and Grasp the Revolution and Promote Production"), August 30, 1967, SMA, B112-5-35, 4-5. Also available in SMA B103-4-24, 8-10; Shanghai shi yibiao dianxun gongye ju geming weiyuanhui bangongshi (Office of the Revolutionary Committee of the Shanghai Municipal Instrumentation and Telecommunications Industry Bureau), "Tongzhi" ("Notification"), September 11, 1967, SMA, B103-4-24, 8-10.

in Urumqi, picking up slack for all the other delinquent workers.[87] Though the promise of free tickets and other financial incentives was appealing, many of the Beijing *zhiqing* who had returned home in 1967-1968 still struggled to return to Xinjiang in 1968 due to disruptions on the Lanzhou-Xinjiang Railway.[88]

Dai Zemin returned to Xinjiang in early 1968, feeling radicalized. Yet as soon as he got back to his farm, his commander sent him to a distant construction site. In Dai's own words, "I had already stopped participating in any 'Cultural Revolution' activities, now I was just 'promoting production'."[89]

**Cultural Revolution Violence in Xinjiang**

If the first "return to the city wind" stemmed from *zhiqing* desires to "link-up" and engage in the Cultural Revolution back home, the second great exodus, which took place in 1968-1969, occurred for the opposite reason: fleeing the violence of the Cultural Revolution. Beginning in June 1968, the *bingtuan* began full-scale purge (a "cleaning up" of sorts) of persons claimed to be of undesirable social and political backgrounds. Over the next 18 months, over 14,000 individuals were attacked. The purge was so severe and so violent that in January 1970, one leading cadre announced things had gone too far: "a great number have been killed or maimed."[90] Hundreds of individuals were beaten and tortured to death, while thousands more underwent other forms of pain and humiliation: dunce caps, cowsheds, and so forth.[91]

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[87] Shanghai shi wenhua xitong huo xue huo yong Mao Zedong sixiang jiji fenzi daibiao dahui, "Ba Shanghai gongren jieji de youliang chuantong dai dao Xinjiang qu—Ji Cao Deyou tongzhi chuli nv'er yunan shijian shang faxian de chonggao fengge," March 12, 1968, SMA, B246-1-47, 88-95.
[88] Zhao, ed., *Tianshan jiaoxia de Beijing zhiqing*, 322.
[89] Zhao, ed., *Tianshan jiaoxia de Beijing zhiqing*, 288.
[90] Li, ed., *Xinjiang bingtuan tunken shubian shi*, vol. 2, 791.
[91] Li, ed., *Xinjiang bingtuan tunken shubian shi*, vol. 2, 791-793.

Following the initial revolutionary upsurge, thousands of educated youth in Xinjiang continued to abandon the Production and Construction Corps in 1968 and 1969. Party authorities blamed "poor ideological foundations," the painful longing for one's family, and "criminals and hooligans" for provoking the exoduses.[92] The Central Committee and the State Council thus continued to remind all youth aiding the frontiers and the interior that they were to "stay in place and participate in the Cultural Revolution."[93] While it is unclear if Xinjiang employed similar strategies, in other areas with large numbers of Shanghai *zhiqing*, such as Yanbian in Jilin Province, authorities guarded train stations and placed "receiving centers" (接待站 *jiedai zhan*) at all major transportation hubs to prevent youth from fleeing.[94]

Ningbo struggled with returning *zhiqing* in summer 1968 and volunteered to defray two-thirds of the cost of train tickets back to Xinjiang if it would help to convince the rusticates to leave again.[95] Xuzhou likewise did its utmost to have many of the 2500 or so "educated youth" it had once sent to Xinjiang return to the far northwest in the

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[92] Shanghai shi geweihui xiaxiang shangshan bangongshi (Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee Down to the Villages Up to the Mountains Office), "Xiaxiang shangshan de zhishi qingnian daoliu hui Hu qingkuang" ("Situation of the Down to the Villages and Up to the Mountains Educated Youth Coming Back to Shanghai"), July 19, 1969, SMA, B228-2-225, 26-29.

[93] Zhejiang sheng geming weiyuanhui shengchan zhihui zu (Production Team of th Zhejiang Province Revolutionary Committee), "Pizhuan sheng laodong ju shengchan lingdao xiaozu 'guanyu jinyibu guanche zhixing zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan "guanyu zhiyuan neidi he bianjiang jianshe de zhigong ying jiudi canjia wenhua da geming de jinji tongggao" de jidian yijian'" ("Forwarding the [Zhejiang] Province Labor Bureau Production Leading Small Group's 'Proposals on Improving the Full Implementation of the CCP Central Committee and the State Council's '"Emergency Notice that Workers Aiding the Interior and Frontier Construction Should Stay in Place to Participate in the Cultural Revolution"'), August 5, 1968, NMA-2, 地 33-002-016, 12-14.

[94] Yanbian Chaoxian zu zizhizhou geming weiyuanhui (Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture Revolutionary Committee), "Guanyu fangzhi zhishi qingnian huiliu wenti de jinji tongzhi" ("Urgent Notification on Preventing Educated Youth from Flowing Back [Home]"), December 24, 1969, Tumen shi dang'anguan (Tumen Municipal Archives [TMA-2]), 10-5-8, 19-20.

[95] Zhejiang sheng geming weiyuanhui shengchan zhihui zu (Zhejiang Province Revolutionary Committee Production Command Organization), "Guanyu zhi Jiang qingnian fan Jiang chelvfei wenti de pifu" ("Reply on the Issue of Transportation Costs for Youth Aiding Xinjiang to Return to Xinjiang"), June 23, 1968, NMA-2, 105-015-002, 22.

summer of 1969.[96] As of June 1969, Shanghai calculated 5,000 deserters in the city on top of 2,000 others from Xinjiang with authorizations for short term family visits. The city was caught between a rock-and-a-hard place, acknowledging that they would probably have to provide transportation for these people but hesitant to hand over any cash, "fearing that doing so would influence the youth aiding Xinjiang to continue to flow back [to Shanghai]."[97] Ultimately the Revolutionary Committee of the Labor Bureau floated the cash necessary to rid the city of the educated youth.[98]

As the Cultural Revolution waned, cities concocted other strategies to both appease the educated youth but also ultimately persuade them to stay permanently in Xinjiang. For example, in 1973, Shanghai *zhiqing* were formally given permission to return home"temporarily" to care for ill or enfeeble parents.[99] In August 1969, Zhu Genmei asked for permission to return to Shanghai so that she could visit her ailing father. Though Zhu had not yet been in her position long enough to be granted an official vacation, her work unit took pity on her and approved a three-month trip to Shanghai.

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[96] Zhonggong Xuzhou shi dangwei shi gongzuo bangongshi (Office of the History of the CCP Xuzhou Municipal Committee) and Xuzhou shi dang'anguan (Xuzhou Municipal Archives), ed., *Zhonggong Xuzhou lishi dashiji* (Chronicle of Major Events in the History of the CCP in Xuzhou) (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 1999), 398-399.

[97] Laodong ju geming weiyuanhui ([Shanghai Municipal] Labor Bureau Revolutionary Committee), "Guanyu dongyuan zai Hu zhijiang qingnian hui Xinjiang chefei to qingshi baogao" ("Reporting and Instructing on Transportation Fees to Return to Xinjiang for the Youth Aiding the Border Region Now in Shanghai"), June 4, 1969, SMA, B127-4-63, 27-28.

[98] Laodong ju geming weiyuanhui ([Shanghai Municipal] Labor Bureau Revolutionary Committee), "Guanyu dongyuan zai Hu zhi Jiang renyuan fanhui Xinjiang de tongzhi" ("Notification to Mobilize Zhijiang Now in Shanghai to Return to Xinjiang"), July 1, 1969, SMA, B127-4-63, 31-33; Shi geweihui lingdao chengyuan pengtouhui (Briefing Meeting of the Municipal Revolutionary Committee's Leading Members), "Guanyu dongyuan zai Hu zhijiang qingnian hui Xinjiang chefei to qingshi baogao" ("Reporting and Instructing on Transportation Fees to Return to Xinjiang for the Youth Aiding the Border Region Now in Shanghai"), July 3, 1969, SMA, B127-4-63, 26.

[99] Shanghai shi Luwan qu jiti shiye guanli ju (Shanghai Luwan District Collective Enterprise Administration) and Shanghai shi Luwan qu laodong ju (Shanghai Luwan District Labor Bureau), "Guanyu Xinjiang yihun du zinv zanjie huihu zhaogu fumu linshi anpai zai zhebian jiti shiye de tongzhi" ("Notification on Jobs in Collectives for Already-Married Children in Xinjiang Temporarily in Shanghai to Care for Parents"), November 2, 1973, HDA, 073-2-1, 189.

The cost of traveling to Shanghai was, however, Zhu's burden alone. For eight days, Zhu barely ate a thing. Zhu's hunger, which certainly extended far back before the train ride, was rewarded with big meals and delicious local snacks when she finally returned to Shanghai. The cuisine helped to ease the pain for seeing her father bedridden in a hospital.[100]

When the city dealt with 2,700 *zhiqing* in spring 1974, they agreed to all sorts of compromises, as long as the educated youth faced a concrete problem. Disabled *zhiqing* and only children with aging parents, for example, could apply to have their Shanghai *hukou* reinstated (Shanghai was less conciliatory with the 800 individuals with "ideological problems")[101]. In other cases, however, the cities rejected the pleas from their former residents: in 1974, Ningbo deferred to help 28 individuals stationed at the 1st Agricultural Division and rejected their request to come home after many years of hardship.[102]

Shanghai also revived the practice of "goodwill missions" during the late Cultural Revolution, sending such delegations to Xinjiang and a number of other hardship provinces.[103] The missions were as much about meeting with and inspiring the youth as they were about bringing back positive messages "about the great situation of going up to

[100] Zhu, *Talimu de Shanghai zhiqing*, 33-8.
[101] Shanghai shi geweihui bangongshi (Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee Office), "Guanyu qu Xinjiang de Shanghai zhishi qingnian zhong jig e wenti de chuli yijian de qingshi baogao" ("Instructing and Reporting on Proposals to Handle Several Problems relating to Shanghai Educated Youth in Xinjiang"), March 5, 1974, SMA, B246-2-1018, 54-59.
[102] "Guanyu yuan Ningbo shi yueju er tuan zhiyuan Xinjiang qingkuang de diaocha baogao" ("Investigative Report on the Situation of Ningbo's Former No. 2 Shaoxing Opera Regiment Aiding Xinjiang"), October 28, 1974, NMA-2, 051-026-009, 70-74.
[103] Shi geweihui xiaxiang shangshan bangongshi ([Shanghai] Municipal Revolutionary Committee Down to the Villages Up to the Mountains Office), "Yunnan, Heilongjiang, Xinjiang, deng sheng (qu) dui wo shi pai xuexi weiwentuan de fanying" ("Response from Yunnan, Heilongjiang, Xinjiang, and Other Provinces/Regions on Shanghai Dispatching Study and Goodwill Delegations"), February 1, 1974, SMA, B228-2-295, 26-27.

the mountains and down to the villages" to parents and families back home in Shanghai.[104] In addition to dispatching representatives to check-in on the educated youth, cities also donated film projectors, movies, and other entertainment devices in an attempt to modestly better the lives of the *zhiqing*.[105] According to one delegation, the "lightweight and agile projectors" donated to the *bingtuan* would "encourage [the Shanghai youth aiding the border region] to strike up roots in the frontier and carry on the revolution."[106] In addition to Shanghai, Zhejiang Province as well as Wuhan and Tianjin did much the same.[107]

Municipal governments deployed other strategies when they refused to accept returnees. Aware that many *zhiqing* wanted to come home to care for their elderly parents, authorities suggested other alternatives. In 1975, for example, Shanghai began circulating one likely fictionalized tale of an only child who had been rusticated to Heilongjiang during the Cultural Revolution. Though his/her parents now faced health problems, the child refused to come home. Rather than abandon his/her post, the child insisted that his/her parents instead relocate to the frontier. In this way, the child obliged their responsibilities to family and to the nation.[108]

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[104] "Xuexi weiwentuan diyi pi hui Hu ganbu de xuexi, gongzuo qingkuang" ("Study and Work Situation of the First Group of Cadres from the Study and Goodwill Delegations to Return to Shanghai"), in *Qingkuang fanying* no. 10 (January 31, 1975), SMA, B228-2-336, 1-2.

[105] Untitled letter from the Shanghai shi geming weiyuanhui zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang bangongshi (Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee Educated Youth Up to the Mountains Down to the Villages Office) to the Fu Xinjiang xuexi weiwentuan (Study and Goodwill Delegation Going to Xinjiang), June 12, 1974, SMA, B228-2-270, 116.

[106] "Xuexi weiwentuan diyi pi hui Hu ganbu de xuexi, gongzuo qingkuang" ("Study and Work Situation of the First Group of Cadres from the Study and Goodwill Delegations to Return to Shanghai"), in *Qingkuang fanying* no. 10 (January 31, 1975), SMA, B228-2-336, 1-2.

[107] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 65-68. See also Wuhan difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Dashi ji*, 277; 'Zhejiang sheng laodong baozhang zhi' bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Zhejiang sheng laodong baozhang zhi*, 117.

[108] "不要照顾回城、Bu yao zhaogu huicheng, muzi gong qu bianjiang zhagen gan geming" ("Don't Come Back to the City to Take Care [of Your Parents], Your Parents Will Go to the Frontiers to Strike Roots and Carry out the Revolution"), in *Qingkuang fanying* no. 53 (August 22, 1975), SMA, B228-2-351, 7-9.

**Reviving Urban-to-Rural Resettlement**

The Cultural Revolution marked the end of state-led population resettlement to Xinjiang, but not the end of rustication in socialist China writ large. With Xinjiang no longer willing to absorb urban *zhiqing* and Zhou Enlai having disowned the campaign, the cities on the east coast had to recalibrate. When the Shanghai Municipal Government learned in autumn 1966 that it could not continue sending its young people to the far northwest, they dispatched a group of 10,000 young people to state-run farms on the outskirts of the city.[109] Many other *zhiqing* had earlier joined construction teams in rural Shanghai to "ready [themselves] for labor conditions" in Xinjiang. With the onset of the Cultural Revolution, what were meant to be temporary tours of duty were extended indefinitely.[110]

These short-term and small adjustments were hardly sufficient to cope with the huge numbers of expected middle and high school graduates in the late 1960s. Shanghai, for example, estimated that it would have 160,000 left over students from graduating classes in 1966 and 1967. As late as July 1967, the city had no concrete plans for what to do with them.[111] Another estimate produced that same month put the number of students

[109] Shanghai shi jingji jihua weiyuanhui (Shanghai Municipal Economic Planning Committee) and Shanghai shi caizeng ju (Shanghai Municipal Financial Bureau), "Guanyu yiujiuliuliu niandu guoying nongchang anzhi jihua de pifu" ("Reply to the 1966 Resettlement Plans for State-Run Farms"), September 5, 1966, SMA, B109-2-1157, 26. See also Shanghai shi liangshi ju (Shanghai Municipal Grain Bureau) and Shanghai shi nongken ju (Shanghai Municipal Land Reclamation Bureau), "Guanyu anzhi chengshi zhishi qingnian 125000 ren de kouliang biaozhun ji gongying banfa de lianhe tongzhi" ("Joint Notification on Standards and Provision of Grain Rations for 12,500 Urban Educated Youth"), November 23, 1966, SMA, B180-1-300, 37-38

[110] Zhonggong Shanghai shi nongken ju weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Reclamation Bureau Committee), "Guanyu jianshe guoying nongchang zhong de ruogan wenti de qingshi baogao (chugao)" ("Draft Instructing and Reporting on Several Issues in Establishing State-Run Farms"), October 1966, SMA, B180-1-68, 67-71.

[111] Shanghai shi biyesheng gongzuo weiyuanhui (Shanghai Municipal Graduating Students Work Committee), "Guanyu da zhong xuexiao biyesheng anpai wenti de qingshi baogao" ("Instructing and Reporting on Arrangements for University and School Graduates"), July 7, 1967, SMA, B244-2-23, 31-33.

at an even higher range, 280,000, and estimated that there were still 50,000 so-called "social youth" floating about the city.[112] Beijing feared a prolonged crisis in which the city would produce 150,000 or more graduates each year who required some sort of job placement.[113] National estimates for the 1970s foresaw 1.6 million young people each year who could not continue schooling, join the army, or find jobs; they would need to go "up to the mountains and down to the countryside."[114]

The authorities in Shanghai, mulling their options, wrote that:

> In the past, Shanghai's youth going up to the mountains and down to the villages were mainly aiding Xinjiang's army land reclamation construction. From here on out, [we] will continue to make some plans with outlying areas; in addition, [we] must, starting this year, by ourselves and in consultation with the relevant provinces, establish base areas to resettle youth.[115]

Officials in East China strove to build connections with Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan, Jiangxi, and Anhui and offload their excess youth, but these were short term efforts.[116] In August 1968, for example, Shanghai announced that it would send 30,000

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[112] Shanghai shi geweihui biyesheng gongzuo wei laodong anpai zu (Group for Organizing Work of the School Graduate Work Committee, Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee), "Guanyu dongyuan qingnian shangshan xiaxiang de chubu yijian (gong taolun)" ("Preliminary Views on Mobilizing Youth to Go Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages [Provided for Discussion]"), July 31, 1967, SMA, B105-4-134, 17-21.

[113]Beijing shi geming weiyuanhui zhaosheng fenpei jiuye lingdao xiaozu, anzhi jiuye bangongshi (Leading Small Group for Student Recruitment and Job Allocations and the Job Placements Office of the Beijing Municipal Revolutionary Committee), "Guanyu linian zhongxue biyesheng anpai qingkuang huibao tigang" ("Report Outline on Arrangements for High School Graduates from Past Years"), July 10, 1968, BMA, 157-001-00018, 1-4.

[114] "Yijiuqisan nian dao yijiubaling nian zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang chubu guihui (cao'an)" ("Draft Preliminary Plan for Educated Youth Going Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages, 1973-1980"), July 1973, in ZGWX, 94-95.

[115] Shanghai shi geweihui biyesheng gongzuo wei laodong anpai zu (Group for Organizing Work of the School Graduate Work Committee, Shanghai Municipal Revolutionary Committee), "Guanyu dongyuan qingnian shangshan xiaxiang de chubu yijian (gong taolun)" ("Preliminary Views on Mobilizing Youth to Go Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages [Provided for Discussion]"), July 31, 1967, SMA, B105-4-134, 17-21.

[116] Shi geweihui biyesheng gongzuo weiyuan hui (Committee for Graduated Students of the [Shanghai] Municipal Revolutionary Committee), "Guanyu jiaqiang yijiuliuliu nian gao, chuzhong biyesheng gongzuo de qingshi baogao" ("Instructing and Reporting on Strengthening Work related to 1966 High and Middle School Graduates"), November 28, 1967, SMA, B105-4-134, 63-67.

educated youth to farms on the outskirts of the city limits. [117] Over the next several years, Shanghai forged a number of partnerships with provinces across the country, but it was unclear if the provinces would be willing to absorb as many surplus youth as Shanghai produced.[118]

From the perspective of urban planners, then, it was very fortunate that, after a three-year hiatus running from 1966-1968, the "Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages" movement returned, ballooning in size and scale. On December 21, 1968, Mao Zedong issued his now famous edict: "it is necessary for educated young people to go to the countryside and be re-educated by poor and lower-middle peasants."[119] With this proclamation, millions of young people left the cities to experience the hardships of rural labor.[120] This was, in many ways, a remarkable and much appreciated bailout for the cities.

This time around, Mao's cleansing of the cities was of a much different character. The campaign was concocted not as a "rationale" means of redistributing population and spurring economic activity, but rather to reassert control over the Red Guards.[121] As a

[117] Shanghai shi geming weiyuanhui xiaxiang shangshan bangongshi (Office of the Down to the Villages and Up the Mountains Campaign of the Shanghai Revolutionary Committee), "Guanyu shijiao guoying nongchang anzhi liuliu jie yi wan qi qian wu bai ming chuzhong biyesheng de baogao" ("Report on the Suburban State-Run Farms Receiving 17,500 Middle School Graduates [1966]"), August 23, 1968, SMA, B123-8-126, 33.
[118] Shanghai geming weiyuanhui xiaxiang shangshan bangongshi (Shanghai Revolutionary Committee Down to the Villages and Up to the Mountains Office), "yijiuliuliu yijiuliuba jie zhishi qingnian xiaxiang qingkuang biao" ("Tables on the Situation of the Educated Youth from Graduating Classes 1966-1968 Going Down to the Villages"), no date, SMA, B228-1-32, 1-20.
[119] "Zai Mao zhuxi geming luxian zhiyin xia, Huining xian bufen chengzhen jumin fenfen bufu nongye shengchan di yi xian, dao nongcun anjia luohu" ("Under the Guidance of Chairman Mao's Revolutionary Line, Some Urban Residents from Huining County are Going to the Agricultural Frontlines and Settling Down in the Countryside"), in RMRB, December 22, 1968.
[120] Frank Dikötter, *The Cultural Revolution: A People's History, 1962-1976* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2016), 192-205; Walder, *China Under Mao*, 269-270.
[121] Bonnin, *The Lost Generation*; Guobin Yang, *The Red Guard Generation and Political Activism in China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016); Rene, *China's Sent-Down Generation*; and Bernstein, *Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages*.

result, hard-hit areas of the country, such as Xinjiang, were spared from having to take on additional *zhiqing* during this manifestation of the campaign. To be sure, the campaign did continue in Xinjiang, but in this instance the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region was now "sending down" middle and high school graduates it had produced.[122] In exceptional circumstances, this did cause some Shanghai *zhiqing* to end up becoming what might be called doubly sent-down because. For instance, a Shanghai-native named Zhu Genmei (朱根妹) had spent the first three years of her time in Xinjiang working on a *bingtuan* farm. After establishing herself as a model youth, she was offered a promotion in 1966 and invited to become a teacher. While Zhu happily accepted the position, in doing so she inadvertently set herself up for future troubles. Teachers and students from her academy were sent-down to a farm after the peak of Cultural Revolution chaos. Zhu later recalled how difficult farm life was this time around: she could not find a day to rest, even over the Chinese New Year.[123]

**The End of the Cultural Revolution, Not of Urban-to-Rural Resettlement**

The death of Lin Biao on September 13, 1971, fundamentally changed Mao's Cultural Revolution.[124] Whatever the causes of Lin's demise, it offered opportunities to the Chairman to dissociate himself from the chaos of the Cultural Revolution and attempt to restore order both at home and in China's international relations. Over the next several years—with stops and starts to be sure—Zhou Enlai and Deng Xiaoping did their utmost to restore party, civilian, and military authority and make amends for the Cultural

[122] Zhonggong Xinjiang Weiwu'er zhizhiqu weiyuanhui (CCP Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Committee), "Guanyu zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang ruogan wenti de shixing guiding (cao'an)" ("Draft Pilot Regulations for Various Issues in Educated Youth Going Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages"), November 1973, SMA, B228-2-304, 46-54.
[123] Zhu, *Talimu de Shanghai zhiqing*, 29-33.
[124] MacFarquhar and Schoenhals, *Mao's Last Revolution*.

Revolution, at least to the extent that it did not impinge on the Central Committee's legitimacy.[125]

In the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the CCP attempted to rectify its mistakes by reviving party authority and restoring the reputations of leaders such as Wang Enmao. When Hua Guofeng visited former *bingtuan* farms in Shihezi in September 1978, he called it a "heavy disaster area" (重灾区 *zhong saiqu*) due to the violence and turmoil of the early Cultural Revolution.[126] The CCP also sought to undo the harm of the Cultural Revolution by shedding institutions which had accrued too much ill well over the past several years, including the *bingtuan.* When, on March 25, 1975, the Central Committee and the Central Military Commission formally shuttered the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, authority over all farms receded to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.[127] Furthermore, in late December 1978, the Autonomous Region Committee issued its "Resolution on Certain Issues with the Former Production and Construction Corps." The document discredited the Cultural Revolution, formerly ended the movement within state-run farms and other former *bingtuan* enterprises in Xinjiang, and rehabilitated many leaders' whose names had been blackened after 1966.[128]

These efforts to repair the damage of the Cultural Revolution came at a time when many educated youth had already abandoned post. One internal report indicated there

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[125] Walder, *China Under Mao*, 287-304.
[126] "Wang Feng zhuan" bianxie weiyuanhui (Editorial Committee for *Biography of Wang Feng*), *Wang Feng zhuan* (Biography of Wang Feng) (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi chubanshe, 2011), 597. Wang Zhen reportedly used the same exact terminology upon one of his tours in November of the same year. See XSJBD, 231.
[127] "Zhonggong zhongyang, zhongyang junwei guanyu chexiao Xinjiang junqu shengchan jianshe bingtuan de piyu (jielu)" ("The CCP Central Committee and CMC's Comments on the Annulling of the Xinjiang Military District's Production and Construction Corps"), March 25, 1975, in XSJBLWX, vol. 1, 472. See also XSJBFS, 315-324.
[128] XSJBD, 232-233.

were still 80,000 Shanghai educated youth in Xinjiang in 1974,[129] while a *People's Daily* article from several months prior counted only 60,000.[130] The Cultural Revolution ruined a once signature campaign and squandered its modest achievements, while destroying a once prized institution. In Xinjiang, the "destruction of the bureaucratic system" and the "simultaneous mobilization of a mass insurgency from below," as Andrew Walder has argued in other circumstances, proved too much for population resettlement.[131]

The gradual winding down of the Cultural Revolution, however, did not mean that the *zhiqing* from Shanghai, Beijing, Tianjin, Wuhan, and other cities were free to go home.

[129] Shi geweihui zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang bangongshi ([Shanghai] Municipal Revolutionary Committee Educated Youth Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages Office), "Guanyu jiang fu Jiang xuexi weiwentuan xiedai de dianying fangyingji he yingpian kaobei deng zeng gei Xinjiang jianshe bingtuan de qingshi" ("Instructions for the Study and Goodwill Delegation Visiting Xinjiang to Donate Portable Movie Projectors and Films to the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), November 18, 1974, SMA, B228-2-270, 68-69.
[130] "Shanghai liu wan zhishi qingnian zai Talimu pendi zhuozhuang chengzhang" ("60,000 Shanghai Educated Youth are Growing Up Healthily in the Tarim Basin"), in RMRB, May 13, 1974.
[131] Walder, *China Under Mao*, 201.

Chapter 6: Persistence

## Introduction

In February 1976, a young man named Xie Zonghao (谢宗浩) made a surprising demand of the Guangdong Provincial Government: he wanted to go to Xinjiang.

We know very little about Xie—in fact, only that he was a student affiliated with Sun Yat-sen University and apparently someone with strong ideological convictions. According to the office responsible for adjudicating Xie's request, the student had asked that he and "five of his comrades" be resettled to Xinjiang, a frontier-like place where, in Xie's mind, young men and women could be sculpted into true revolutionaries. Though probably taken aback by the request, the Guangdong Higher Education Committee was also impressed. Xie and his classmates had shown an enviable determination to "hit back" (回击 *huiji*) against the forces in China undermining the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. It pleased the committee that Xie had such firm ideological dispositions only days after the Premier, Zhou Enlai, had passed and as the longevity of the Chairman himself, Mao Zedong, appeared shorter and shorter. The request, the committee explained, "fully reflected the excellent situation on the educational front." The authorities in Guangzhou promptly approved Xie's petition, deciding that all but two of the Sun Yat-sen University students could head off to the far northwest.[1]

In itself, this case from Guangdong probably touched the lives of only the five students and their immediate families, but it still spoke to a much larger historical

[1] The Higher Education Committee ruled against two students going to Xinjiang because of problems in their family lives. See Zhonggong Guangdong sheng gaodeng jiaoyu weiyuanhui (CCP Guangdong Provincial Committee on Higher Education), "Guanyu yingjie biyesheng Xie Zonghao deng wu tongzhi yaoqiu dao Xinjiang gongzuo de pifu" ("Approving the Demands to Go to Xinjiang made by Xie Zonghao and Five Other Upcoming Graduates"), February 28, 1976, GPA, 315-A1.5-23, 13.

moment then unfolding in the People's Republic of China. Xie Zonghao's determination to reinvent himself in Xinjiang through state-sanctioned, urban-to-rural resettlement was one of the last gasps of the long "Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages" movement. In the years that followed, "educated youth" asked not to go to the frontier, but to leave Xinjiang and return to the cities. This chapter explores the ambiguous and contested end of state-led population resettlement to Xinjiang, contrasting the end of this program to the fate of *zhiqing* nation-wide.

Rarely are there clean breaks with the past. This is especially true when the lives of millions of dislocated peoples are at stake. The multi-year project of repatriating overseas soldiers and settlers back to Japan showed that the "end" of World War II hardly occurred on September 2, 1945, when the official surrender documents were drawn up and signed.[2] The extended, gradual process of decolonizing the Japanese empire and undoing its human footprint in Asia foreshadowed developments in post-Mao China three decades later. The end of the Cultural Revolution, signified by the death of Mao in September 1976 and the defeat of the Gang of Four only one month later, engendered more confusion than it did certainty about the future. What would be the fate of more than three decades of socialist engineering through state-led population resettlement to Xinjiang?

While millions of *zhiqing*, including those stationed in Xinjiang, demanded to return home, the leadership in China was initially determined to preserve the results of the "Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages" movement. The post-Mao era was thus marked by wrenching continuities, even as leaders like Deng Xiaoping strove to remake

[2] Lori Watt, *When Empire Comes Home: Repatriation and Reintegration in Postwar Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

China in remarkable ways. For the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang, life and politics after 1976 remained largely the same as they had during the twilight of the Cultural Revolution.

But things were changing. Hundreds of thousands of educated youth across China protested the Central Government's tepidness, with the *zhiqing* in the far northwest engaging in some of the most contentious and extended opposition to the party-state in the early reform era. Whether through letter-writing campaigns, impassioned rallies and speeches, hunger strikes, and, in many cases, simply boarding trains bound for Eastern China without explicit permission to do so, the dramatic protests staged by *zhiqing* in Xinjiang sought to force the hand of the leadership.[3]

The collision of state and society, demonstrated by this so-called "return to the city wind" (回城风 *huicheng feng*), revealed the depth of social resentment toward population resettlement as a state-building tool. While the Central Government pushed back against the demands of the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang as much as it could, the physical, living remnants of the Mao era proved difficult to preserve in the far northwest. While the party-state eventually conceded to a partial abandonment of its formerly signature policy initiative, it refused to discredit the campaign writ large. At a time during which the horrors of the Cultural Revolution and other chapters of the Mao era were being aired and atoned for, the verdict on rural resettlement to Xinjiang remained largely the same as it had always been.

[3] Yang, *The Red Guard Generation and Political Activism in China*, 149-151; McLaren, "The Educated Youth Return," 1-20. On protests, see, for example, Shanghai shi laodong ju geming weiyuanhui (Revolutionary Committee of the Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu zhuanfa 'Guowuyuan zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang lingdao xiaozu (79) quo qing zidi yi hao tongzhi' de tongzhi'" ("Notification of Forwarding the 'State Council's Leading Small Group Educated Youth Going Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages Notification No. 1 [1979]'"), March 14, 1979, SMA, B105-9-577, 32-34.

Unpacking the contradictory policies pursued by the Central Government and authorities in Xinjiang and Shanghai toward the educated youth from 1976 through 1989, this chapter depicts the ambiguous end of rustication as a state-building tool.

**The Hua Guofeng Era Begins**

The Mao era did not end on September 9, 1976. Shortly before his death, the Great Helmsman had identified a faithful successor named Hua Guofeng (华国锋). Mao's famous edicts to Hua to "take your time [and] don't be anxious," "act according to past principles," and finally, "with you in charge, I am at ease" paralyzed China's political system in the years immediately following the Chairman's death.[4] Exceedingly loyal, Hua, a long-time party apparatchik in Hunan Province, abided by the "two whatevers" (两个凡是 *liang ge fan shi*): that is, whatever policies Mao had supported and whatever instructions Mao had given.[5]

The "two whatevers" defined Chinese governance in the period between Mao's death and Deng Xiaoping's definitive rise in late 1978. The party-state under Hua Guofeng, typically unwilling to break with the past, was particularly intent on preserving the population patchworks—including those in Xinjiang—created over the last decades of Mao's life. As Li Xiannian (李先念) articulated, Hua and the elders surrounding him feared that repudiating the Maoist-era policy of urban-to-rural resettlement would aggravate the country's economic problems and, more alarmingly, hurt the already fragile

[4] Lowell Dittmer, *China's Continuous Revolution: The Post-Liberation Epoch, 1949-1981* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 134.
[5] "Hua Guofeng's Speech at the Closing Session of the CCP Central Work Conference," December 13, 1978, Hubei Provincial Archives SZ1-4-791, translated by Caixia Lu, accessible at http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/121690. See also Ezra Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011), 188-189.

legitimacy of the CCP.[6] Li's apprehensions were translated into policy on November 8, 1977, when the State Council decreed that educated youth should continue to "participate in collective production and labor in the villages." At this point, the Central Government refused to allow either the *zhiqing* or their young children to "move into cities or towns."[7]

Reluctant to discredit the movement, officials directly responsible for *zhiqing* work were nevertheless coming to grips with extreme social discontent rural resettlement continued to arouse.[8] Even Li Xiannian dwelled on the unpopularity of rustication after Mao's death, coining the phrase "four dissatisifieds" (四不满意 *si bu manyi*) to describe the environment. He claimed that educated youth in the countryside were unhappy, that their parents in the cities were displeased, and that sponsoring production teams frustrated with the quality of work. Taken together, all of this meant the nation—the fourth dissatisfied—was quite gloomy.[9]

That everyone was unhappy with the Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages movement was on full display at a month-long conference convened by the *Zhiqing*

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[6] Gu Hongzhang and Hu Mengzhou, eds., *Zhongguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shimo* (A History of China's Educated Youth Who Went Up to the Mountains and Down to the Villages) (Beijing: Zhongguo jiancha chubanshe, 1996), 152-156.

[7] "Guowuyuan pizhuan gong'an bu guanyu chuli hukou qianyi de guiding de tongzhi" ("The State Council Approves the Notification from the Ministry of Public Security on Handling *Hukou* Transfers"), November 8, 1977, in ZGWX, 96.

[8] In the last years of the Cultural Revolution, municipalities revived the practice of dispatching "study and goodwill delegations" (学习慰问团 *xuexi weiwen tuan*) to both inspect the sent-down youth and to pay respects to the receiving communities. It is likely that these missions to rustication sites helped, as they had in the past, to pool information about the problems related to the "Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages" movement. See Shi geweihui xiaxiang shangshan bangongshi ([Shanghai] Municipal Revolutionary Committee Down to the Villages Up to the Mountains Office), "Yunnan, Heilongjiang, Xinjiang, deng sheng (qu) dui wo shi pai xuexi weiwentuan de fanying" ("Response from Yunnan, Heilongjiang, Xinjiang, and Other Provinces/Regions on Shanghai Dispatching Study and Goodwill Delegations"), February 1, 1974, SMA, B228-2-295, 26-27; "Guanyu shangshan xiaxiang xuexi weiwentuan zhengxun qingkuang de huibao" ("Report on the Training of the Up to the Mountains Down to the Villages Study and Goodwill Delegations"), in *Qingkuang fanying* no. 20 (March 27, 1975), SMA, B228-2-350, 5-9.

[9] Gu and Hu, eds., *Zhongguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shimo*, 158.

Office within the State Council in winter 1977-1978. One deputy premier in attendance, Chen Yonggui (陈永贵), went so far as to call resettlement a "headache" (头痛 *toutong*) for both officials and the *zhiqing* themselves. Unfortunately, because of the "two whatevers," these frank discussions translated only into conservative adjustments, not drastic policy changes. The organizers adjourned the meeting with a mandate to study the specific problems which the *zhiqing* were facing and to implement modest policy measures which could help to win the public relations war.[10] In Xinjiang, this meant increasing expenses on propaganda and ideological education for *zhiqing*, rather than a initiating a major shift, such as permitting the Shanghai'ers to go back home.[11]

The Chinese Communist Party's hesitancy to end the Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages movement immediately meant that for millions of so-called educated youth living in the countryside and on the frontiers, the Mao era and the post-Mao era were remarkably consistent with one another. Even the Third Plenum of the 11th Central Committee held in late 1978—a meeting which promised to shake-up politics and the economy in China dramatically by codifying the policy of "reform and opening," securing Deng Xiaoping's preeminence over Hua Guofeng, and revisiting a slew of Mao-era purges—had very little consequence for *zhiqing*.[12]

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[10] Gu and Hu, eds., *Zhongguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shimo*, 148-150.

[11] Untitled letter from the Shi geming weiyuanhui zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang bangongshi ([Shanghai] Municipal Revolutionary Committee Educated Youth Up to the Mountains Down to the Villages Office) to the Shi geweihui gongjiao zu ([Shanghai] Municipal Revolutionary Committee Public Transportation Group), July 26, 1976, SMA, B228-2-365, 182-183.
The gender and marriage policies of this period are also worthy of greater inquiry. As of 1975, over 16,000 of male urban "educated youth" in Xinjiang were not married. Fearing social instability among unwed men in their late twenties and early thirties, the National *Zhiqing* Office, Ministry of Land Reclamation, and Ministry of Labor began a frantic campaign to arrange marriages, promising jobs and other benefits to women willing to marry the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang. See Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Laodong zhi*, 65.

[12] Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China*, 229-240.

In fact, concurrent with the Third Plenum, the Central Committee also convened the first "All National Work Conference on Educated Youth Up in the Mountains and Down in the Villages." Headlined and chaired by Hua Guofeng, the National Conference was a consensus building exercise which aimed to dispel any doubts about the future of state-led, urban-to-rural resettlement in the People's Republic of China. While conference attendees did openly discuss the legitimate grievances *zhiqing* had about quality of life, the senior leadership predictably blamed Lin Biao and the Gang of Four for spoiling the movement. The participants thus brushed aside demands to end the movement formally and, in the spirit of the "two whatevers," they also praised the decisions of Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, and other leaders responsible for having engineered rural resettlement.[13]

The resolutions from this widely attended assembly did not mention the rusticates in Xinjiang specifically, but they effectively bound this group to continue residing within the Uyghur Autonomous Region.[14]

**An Alternative from Deng Xiaoping**

While Hua Guofeng and his coterie of elder advisers remained committed to the Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages movement, Deng Xiaoping, for his part, was at least willing to consider some alternatives. While we should hesitate to follow official

[13] "Quanguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang gongzuo huiyi jiyao" ("Minutes of the All National Educated Youth Up to the Mountains Down to the Villages Work Meeting"), December 10, 1978, in ZGWX, 99-107. See also Bonnin, *The Lost Generation*, 139; Du Honglin, *Feng chao dang luo (1955-1979): Zhongguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang yundong shi* (Rising and Falling Wave: A History of Chna's Educated Youth Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages Movement, 1955-1979) (Shenzhen: Haitian chubanshe, 1993), 258-260.

[14] "Yanjiu tongchou jiejue zhishi qingnian de wenti, quanguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang gongzuo huiyi zai Jing juxing; Hua Guofeng tongzhi zhuchi zhengzhi ju huiyi, taolun he tongguo le huiyi shengchan de wenjian" ("To Study, Coordinate, and Resolve Educated Youth Problems, the All-National Work Conference on Educated Youth Up in the Mountains and Down in the Villages Convened in Beijing; Comrade Hua Guofeng Presided over the Political Bureau Meeting, Discussing and Passing Documents Produced at Conference"), in RMRB, December 15, 1978.

communist historiography by granting Deng Xiaoping too much credit for ending population resettlement, we can still recognize the power of his words.[15] Still the chairman in waiting, Deng questioned the logic of the party-state's population planning. He had apparently come to see the problem in reverse of how Zhou Enlai had seen it in the 1960s: instead of overcrowded cities, Deng now worried about overpopulated villages. He noted that that in Sichuan Province, there was less than one *mu* of land available per person. Every *zhiqing* in Sichuan was effectively "snatching food away" (抢饭吃 *qiang fan chi*) from lifetime village dwellers.[16]

In the months leading up to the Third Plenum, Deng began to advocate for a return to the city. In February 1978 at a meeting on rural development, for instance, he announced that the "real solution to the sent-down youth problem is, in the final analysis, urban industrial development."[17] Inclined to get the *zhiqing* out of the villages, Deng later asked Hu Qiaomu (胡乔木) and Deng Liqun (邓力群) to "investigate how cities and towns can accommodate more laborers."[18]

Deng Xiaoping's campaigning continued throughout 1978. In October, he told an audience of provincial and municipal party secretaries that the *zhiqing* issue must be dealt with from an "economic perspective." He argued that "if the economy doesn't develop, some problems will never get resolved."[19]

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[15] Unsurprisingly, Chinese histories today, highly critical of Hua's "two whatevers," do their best to cast Deng in a positive light. See, for example, Gu and Hu, eds., *Zhongguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shimo*, 151.
[16] Gu and Hu, eds., *Zhongguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shimo*, 144-147, 151.
[17] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi (Party Literature Research Center), *Deng Xiaoping sixiang nianpu, 1975-1997* (Chronicle of Deng Xiaoping's Ideology, 1975-1997) (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1998), 103. See also Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushui, ed., *Deng Xiaoping nianpu 1975-1997* (Chronicle of Deng Xiaoping, 1975-1997), vol. 1 (Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 2004), 261.
[18] Gu and Hu, eds., *Zhongguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shimo*, 151.
[19] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushi, ed., *Deng Xiaoping sixiang nianpu, 1975-1997*, 263.

Hu Yaobang (胡耀邦) often echoed his mentor's sentiments. On July 3, 1978, Hu purportedly recommended to the Chairman of the State Council's *Zhiqing* Office that the practice of sending down should gradually be done away with and cities—including Beijing, Tianjin, and Shanghai—should become the primary locations for resettlement activity.[20] According to the son of Hu Yaobang, Hu Deping, Hu did his utmost to draw attention to the ridiculousness of forced rural resettlement. The elder Hu allegedly commented that "right now across the entire world, cities are drawing in people from villages; it is only us who are going from the cities to the countryside. Is this going to be temporary or will it go on for a while?"[21] While he later changed his attitude, remarking that urban populations did in fact need to shrink, Hu still distanced himself the heavy-handed population resettlement methods of the Mao era.[22]

While Deng won the sympathies of Hu Yaobang, his commentaries generally did not have an immediate effect upon policy, at least for the millions of *zhiqing* already in the countryside.[23] The party leadership was not yet seriously considering allowing the educated youth to come home. Yet Deng's words still registered with the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang and elsewhere, and serious questions about the future of the rustication movement bubbled to the surface.[24]

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[20] Sheng Ping and Wang Zaixing, ed., *Hu Yaobang sixiang nianpu, 1975-1989* (Chronicle of Hu Yaobang's Ideology, 1975-1989), no. 70*Zhonggong zhongyao lishi wenxian ziliao huibian* (Important Historical Documents of the CCP) (Los Angeles: Zhongwen chuban wu fuwu zhongin, 2007), 59.
[21] Hu Deping, *Zhongguo weishenme yao gaige: Si yi fuqin Hu Yaobang* (Why China Needed Reform: Remembering My Father Hu Yaobang) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2011), 164.
[22] Sheng and Wang, ed., *Hu Yaobang sixiang nianpu, 1975-1989*, 163.
[23] The leadership did decide to eventually cease the practice of sending more youth to villages. In order to develop alternatives to rural resettlement, Hua Guofeng called for increased study of foreign models, citing small towns with concentrations of cooperative industries in Yugoslavia as a primary example. He even explained that "big places with bountiful resources like Heilongjiang and Xinjiang" could certainly be sculpted in the mold of the Yugoslav example. See Gu and Hu, eds., *Zhongguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shimo*, 156.
[24] Bonnin, *The Lost Generation*, 134-135.

## The *Zhiqing* Protest

Resolved to chart their own futures, educated youth across China challenged the party-state's commitment to preserving the human footprint of the high-socialist era. On October 16, 1978, 974 Shanghai *zhiqing* stationed in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, jointly penned an open letter to Deng Xiaoping. A remarkable act of protest, the letter articulated the social alienation and everyday hardships the educated youth in Yunnan had experienced over the past 15 years. Put on paper for public consumption, the letter revealed the regrettable coping mechanisms which the *zhiqing* had resorted to, but it also hinted at the remarkable ingenuity of those who sought to escape the drudgery of internal exile. *Zhiqing*, for example, often married and/or divorced so they could leave Yunnan, or feigned long bouts of illness to get away from work.[25]

The open letter sparked a widespread petitioning movement within Yunnan. Thousands of educated youth began lobbying cadres at the state-run farms, in the provincial capital, and even in Beijing to implement real and immediate policy changes with regards to urban-to-rural resettlement. Aside from these direct approaches, *zhiqing* in Yunnan published two more open letters to the central leadership in November and December. Taken together, these acts of protests made the demands of the "50,000 educated youth in Yunnan" clear: they wanted permission to go home to Shanghai, and they wanted it as soon as possible.[26]

The Central Government hesitated to respond. After stalling for several months, Beijing finally dispatched Wang Zhen (王震) to meet with Yunnan's *zhiqing* in January 1979. The long-time engineer of urban-to-rural resettlement, Wang had no intentions of

[25] Du, *Feng chao dang luo (1955-1979)*, 261-262.
[26] Liu, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi*, 463-464; Yang, "'We Want to Go Home!'"

conceding to the *zhiqing.* But after a number of highly contentious meetings with delegates from Yunnan and the start of hunger strikes among the 50,000 Shanghainese in the far southwest, Wang lost his ground in the negotiations. While we still lack an insider's perspective of the decision-making process at this time, the State Council made a stunning reversal in its policy: the Shanghai *zhiqing* in Yunnan were free to come home.[27]

The successful protests in Yunnan inspired a nation-wide movement of *zhiqing* activism. A front-page editorial in the *China Youth Daily* (*Zhongguo qingnian bao*) on November 23, 1978, further aggravated the tensions between *zhiqing* and the Central Government. Spread across four newspaper columns, the editorial took up the bulk of the front page and broke the taboo on publicly speaking out about the injustices of the Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages movement. Its headline announced that China must:

> CORRECTLY UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM OF EDUCATED YOUTH GOING UP TO THE MOUNTAINS AND DOWN TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

While much of the text was familiar, rehashing old justifications for the start of the movement many years' prior, the editorial was notable for its bold criticisms of the campaign. Calling attention to the everyday hardships facing millions of *zhiqing* across the country, the editorial proved to be wildly unpopular among officials in China's major urban areas, who feared that it would provoke a "return to the city wind."[28] While the

[27] Liu, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi*, 464-466; Du, *Feng chao dang luo (1955-1979)*, 263-265.
[28] Wang Rao, "Zhiqing huicheng de lishi guaidian" ("Historical Turning Points in the *Zhiqing* Returning to the Cities"), *Zhongguo qingnian bao* (China Youth Paper) (October 22, 2008); Ye Xin, "Lun Zhonggong zhiqing shangshan xiaxiang yundong de luomu" ("On the End of the Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages Movement among China's *Zhiqing*"), *Shehui kexue* no. 7 (2007): 145-146.

editorial blamed Lin Biao and the Gang of Four, a cautious verdict in line with the CCP's own narrative, its suggestion that an entire generation had been duped was explosive.[29]

The campaign to end the Up to the Mountains, Down to the Villages, unfolded quickly thereafter, with the protests moving into the cities. According to official histories, *zhiqing* from an undisclosed location returned to Shanghai and staged huge protests on February 5-6, 1979, blocking off rail traffic at the train stations as well as much of the vehicle traffic in parts of the city.[30] The Central Government reacted less amicably to these protests than they had towards the movement in Yunnan. In February 1979, the Central Committee and the State Council dictated that "education"—as opposed to "accommodation" (迁就 *qianjiu*)—was the answer to the *zhiqing*'s "demands to return to their original city."[31] National papers launched a campaign to discredit the so-called "return to the city wind" in early 1979, targeting rusticates from Shanghai especially.[32] In one case, *People's Daily* featured Peng Chong (彭冲), the First Party Secretary in the city, pleaded with *zhiqing* from the northwest to abandon the misplaced dream of "returning to the city" and strive to make the best of their lives elsewhere in the country.[33]

**The Return to the City Wind in Xinjiang**

[29] Pan, *Tempered in the Revolutionary Furnace*, 54.
[30] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei dangshi yanjiushi (Party History Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee), ed., *Shanghai shehui zhuyi jianshe 50nian* (Fifty Years of Socialist Construction in Shanghai) (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1999), 447. See also Liu Xiaomeng et al, eds., *Zhongguo zhiqing shidian* (Encyclopedia of the Chinese *Zhiqing*) (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1995), 678-680.
[31] "Zhonggong zhongyang, guowuyuan guanyu jinyibu jiaqiang quanguo anding tuanjie de tongzhi" ("Notification of the CCP Central Committee and the State Council on Taking Steps to Strengthen the Nation's Stability and Unity"), February 17, 1979, in ZGWX, 116.
[32] "Weihu shehui zhengchang shixu caineng baozheng gongzuo he shengchan," in RMRB, February 9, 1979.
[33] "Shanghai shiwei lingdao tongzhi jiejian shangfang qingnian; xionghuai quanju jianshou gangwei da gan sihua," in RMRB, March 14, 1979.

The crackdown did little to erode the will of the *zhiqing.* By this time, the educated youth in Xinjiang had determined that they, too, would join the return to the city wind.

One of the memorable and impassioned pleas to go home came from the most famous model *zhiqing* from Shanghai: Yu Shanling (鱼珊玲).[34] At a national educated youth conference convened in May 1979, Yu movingly described the past 16 years of her life and the experiences of other Shanghai youth who had been resettled to Xinjiang. She recalled hearing, as a young woman, Wang Zhen's impassioned mobilization speech in Shanghai in 1963, a speech which had prompted her to register to go to Xinjiang. While emerging as a spokesperson for resettlement to Xinjiang in the mid-1960s, Yu was put off by the spartan circumstances of living on the *bingtuan*'s farms. Though the Cultural Revolution had been by far the worst period for the *zhiqing*, Yu emphasized that she and many others in Xinjiang had been subject to hardship from the very beginning.[35]

Yu's reflections cast the party-state as whole, rather than just the Gang of Four, as villains. When Yu was mobilized to leave Shanghai, she and her classmates were told they would be valorized as workers and sericulture experts. Instead, they were catapulted to the lowest rungs of society, living in filth and dwelling in mud huts (地窝子 *diwozi*). Instead of becoming heroes, the Shanghai *zhiqing* in Xinjiang felt oppressed by their diminished socio-economic status. As Yu summarized, "the Shanghai youth have

[34] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 94.
[35] "Yu Shanling tongzhi 1979nian zai quanquo zhiqing gongzuo huiyi shang de shumian fayan" ("Comrade Yu Shanling's Written Remarks from the 1979 National Educated Youth Work Meeting"), May 1, 1979, AC. For a detailed summary, see Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian mingren lu*, 6-11.

endured prejudice for a long time now. [Our] political status is low, [our] material conditions poor, but the intensity of [our] labor has been high." [36]

Yu did not merely seek to draw attention to her own individual plight. Rather, she also wanted to spark a discussion about the children of the *zhiqing*, including her own. Yu explained that "many children of the Shanghai youth have already started school, but here the conditions for studying [in Xinjiang] are lacking." Distressed over her children's future, Yu asked rhetorically, "who does not hope to be able to have a better life and work environment?"[37]

Every bullet point of Yu Shanling's May 1979 speech resonated with the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang. The archives of various party offices and propaganda organs in Shanghai and Xinjiang prove as much. According to one issue of the internal circulation *Ideological Trends* (思想动向 *sixiang dongxiang*), the *zhiqing* were asking themselves:

> [What if one] had not heeded the call [to go up to the mountains and down to the countryside] and instead stayed in Shanghai and joined a production team? Why they'd make 1.3 *yuan* in salary every day right now. But coming back and joining a production team after ten years of being tempered in a village, [one] only makes 9 *jiao* each day.
>
> The children of workers at the farmers could not enroll at schools in Aksu, because [they said] your child, he/she is a village baby. The children of Shanghai *zhiqing* could only study at the farms. But the schools and education at the farms were no good. Parents worried about their children's future. They wanted, at the very least, for their sons and daughters to go back to Shanghai.[38]

**Protesting in Xinjiang**

[36] "Yu Shanling tongzhi 1979nian zai quanquo zhiqing gongzuo huiyi shang de shumian fayan."
[37] "Yu Shanling tongzhi 1979nian zai quanquo zhiqing gongzuo huiyi shang de shumian fayan."
[38] Ouyang Lian, "Akesu shijian shimo" ("The Whole Story of the Aksu Incident"), in *Zhongguo zhiqing koushu shi*, ed. Liu Xiaomeng (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 2004), 445-505.

Ouyang Lian was 37-years old when the "return to the city wind" began in Xinjiang. Born in Shanghai but raised in Chongqing, he had made the fateful decision to return to his native place in autumn 1963. Two years removed from middle school and unemployed, Ouyang was a text-book candidate for mobilization. Unsurprisingly, he was sent to Xinjiang in May 1964, assigned to a *bingtuan* farm belonging to the 1st Agricultural Division in Aksu Prefecture. Having endured many of the hardships described in chapters four and five for nearly 15 years, in 1979 Ouyang earnestly desired to leave behind the dusty farms of central Xinjiang and return to a bustling metropolis.[39]

News of the *zhiqing* protests in Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, and the Central Government's decision to allow the educated youth in that part of the country to return to Shanghai emboldened Ouyang. He stayed abreast of these developments through the *People's Daily* and whatever other news and rumors traveled by word-of-mouth. The Central Government tried to prevent the "return to the city wind" from spreading to Xinjiang. During an intensive propaganda campaign in February and March, national news outlets praised the *zhiqing* for their service and efforts to modernize Xinjiang. An open-letter from Yang Yongqing (杨永青)—an educated youth captured rather famously in a photograph standing next to Zhou Enlai in 1965—declared her intentions to return to Xinjiang's farms after many years in an office building in Urumqi.[40]

The propaganda swirling throughout Xinjiang did little to deter Ouyang. By February 1979, he was spearheading an effort for *zhiqing* in Aksu to also gain permission

[39] Unless otherwise indicated, the next several paragraphs draw from Ouyang, "Akesu shijian shimo," 445-505.
[40] See the extended articles published in RMRB on February 14, February 16, March 7, March 12, and March 23, 1979. See also Gu and Hu, eds., *Zhongguo zhishi qingnian shangshan xiaxiang shimo*, 188-189; XSJBD, 234-235.

to return to Shanghai. His initial interfacing with authorities in Urumqi unsuccessful, the 37-year old announced that he, like the organizers in Yunnan, would plead his case in Beijing. When Ouyang raised enough funds to support a delegation of nearly 50 people, cadres in both Aksu and Urumqi tried to dissuade the group from departing for the nation's capital. When reasoning failed, the local officials ordered the ticket sellers at Urumqi station to refuse to issue tickets to the group. These modest efforts did little to slow down Ouyang and the other *zhiqing* from Aksu.[41]

Ouyang and his comrades arrived in Beijing in March 1979. They stayed until June, pleading their case on a daily basis with representatives of the State Farm Bureau.[42] Early on in their tour of duty in the capital, one group member named Yang Qingliang (杨清良) presented a 10,000 character essay to the Ministry of Land Reclamation, outlining in detail the complaints and demands of the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang.[43] While the Bureau acknowledged the severe hardships which the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang had lived under for many years, it insisted that the educated youth had much to be proud of from their tenures in the far northwest. The Bureau prodded the *zhiqing* to set aside "personal motives" (个人目的 *geren mudi*) and put the nation first.[44] The author of the treatise, Yang Qingliang, recalled the responses of Zhao Fan (赵凡), a vice minister at the Land Reclamation Ministry. Feigning sympathy, Zhao insisted that the country was dealing

[41] Yang Qingliang, "Ba mianzai liugei muqin, ba lizhi liugei ziji" ("Give Face to Your Mother, Leave Reason to Ourselves"), in *Zhongguo zhiqing koushu shi*, ed. Liu Xiaomeng (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan chubanshe, 2004), 508-509.
[42] Liu Jimin, "1979 nianxia chuli Xinjiang bingtuan Shanghai qingnian huicheng wenti de huiyi" ("Handling the Shanghai Youth Returning to the City from the Xinjiang Bingtuan, Summer 1979"), in Hubei zhengxie wenshi he xuexi weiyuanhui, ed., *Hubei wenshi* 28 (Wuhan: Hubei wenshi, 2007), 74-75
[43] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian mingren lu*, 485-486.
[44] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 91, 93-96.

with too many problems at the moment to properly handle the complaints of all of the *zhiqing*. Yang quipped back using the language of the state: "all of the landlords, rich peasants, counterrevolutionaries, bad elements, and rightists as well as the 'stinking old ninth' [intellectuals] were dealt with; what's more, they were resolved during difficult times."[45]

On April 3, 1979, the Aksu delegates their counterparts at the Ministry of Land Reclamation to concede on four points. First, that the *zhiqing* could replace (顶替 *dingti*) their retiring parents in the cities; second, that seriously ill or enfeeble *zhiqing* could retire and return home; third, that *zhiqing* could return home if their families were facing legitimate hardships; and, fourth, that after undergoing persuasion work, *zhiqing* could return to home if they still did not desire to stay in Xinjiang.[46]

While the State Farm Bureau did not agree to this proposal, they did consent to dispatching investigators to Xinjiang, should Ouyang Lian and his partners return to Aksu. The State Farm Bureau dispatched Liu Jimin (刘济民), who was almost immediately accosted by huge throngs of *zhiqing* upon his arrival. As Liu's investigations of various farms got under way, he was "taken captive" by a group of *zhiqing* at the 11th Company on the outskirts of Aksu. The hostage-takers reportedly wanted Liu to live, eat, work, and, in general, feel like they did, and the plan worked. By the end of Liu's tour, he empathized with the demands to return to Shanghai and, especially, the desire to have one's child grow up in a city.[47]

[45] Yang, "Ba mianzai liugei muqin, ba lizhi liugei ziji," 516.
[46] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian mingren lu*, 487.
[47] Liu, "1979 nianxia chuli Xinjiang bingtuan Shanghai qingnian huicheng wenti de huiyi," 73-98. See also Yang, "Ba mianzai liugei muqin, ba lizhi liugei ziji," 511-512.

Despite winning over an ally in the State Farm Bureau, not much changed for Ouyang Lian, Yang Qingliang, and the other *zhiqing* at Aksu. Propaganda outlets such as *People's Daily* continued to suggest that the *zhiqing* should strike down roots in Xinjiang.[48] Ouyang's partners attempted to form a second petitioning group in July, but the delegation was stopped in its tracks in Urumqi. Other groups attempting to petition in Beijing were also detained or denied permission to leave the XUAR in September and November.[49]

**Dwindling Numbers**

While the protests were, to date, largely unsuccessful, by late summer 1979 many *zhiqing* in Xinjiang had in fact already left. By 1976, only an estimated 60-65,000 *zhiqing* remained with the *bingtuan.*[50] According to some estimates, there were only 60,000 *zhiqing* still in Xinjiang in 1978.[51] By 1979, according to the Shanghai Labor Bureau, out of the nearly 100,000 *zhiqing* sent to Xinjiang from Shanghai in the 1960s, only 40 to 50 percent remained in Xinjiang. The Labor Bureau, however, was not ready to concede defeat, stating that "because the educated youth went to Xinjiang's farms prior to the Cultural Revolution, their situation is different [from other *shangshan xiaxiang* youth]." While Cultural Revolution-era *zhiqing* had received permission to return home under certain circumstances, the same rules did not apply to the Xinjiang rusticates.[52] Shanghai

[48] "Talimu jiushi wo de jia: Ji shanghai zhibian qingnian Yan Keqi" (The Tarim is My Home: Remembering the Shanghai Youth who Aided the Frontier, Yan Keqi), in RMRB, September 3, 1979.
[49] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 97, 100, 101-102; Yang, "Ba mianzai liugei muqin, ba lizhi liugei ziji," 513.
[50] Li, ed., *Xinjiang bingtuan tunken shubian shi*, vol. 2, 857.
[51] XSJBFS, 337.
[52] Shanghai shi yibiao dianxun gongye ju (Shanghai Municipal Instrumentation and Telecommunications Industry Bureau), "Zhuanfa laodong ju 'guanyu benshi zhigong tuixiu zhaoshou Xinjiang nongchang zinv wenti de tongzhi'" ("Forwarding the Labor Bureau's 'Notification on Shanghai's Retired Workers Recruiting Sons and Daughters from Xinjiang's Farms"), August 21, 1979, SMA, B103-4-1072, 89-90.

began an urgent campaign to persuade the *zhiqing* already in the city to leave, even offering transportation subsidies to get them to "go back to their place of work in Xinjiang."[53]

In late 1979, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region took additional steps to keep the *zhiqing* inside the XUAR. Clarifying that "urban educated youth" in Xinjiang, as well as their children, were "state employees,", the Regional Farm Bureau announced that the *zhiqing w*ere bound to continue supporting their designated work units. In the rare chance a farm were to have "surplus labor," educated youth could become eligible for a transfer elsewhere. Yet this had to be done according to protocol: the Farm Bureau had to consent, the Labor Bureau had to approve, and the receiving work unit had to agree.[54]

On January 9, 1980, the State Council echoed these policy positions coming out of Shanghai and Xinjiang. The Central Government announced that the "vast majority of Shanghai's educated youth" would have to remain in Xinjiang. Later that month, the Xinjiang People's Government declared that the decision to dispatch the *zhiqing* to Xinjiang in the 1960s was "completely correct" (完全正确 *wanquan zhengque*) and, as a result, there should be no expectation that individuals could return to their native places.

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Also available in SMA B103-4-1072, 92-94; SMA B105-9-577, 46-52; SMA B165-2-136, 15-17; SMA B170-3-662, 127-130; SMA B170-3-662, 133-135; HDA 059-2-817, 141-144.c2

[53] Shanghai shi laodong ju geming weiyuanhui (Revolutionary Committee of the Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu shidang jiejue shaoshu zixing lai Hu dengdai banli dingti de Xinjiang nongchang qingnian fanhui gongzuo gangwei de lufei wenti de tongzhi" ("Notification on Appropriately Resolving the Issue of Travel Costs to Return to Work for the Small Number of Youth from Xinjiang Farms Who Came to Shanghai on Their Own to Await for a Job Placement"), June 21, 1979, SMA, B105-9-577, 42-45. Also available in SMA B165-2-136, 36-37; SMA B170-3-662, 122-123; SMA B170-3-662, 126.

[54] Zizhiqu nongken zongju dangwei (Party Committee of the [Xinjiang Uyghur] Autonomous Region Farm Bureau) and Zizhiqu nongken zongju ([Xinjiang Uyghur] Autonomous Region Farm Bureau), "Guanyu guoying nongchang jige zhengce de baogao" ("Report on Several Policies for State Run Farms"), October 19, 1979, in XSJBLWX, vol. 1, 496.

Going a step further, the People's Government in the XUAR also demanded that the organizations responsible for the petitioning drives admit defeat and cease their activities.[55]

**The Crackdown**

The available archival evidence for this period—though quite extensive—still does not clarify precisely why China's State Council did not grant wholesale permission for the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang to return to their native places. Michel Bonnin argues that by keeping a sizable Han Chinese population in Xinjiang, the Chinese Government intended to balance the ethnic composition in the region.[56] Scholarship from Xinjiang experts, however, demonstrates that the Communist Party in fact temporarily ceded greater autonomy to Xinjiang's minority peoples in the late 1970s and early 1980s.[57] The leading *zhiqing* historian in China, Liu Xiaomeng, thus suggests that the attempts to prevent the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang from leaving was more complicated than ethnicity alone. In Liu's reading, the unique approach handling of *zhiqing* in Xinjiang was probably meant to resolve several different economic, political, and security issues, some of which had more to do with Shanghai than they did with Xinjiang.[58]

While the archival evidence currently available tends to support Liu's perspectives, it is still difficult to say for certain what role the *zhiqing* were supposed to play in Xinjiang after 1979. But if we are too focused on the debate about causes, we may inadvertently neglect outcomes. After the State Council intervened in January 1980,

[55] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 103-105; Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian mingren lu*, 489.
[56] Bonnin, *The Lost Generation*, 198.
[57] Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 276-279; Bovingdon, *The Uyghurs*, 52-53.
[58] Liu, *Zhongguo zhiqing shi*, 476.

supporting the decision to keep most the Shanghai *zhiqing* in Xinjiang, the scale and scope of the protest movement changed. That same month, over 3,700 people came together in Aksu for the first large scale protest.[59]

Ouyang Lian recalled the confusion of this period. For one, they learned from cadres in Aksu that the Central Government was in fact drawing up criteria to allow some individuals to resettle in farms just outside of Shanghai proper. At the same time, they heard from others that "Shanghai won't receive you; they've shut the door," or that Wang Zhen had just given an address at a national conference in Beijing in which he condemned the "return to the city wind."[60] Authorities in Xinjiang and Shanghai recognized the confusion and credited the misunderstandings of policies for pushing the *zhiqing* to "demand to leave Xinjiang and return to Shanghai" or to "go to *neidi* [China Proper] to find a work unit." [61]

The crackdown on the *zhiqing* organizations in Xinjiang and the mixed signals coming from Urumqi, Shanghai, and Beijing pushed Ouyang Lian toward more dramatic action: a hunger strike.[62] With several thousand other educated youth, including many from as far away as Kashgar, Ouyang descended on downtown Aksu on November 8, 1980.[63] The protests went on for days, with the group blocking access to and from the main party buildings in Aksu. They even broadcast their messages in the Uyghur-language to attract even more attention. Wang Zhen phoned into to Aksu to announce his

[59] XSJBFS, 337-338.
[60] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 106.
[61] Untitled letter from Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau) to various labor and labor-wage offices in Shanghai, September 27, 1980, SMA, B103-4-1273, 5.
[62] Lu Wen, "Wo jingli le Xinjiang shijian" ("I Experienced the Xinjiang Incident"), *Zhengming* 44, no. 6 (1981): 12-16.
[63] XSJBD, 242.

intention to come to the city and help alleviate the situation,[64] but after several days of being a no-show, Ouyang and hundreds of other *zhiqing* announced on November 22 that they would not dare to eat anything until their demands had been met. The hunger strike continued through November 27, by which time many of the participants began to require medical attention.

The protest movement continued through the middle of December. Finally, the Central Committee requested a meeting with Ouyang Lian and several of the other chief representatives. Ouyang made a point of specifying that he was here to "report on the problems of the Xinjiang educated youth" and "not to negotiate with you," though he agreed to disperse the protestors on December 20.

**Wang Zhen Intervenes**

Ouyang's stubbornness did not pay off. He was arrested on December 26, 1980, before any of his demands had been met. On the same day, the State Council and the Central Military Commission jointly authorized the People's Liberation Army to use force against recalcitrant protestors in Xinjiang.[65] During a series of emergency meetings of the Central Committee held in late December 1980 and early 1981, Hu Yaobang also agreed for Wang to go to Xinjiang.[66] Wang Zhen thus made his much anticipated visit to Xinjiang only after the demonstrations had been brought to an end and Ouyang Lian—as well as others believed to be the chief culprits behind the unrest—were under arrest. It

[64] Chen Wuguo, *Wang Zhen yu Xinjiang* (Wang Zhen and Xinjiang) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2013), 205. The Central Committee allegedly did not allow Wang to go to Xinjiang during this time because he was still recovering from surgery.
[65] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 111-112.
[66] Chen, *Wang Zhen yu Xinjiang*, 205.

was fitting that Wang was now tasked with rescuing the very program he had helped to create more than 15 years earlier.

Wang held meet-and-greet sessions with *zhiqing* in Aksu, Shihezi, Urumqi, and Bayingolin.[67] We know very little about these meetings. In internal summaries circulated the following month, Wang appeared to blame the unrest and the desires of the *zhiqing* to leave Xinjiang on the lifting of martial law following the conclusion of the Cultural Revolution. In general, Wang was not so much interested in fact-finding as he was with inspiring the *zhiqing* to remain in Xinjiang. [68]

Wang apparently had very little success in persuading his audiences to stay in the Autonomous Region.[69] In the months following his inspection of Xinjiang, Party and Government offices in Shanghai reported that over 10,000 educated youth had recently come to the city under "unusual" circumstances, bringing with them over 9,000 family members, too.[70] Other estimates state as many as 17,000 *zhiqing* left between the end of 1980 and March 1981, although it is not clear if these figures include the children and spouses of *zhiqing*.[71] Jiangsu Province estimated that, by this time, only 6,400 of its *zhiqing* remained in Xinjiang, a decrease of over 10,000 individuals.[72] The toll of the

[67] Chen, *Wang Zhen yu Xinjiang*, 206-208.
[68] See a pair of articles in RMRB, January 24, 1981. See also Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 114-115.
[69] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 114-115; XSJBD, 243.
[70] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Guanyu Xinjiang fan Hu zhibian qingnian kunnan buzhu wenti de pifu" ("Response on the Issue of Subsidies for the Youth Who Aided the Border Region in Xinjiang and Have Returned to Shanghai but are Facing Difficulties"), March 24, 1981, SMA, B1-9-468, 43-44. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)
[71] XSJBFS, 339; Li, ed., *Xinjiang bingtuan tunken shubian shi*, vol. 2, 858.
[72] Jiangsu sheng difangzhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Minzheng zhi*, 834.

flights was becoming increasingly clear. By the end of 1980, there were less than 50,000 *zhiqing* still in Xinjiang.[73]

**Beijing Convenes**

After Wang Zhen's failed intervention, the case file for the Xinjiang *zhiqing* floated back to the desk of Hu Yaobang. The General Secretary in-waiting reportedly stayed abreast of developments through several different internal circulars and on several occasions offered some influential marginalia.[74] The exodus was so severe that the State Council quickly decided to summon senior officials from Shanghai, Xinjiang, and various central-level ministries for an extended emergency session running from March 12 through March 30, 1981. Even Premier Zhao Ziyang (赵紫阳) was called upon to attend the meetings and to speak to his peers on March 25. [75]

The emergency sessions did not challenge the mandate to keep the "vast majority" of the *zhiqing* in Xinjiang. In fact, the officials in attendance decided that, out of the estimated 48,800 *zhiqing* with formal work assignments in Xinjiang, only 15,000 or less would be allowed to leave over the next three years. Wanting to "prevent a 'return to the city wind' from arising again," the conference-goers decided that the best strategy was to tap into the "emotions" (感情 *ganqing*) of the *zhiqing*. They sought ways and means to kindle fondness and nostalgia for life in the northwest. To further persuade the *zhiqing* to either stay in Xinjiang or leave Shanghai, the attendees also discussed playing up the financial hardships and other challenges of living in a metropolis such as Shanghai. If

[73] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 113.
[74] XSJBFS, 338.
[75] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 115. Unfortunately, the recently published *Collected Works of Zhao Ziyang* (*Zhao Ziyan wenji*)—a series smuggled out of China and released in Hong Kong—does not include any references to these meetings.

people could not secure jobs or housing, the rationale went, they would be perfectly "willing to go back to Xinjiang."[76]

The *People's Daily* began to spread this message in the days that followed. Reporting on a 1964 rusticate who had come back to Shanghai in December 1980, the paper printed the individual's confession that she "had misunderstood the Party's policies as well as the real difficulties facing Shanghai." Having not yet found stable work in Shanghai, this *zhiqing* announced that she was ready to take her family back to Xinjiang and return to her old job.[77] Within Xinjiang, the Farm Bureau convened a series of meetings to convey the results of the March conference and to prepare cadres to welcome back *zhiqing* or otherwise prevent them from leaving.[78]

The results of the March meetings also reinforced the decisions of Shanghai and other cities along the coast to push back against the Xinjiang *zhiqing*. Authorities in Shanghai resisted requests for work unit, *hukou*, and grain ration card transfers, arguing that permitting such defections would "not only impact production [in the area of origin] but also make a lot of trouble for Shanghai." Instead of conceding to the *zhiqing*'s demands, Shanghai wanted "carry out ideological education to put them at ease." The

[76] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zhizhiqu renmin zhengfu (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region People's Government) and Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Guanyu jiejue Xinjiang kenqu nongchang Shanghai zhibian zhishi qingnian wenti de baogao" ("Report on Resolving the Issue of Shanghai's Youth Who Aided the Border Region at Xinjiang's Land Reclamation Farms"), March 30, 1981, SMA, B98-6-536, 27-32. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.) See also Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 115.

[77] "Gu daju de qingnian ren: Shanghai zhibian qingnian Xu Meili yijia zhongfan Xinjiang gongzuo" ("Youth Who Care for the Overall Situation: Xu Meili, a Shanghai Youth Aiding the Frontier, and Family Return to Xinjiang for Work"), in RMRB, April 15, 1981.

[78] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 115-116.

message they wished to convey was simple: "to avoid harming [your] work and life, do not blindly return to Shanghai."[79]

**Protests Again**

Following the Shanghai model, other cities and provinces engaged in direct talks with the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region to stem the flow of returning *zhiqing* and minimize the likelihood of protests.[80] Yet in April 1981, more protests began to flare up, this time among the fleeing *zhiqing* in Shanghai. The group was refused to accept the mandate to return to Xinjiang, and was demanding formal permission to remain in Xinjiang. The protests were so serious, according to the Municipal Party Committee, that the *zhiqing* now ranked as one "one of the outstanding issues affecting social stability."[81] Their demands unmet, the returned *zhiqing* from Xinjiang assembled at the Municipal Labor Bureau's headquarters, creating such an "uproar" that they blocked traffic in downtown Shanghai and prevented buses from proceeding along regularly scheduled routes. Public Security Bureau officials sent to pacify the situation reported that the *zhiqing* attacked security guards and other cadres, creating a huge commotion and attracting spectators.[82]

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[79] Shanghai shi yibiao dianxun gongye ju (Shanghai Municipal Instrumentation and Telecommunications Industry Bureau), "Guanyu shi laodong ju zhuanfa Jilin Yanbian Chaoxian zu zizhiqu geweihui 'guanyu zhizhi yi canjia gongzuo de Shanghai zhiqing lizhi fan Hu de jinji tongzhi'" ("On the Municipal labor Bureau forwarding the Jilin Yanbian Korean Autuonomous Prefecture Revolutionary Committee's 'Emergency Notification on Stopping Working Shanghai Youth from Quitting and Returning to Shanghai'"), May 31, 1979, SMA, B103-4-1072, 53-54. Also available in SMA B103-4-1072, 56-57; SMA B142-2-121, 21-22; SMA B170-3-662, 91-92.

[80] Jiangsu sheng Nanjing shi laodong zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nanjing laodong zhi*, 780.

[81] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Pizhuan 'guanyu yijiuba'er nian shangban nian zhiqing gongzuo yijian'" ("Approving and Forwarding the 'Proposals for Zhiqing Work during the First Half of 1982'"), February 13, 1982, SMA, B1-9-758, 1-5.

[82] Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Tongzhi" ("Notification"), April 15, 1981, SMA, B1-9-468, 7-8. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)

To appease the protestors, Shanghai volunteered to pay for transportation back to Xinjiang. The city also encouraged authorities in Xinjiang to begin paying *zhiqing* salaries as soon as possible, not necessarily waiting until after individuals returned to work.[83] The State Council added that Xinjiang must strive to do better for the returnees by "developing producing, taking care of the farms," and creating "stability" for them.[84] Though the *zhiqing* had left a bad taste in many cadres' mouths in recent years, the Xinjiang People's Government responded, ordering the farms and other work units to receive and take care of all of the returning Shanghainese, "except for the few leaders stirring up trouble or those involved in beating, smashing, and looting."[85]

**The "Specific Provisions"**

Because so many people had already deserted Xinjiang, and many more were still agitating to leave Xinjiang, in May 1981 the Chinese Central Government finally appeared ready to partially compromise and allow a select number of people to return legally to the city. On May 28, 1981, the State Council released the so-called "Specific

[83] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Tongzhi" ("Notification"), May 16, 19861, SMA, B1-9-468, 1-2. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.) See also untitled letter from the Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu bangongting (Office of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government) to the Xinjiang zizhiqu renmin zhengfu bangongting (Office of the Xinjiang Autonomous Region People's Government), May 4, 19861, SMA, B1-9-468, 14-16. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)

[84] Zhonghua renmin gongheguo guowuyuan (State Council of the People's Republic of China), "Guowuyuan dui Xinjiang Wei'wu'er zizhiqu he Shanghai shi guanyu jiejue Xinjiang kenqu nongchang Shanghai zhibian zhishi qingnian wenti baogao ge pifu" ("The State Council's Response to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and the Shanghai Municipality's Report on Resolving the Issue of Shanghai's Youth Who Aided the Border Region at Xinjiang's Land Reclamation Farms"), May 28, 1981, SMA, B98-6-536, 24-26. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.) For a summary, see Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 116-119.

[85] Xinjiang Weiwu'er zizhiqu renmin zhengfu (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region People's Government), "Guanyu zuo hao fan Jiang Shanghai zhibian zhishi qingnian jieshao anzhi gongzuo de tongzhi" ("Notification on Receiving and Resettling the Shanghai Educated Youth who Aided the Border Region and are Returning to Xinjiang"), April 16, 1981, SMA, B1-9-468, 20-21. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)

Provisions" (具体规定 *juti guiding*), a document which elucidated who among the nearly 50,000 *zhiqing* in Xinjiang were eligible to legally return to Shanghai or to be resettled on a farm adjoining the city. The document spelled out that, to be eligible, one had to be facing "special difficulties" (特殊困难 *teshu kunnan*), such as:

- An only child whose retired parents in Shanghai required a caretaker;
- A child whose parent(s) were attacked or killed during the Cultural Revolution but have since been rehabilitated;
- Individuals with younger siblings requiring a caretaker because both parents are deceased;
- The son or daughter of a revolutionary martyr;
- A person with a medical disability which prevented them from completing farm work in Xinjiang.[86]

Aware that more Shanghai *zhiqing* would request to come home based on the "Specific Provisions" than could possibly be allowed, the Shanghai Municipal Government announced that:

> We must strengthen political and ideological work toward the Shanghai zhiqing, treating the resolution of the Shanghai zhiqing issue as a matter of constructing socialism. [We] must use basic ideological principles and patriotism to educate the Shanghai zhiqing to be concerned about national affairs, to willingly comply with government regulations and national laws, to carry forward the revolutionary spirit of heading to all four corners of the motherland, and to contribute to the motherland's four modernizations and borderland construction.[87]

In addition to ideological education, the Shanghai Government was ready to fork over some cash, volunteering to give subsidies and transportation for *zhiqing* in Shanghai

[86] Guowuyuan bangongting (Office of the State Council), "Guanyu jiejie Xinjang kenqu nongchang Shanghai zhibian zhishi qingnian wenti de juti guiding" ("Specific Provisions for on Resolving the Issue of Shanghai's Youth Who Aided the Border Region at Xinjiang's Land Reclamation Farms"), May 29, 1981, SMA, B98-6-536, 33-37. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)
[87] Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Guanyu yinfa 'guanyu jiejue Xinjiang kenqu nongchang Shanghai zhibian zhishi qingnian wenti de juti guiding' de tongzhi" ("Notification on Distribution of 'Specific Provisions on Resolving the Issue of Shanghai's Educated Youth Who Aided the Border Region at Xinjiang's Reclamation Farms'"), June 9, 1981, SMA, B1-9-468, 22-25. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.) This document was also once available in SMA B98-6-536, 39-46.

prepared to go back to Xinjiang.[88] The Ministry of Finance later pledged a sum of three million *yuan* to help Shanghai defray these costs.[89]

The "Specific Provisions" did indeed create a huge rush of individuals coming back to Shanghai. According to some estimates, in 1981 alone, 20,000 *zhiqing* from Xinjiang came back to the city along with 20,000 family members.[90] Similarly, when Haifeng Farm—a work unit owned and operated by Shanghai across the provincial border with Jiangsu—began receiving *zhiqing* from Xinjiang in 1982, cadres complained that more *zhiqing* were arriving than the farm could possibly accommodate.[91]

The huge numbers of people coming back, most of whom did not, in the eyes of municipal authorities, meet the criteria of the "Specific Provisions," was met by an intensive repatriation campaign in the lead up to the Spring Festival in 1982. Authorities in Shanghai were especially wary of illegal *zhiqing* doing business in the city limits and creating an impression of success. "If [we] don't pay attention," one official wrote, "there will be even more *zhiqing* doing business in Shanghai, creating more problems for [our]

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[88] Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Guanyu tongyi zhuijia Xinjiang hui Hu zhibian qingnian kunnan buzhu bokuan de pifu" ("Response Agreeing with Increasing the Subsidy Appropriation for Youth Who Aided the Border Region in Xinjiang and Have Returned to Shanghai but are Facing Difficulties"), July 14, 1981, SMA, B1-9-468, 45-46. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.) See also Shanghai shi caizheng ju (Shanghai Municipal Finance Bureau) and Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu Xinjiang fan Hu zhibian qingnian kunnan buzhu bokuan de qingshi baogao" ("Report and Request for Instructions on Increasing the Subsidy Appropriation for Youth Who Aided the Border Region in Xinjiang and Have Returned to Shanghai but are Facing Difficulties"), July 23, 1981, SMA, B1-9-468, 50-52. (Note: As of the time of writing, this document is not accessible at the SMA.)

[89] Caizheng bu (Ministry of Finance), "Guanyu anzhi Xinjiang hui Hu 'zhiqing' suoxu jingfei de fuhan" ("Response concerning Arranging the Required Funds for the 'Zhiqing' Returning to Shanghai from Xinjiang"), October 20, 1981, SMA, B1-8-184, 28-29.

[90] Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Guanyu anzhi Xinjiang hui Hu 'zhiqing' suoxu jingfei qingqiu zhongyang caizheng jiyu diao bo kuan zhizhi de qingshi" ("Request for Instructions on the Ministry of Finance Providing Support for Arranging the Required Funds for the 'Zhiqing' Returning to Shanghai from Xinjiang"), August 18, 1981, SMA, B1-8-184, 30-31.

[91] "Haifeng nongchang anzhi Shanghai zhi Jiang qingnian gongzuo luoshi qingkuang" ("Situation of the Haifeng Farm Resettling the Shanghai Zhijiang Youth"), March 5, 1982, SMA, B1-9-767, 1-7.

mobilization work next year."[92] While earlier the Central Government had tried to emphasize the financial hardships of the *zhiqing* in Shanghai, now they were readily acknowledging that this was not the case. Illegal *zhiqing*, according the Municipal Party Committee, earned upwards of several hundred *yuan* each peddling small goods on the streets. Accordingly,

> The work of mobilizing the zhiqing who do not meet the 'Specific Provisions' to return to Xinjiang is much more difficult today than in the past…Most of them in Shanghai are doing business or are self-employed. They can get by in Shanghai. Some people want the policies to be relaxed. They have a fantasy of waiting around in Shanghai for the problem to be solved. Some people are being held back by their family.

The city called for Public Security Bureau officials to "consolidate the market," "clean up unlicensed street peddlers," and "deal a blow to people engaged in speculation and other illegal acts."[93]

In March 1982, the Municipal Committee in Shanghai announced that "in order to maintain normal social order and economic order, [we] must pay attention to strengthening the management of the market, rectifying market order, protecting legitimate businesses, and clamping down on unlicensed operations."While not referencing any *zhiqing* from Xinjiang specifically, the Committee proposed a series of policies which would help to "mobilize the people who flowed back to Shanghai and

[92] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui bangongting (Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu bangongting (Office of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Yinfa 'guanyu chunjie Yiqian zhiqing gongzuo de yiian'" ("Distributing 'Proposals for Zhiqing Work prior to Chinese New Year'"), January 27, 1982, SMA, B1-9-758, 16-17.
[93] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Pizhuan 'guanyu yijiuba'er nian shangban nian zhiqing gongzuo yijian'" ("Approving and Forwarding the 'Proposals for Zhiqing Work during the First Half of 1982'"), February 13, 1982, SMA, B1-9-758, 1-5.

those who blindly came to the city to engage in unlicensed operations to go back to where they came from."[94]

Officials in Shanghai continued to gripe over the business activities of the *zhiqing* throughout 1982, noting that successful business persons were highly reluctant to go back to Xinjiang. Even worse, authorities reported that "in society there are some people who do not understand very well why we must mobilize the zhiqing who do not fit the 'Specific Provisions' to return to Xinjiang. They even are sympathetic to the zhiqing doing business."[95]

The crackdown was not easy. When Public Security Bureau officials attempted to thwart *zhiqing* from selling fruits and vegetables or small housewares on the streets of Shanghai, they met violent resistance:

> During our work, some new situations have arisen. Some people have threatened to kill; some have quarreled with or assaulted our staff; some gangs have gone down to the streets or the police station 'to have something to eat.' Some have carried out a series of activities, announcing that they are in 'in a confrontation' with the government.[96]

**Ambiguous Ends**

On July 1, 1981, Deng Xiaoping received a report from Wang Zhen on reviving the moribund Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps.[97] The following month, Deng

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[94] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), " Pizhuan shi gongshang hang zheng guanli ju 'guany uzhengdun shichang zhixu, quid wu zheng jingying de yijian'" ("Forwarding the Municipal Industry and Commerce Administration Bureau's 'Proposals for Rectifying Market Order and Clamping Down on Unlicensed Operations"), March 20, 1982, SMA, B1-9-826, 1-7.
[95] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui (CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu (Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Yifa 'guanyu jinyibu dongyuan zhiqing fan Jiang gongzuo de yijian' de tongzhi" ("Notification of the Distribution of the 'Proposals on Improving the Work of Mobilizing Zhiqing to Return to Xinjiang'"), June 14, 1982, SMA, B1-9-758, 6-10.
[96] Zhonggong Shanghai shi weiyuanhui bangongting (Office of the CCP Shanghai Municipal Committee) and Shanghai shi renmin zhengfu bangongting (Office of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government), "Tongzhi" ("Notification"), June 24, 1982, SMA, B1-9-826, 58-61.
[97] Zhonggong zhongyang wenxian yanjiushui, ed., *Deng Xiaoping nianpu 1975-1997*, vol. 2, 752.

travelled to Xinjiang on his own. While principally concerned with investigating the situation amongst the Uyghurs, Deng also tried to recreate parts of Zhou Enlai's famous 1965 trip.[98] During an inspection of state-run farms in Shihezi, Deng announced that "the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps is now a land reclamation and cultivation unit. It is the core of Xinjiang's stability. The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps should be revived."[99]

The *bingtuan* in Xinjiang was formally reconstituted by the end of the year. While it is unclear whether the unrest among *zhiqing* motivated the decision to do so, the revived Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps did become an important tool in pacifying the educated youth. The new *bingtuan* leadership, for instance, quickly passed legislation which entitled all employees to housing and other benefits.[100] Other plans called for a robust educational system for children affiliated with the Production and Construction Corps.[101] As an olive branch, Wang Zhen's speech to mark the occasion also paid lip service to the sacrifices of the "educated youth" who had dedicated their lives to the *bingtuan*.[102]

By the end of 1981, Shanghai had disbanded its Up the Mountains, Down to the Villages Office, citing the return the vast majority of *zhiqing*.[103] It is not known how

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[98] Bovingdon, *The Uyghurs*, 52-53. See also "Xinjiang nongken zongju shiqi jihua zhixing qingkuang" ("The Xinjiang Farm Bureau's Plan Implementation"), undated, in XSJBLWX, vol. 1, 536.
[99] Untitled comments by Deng Xiaoping made to Wang Enmao, October 23, 1981, in XGWX, 253.
[100] "Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan guanyu nong mu tuanchang fangwu jianshe he guanli de zanxing guiding" ("Xinjiang Production and Construction Corp on Interim Provisions for the Construction and Management of Housing at Agricultural and Husbandry Farms"), August 17, 1982, in XSJBLWX, vol. 2, 22-28.
[101] "Guanyu jianshe bingtuan di liu ge jihua hou san nian he di qi ge wu nian jihua zonghe baogao" ("Summary Report on the Last Three Years of the Sixth Five-Year Plan and the Seventh Five-Year Plan of the [Xinjiang] Production and Construction Corps "), June 9, 1983, in XSJBLWX, vol. 2, 34-53.
[102] Wang Zhen, "Zai qingzhu huifu Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan dahui shang de jianghua" ("Remarks at the Assembly to Celebrate the Revival of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps"), June 1, 1982, in XSJBLWX, vol. 2, 6-8.
[103] Zhonggong Shanghai shiwei dangshi yanjiushi, ed., *Shanghai shehui zhuyi jianshe 50nian*, 448.

many educated youth from Xinjiang that the Shanghai Municipal Government permitted to return home in the years immediately following the publication of the "Specific Provisions." The Haifeng Farm, one work site receiving *zhiqing* from Xinjiang, reported that 5,000 individuals, as well as their families, came to the farm in 1982 and 1983.[104] Later estimates put indicate that, by 1986, over 9,000 *zhiqing* resided at the Haifeng Farm.[105]

We have a much better sense of the numbers of people Shanghai did *not* allow to come back. An article in *People's Daily* in 1983, for example, trumpeted how "15,000" former *zhiqing* had been coaxed into returning to Xinjiang from Shanghai in just one year. While propagandists portrayed these returns as the natural outcome of improving conditions in Xinjiang, force was also at hand.[106]As late as January 1986, the *bingtuan* continued its efforts to bring the Shanghai educated youth back to Xinjiang, dispatching work teams—in effect bounty hunters—to the East Coast.[107] A year later, Wang Zhen was keeping up his efforts to keep the vast majority of Shanghai *zhiqing* in Xinjiang. He called on the *bingtuan* as well as Shanghai to invest in the livelihoods of the educated

[104] Shanghai shi laodong ju (Shanghai Municipal Labor Bureau), "Guanyu lai bai hu Xinjiang zhiqing de jieshou anzhi wenti" ("On Receivig and Resettling the 600 Zhiqing from Xinjiang"), October 25, 1984, SMA, B250-5-587, 29-30. Also available, partially, in SMA B250-5-587, 28.
[105] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 130.
[106] "Dang de zhengce guwu tamen jixu wei kaifa da xibei chuli: Yiwan wuqian ming Shanghai zhiqing chongfan Xinjiang" ("Party Policies Encouraged Them to Continue Opening up the Great Northwest: 15,000 Shanghai *Zhiqing* Return to Xinjiang"), in RMRB, September 1, 1983. See also the article on Zhao Ziyang's visit to Xinjiang in RMRB, September 7, 1983. See also Liu Xiaomeng et al, eds., *Zhongguo zhiqing shidian* (Encyclopedia of the Chinese *Zhiqing*) (Chengdu: Sichuan renmin chubanshe, 1995), 678.
[107] XSJBD, 298-300. See also Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 128-129.

youth and resolve whatever grievances they still had.[108] For its part, Shanghai revived the practice of sending "goodwill missions" to Xinjiang.[109]

The ever-dwindling numbers of *zhiqing* in Xinjiang continued their protests.[110] In 1989, Shanghai and Xinjiang finally conceded that the children of *zhiqing* were entitled to return to Shanghai and exchange their rural *hukous* for urban ones.[111] This was a landmark victory for the educated youth generation in Xinjiang, but hardly the last. It was only in 1994 that Nanjing fully agreed to dismantle the program, announcing that, if the authorities in Xinjiang agreed and the *zhiqing* could identify a new work unit in Nanjing, they were welcome to come home. If for whatever reason the *zhiqing* could not obtain approval from Xinjiang, they were still welcome to send their children back to Nanjing. The city continued to find ways to accommodate the children of "educated youth" in Xinjiang, even as they entered adulthood, into the late 1990s.[112]

[108] XSJBD, 308-309; Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 133-134.
[109] Xie, *Xinjiang Shanghai zhishi qingnian zai shangshan xiaxiang sishi nian (1963-2003nian) dashiji*, 131-132.
[110] XSJBD, 322-323.
[111] "Shanghai shi laodong ju guanyu jiejue zai Xinjiang yuan Shanghai zhiqing zinv lai Hu jiu du ruhu wenti de tongzhi" ("Notification on Resolving the Residency Issue of the Children of Shanghai *Zhiqing* in Xinjiang Coming to Shanghai for School"), March 21, 1989, AC.
[112] Jiangsu sheng Nanjing shi laodong zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, ed., *Nanjing laodong zhi*, 781-782.

# Conclusion

The urban-to-rural population resettlement program which bridged China's largest cities and its frontier began in 1963 with an uproar. It ended in the late 1980s with a whimper.

Urban-to-rural population resettlement was executed across all of China in the years leading up to the Cultural Revolution. More than one million "educated youth" were sent from China's largest cities to state-run farms, rural cooperatives, production and construction corps, and other work units in the countryside. The more than 100,000 *zhiqing* sent to Xinjiang from Shanghai, Tianjin, Wuhan, Beijing, Jiangsu, and Zhejiang were thus hardly unique, although, as I have suggested, this population resettlement program was among the most extreme and ambitious.

Regardless of the sending community or the receiving community, state-led urban-to-rural population resettlement in socialist China aimed to simultaneously transform people and place. Emerging in the aftermath of the disastrous Great Leap Forward, the single initiative campaign aimed to reduce the population sizes of China's cities and lessen their grain requirements while realizing the latent potential of hitherto undeveloped lands. The ambitious demographic and developmental aims of the program gradually melded with a new goal: the ideological and physical transformation of the individuals who constituted urban-to-rural population resettlement, young Chinese from the cities. By participating in population resettlement and engaging in agricultural labor on the Chinese frontier, the "baby boomer" generation would become physically stronger and mentally sharper. Having revolutionized their own minds and bodies, the *zhiqing*

could safely work to turn Xinjiang into the vanguard of Chinese socialism and protect China's status as the head of the world revolution.

Chairman Mao Zedong is remembered for his big and bold campaigns which often had disastrous outcomes. Urban-to-rural population resettlement, though disastrous, was not one of Mao's ideas. Rather, the creators and executors of urban-to-rural population resettlement were his ostensibly more level headed comrades: Premier Zhou Enlai, Vice Premier Tan Zhenlin, Commander Wang Zhen, Shanghai Mayor Cao Diqiu, and the Second Commissar of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps Zhang Zhonghan, to name only a few. Facing real and immediate problems and sensing new development opportunities, these men earnestly believed in the power and potential of urban-to-rural population resettlement. Believing that resettlement was a rational means of managing China's economy and society, their work is proof that authoritarian agendas can quickly become divorced from reality. Catapulting someone as young as 15 years old thousands of miles from home, state-led urban-to-rural population resettlement in socialist China was bound to experience turbulence, provoke social resentment, and see its ambitious aims gradually erode.

Upon sending 100,000 young people to Xinjiang, the Chinese state did its best to manage the urban-to-rural population resettlement campaign. While the *zhiqing* complained about the quality of life in the far northwest and struggled to assimilate to life as frontier farmers, the state celebrated their accomplishments while trying to make modest improvements to the program. Having expended significant resources to build up population resettlement, the state tore it down during the Cultural Revolution. Mao Zedong's attacks on capitalist roaders and revisionists within the Chinese Communist

Party sank institutions like the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps and squandered once signature initiatives like population resettlement. Through tumult of its own making, the Chinese state disrupted and disavowed population resettlement.

While the Cultural Revolution washed away the modest achievements of urban-to-rural population resettlement, the post-Mao leadership strove to salvage it. While willing to make amends for wrongs committed during Mao's "last revolution," Hua Guofeng, Deng Xiaoping, Wang Zhen, Hu Yaobang, and local officials in Shanghai and Xinjiang wanted to reconstitute the "rational" programs and policies concocted in the lead up to the Cultural Revolution. The new reformist leadership insisted that the "educated youth" remain in or immediately return to Xinjiang. The *zhiqing*, older and probably wiser, resisted fiercely, staging some of the most prominent protests in the early reform era. While the state pushed back and refused to concede fully to the demands of the "educated youth," these fissures exposed the fragility of a vast human and social engineering project like population resettlement. The state's goals to transform people and place were undone by the resistance of the campaign participants themselves.

**Urban-to-Rural Resettlement and Chinese History**

In hindsight, China's urban-to-rural population resettlement program appears highly idiosyncratic. Wanting to move millions of young people long distances, from relatively developed and industrialized urban areas to an impoverished and vacant countryside, the program sounds not only ambitious, but grandiose and even radical. Yet the high socialist Chinese state, at least in the context of this particular initiative, was not exceptional, neither in the context of Chinese history or world history. Urban-to-rural resettlement in socialist China thus provides an entry point into the familiar debate about

continuity and change before and beyond the "1949 divide" in Chinese history, although in ways that have previously not been considered, and in putting Mao's China in a broader comparative perspective.[1]

Migration has been a key driving force in Chinese history for several millennia, and China's rulers, whether presiding over an imperial dynasty or a modern nation-state, have often played an important role in organizing, enabling, or restricting the movement of peoples.[2] The urban-to-rural resettlement program which connected Xinjiang and urban China in the 1960s harkens back to a handful of specific state-led migrations in the *longue durée* of Chinese history.

Like the PRC, several of China's ruling imperial regimes relied on population resettlement to areas outside of "China proper," using it as a military tactic, a governing strategy, and a driver for economic activity.[3] In the area of China today constituting the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, both the Han and the Qing dynasties used resettlement in ways that would have been familiar to Commander Wang Zhen: as means of supplying soldier run farms, a system known during ancient and early modern times as *tuntian* (屯田). Reclaiming previously inhospitable lands, soldiers loyal to the Han and to the Qing built productive farms and cultivated grains and other foodstuffs. Providing a stable source of nourishment, *tuntian* allowed imperial troops to survive even when

[1] Paul A. Cohen, "Reflections on a Watershed Date: The 1949 Divide in Chinese History," in *Twentieth-Century China: New Approaches*, ed. Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom (New York: Routledge, 2003), 27-36; Joseph W. Esherick, "Ten Theses on the Chinese Revolution," in *Twentieth-Century China: New Approaches*, ed. Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom (New York: Routledge, 2003), 37-65; William C. Kirby, "Continuity and Change in Modern China: Economic Planning on the Mainland and on Taiwan, 1943-1958," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 24 (July 1990): 121-141.
[2] Lee, "Migration and Expansion in Chinese History," 20-47. See also Diana Lary, *Chinese Migrations: The Movement of People, Goods, and Ideas over Four Millennia* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2012).
[3] James Reardon-Anderson, *Reluctant Pioneers: China's Expansion Northward, 1644-1937* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005).

occupying lands located far from supply lines. This made colonies on the frontier cheaper to administer and maintain in the short term; it also made them scalable in the long term. With an abundance of food available, the mostly self-sufficient farms could also host the families of soldiers and otherwise expand the number of peoples on the frontier faithful to the ruling regime. The soldier run farms were also magnets for traders and intrepid explorers. Whether before the common era or in the eighteenth century, *tuntian* were feeder mechanisms for state-led population resettlement to Xinjiang.[4]

The parallels between the ancient *tuntian* and the modern *bingtuan* are abundant.[5] The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps was also founded to overcome the tyranny of distance. Without railways connecting Xinjiang with China proper, soldiers became settlers to grow their own food and otherwise provide what the state led out of Beijing could not. Gradually, the *bingtuan* incorporated new laborers through both coercion and volunteerism, all with the aim of expanding economic productivity and, occasionally, shoring up border security. Thus, the People's Republic of China, like the Qing before it, did not use its modern incarnation of *tuntian* for the sake of ethnic "integration."

The PRC's resettlement programs to Xinjiang and its use of the *bingtuan*, however, were not replications of imperial strategies. More precisely, they were

[4] Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 22, 104-105, 116-117; Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005), 232, 241, 324, 328-353; Judd Kinzley, "Turning Prospectors into Settlers: Gold, Immigrant Miners and the Settlement of the Frontier in Late Qing Xinjiang," in *China on the Margins*, ed. Sherman Cochran and Paul G. Pickowicz (Ithaca, NY: Cornell East Asia Program 2010), 17-41;

[5] Hauke Neddermann, *Sozialismus in Xinjiang: Das Produktions- und Aufbaukorps in den 1950er Jahren* (Socialism in Xinjiang: The Production and Construction Corps during the 1950s) (Berlin: Lit, 2010). See also Hauke Neddermann, "Peers and Strangers: Han Settlers in Xinjiang as a Community of Action and Memory," in *China Networks*, ed. Jens Damm and Mechthild Leutner (Berlin: Lit, 2009), 98-117; James A. Millward, "Historical Perspectives on Contemporary Xinjiang," *Inner Asia* 2, no. 2 (2000): 121-135, doi: 10.1163/146481700793647814; Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 251-264

innovations. The resettlement of urban young people—students and recent graduates, of good and bad classes alike, and across both sexes—to Xinjiang and other underdeveloped border regions was an entirely new practice introduced by the People's Republic of China. China's imperial dynasties had used peasants, soldiers, and convicts to people the frontier; while the socialist state drew on these population pools as well, [6] their use of relatively educated young people broke significantly with imperial tradition.

**Chinese Urban-to-Rural Resettlement and World History**

A defining characteristic of the modern state is its desire to dictate the "legitimate means of movement" among peoples.[7] To put it more concretely, the passport, the visa, and the Chinese *hukou* or household registration system are three examples of how states regulate the movements of individuals and families; they are also signposts of the strong, intrusive, and omnipresent nature of the post-nineteenth century state.[8] Yet, there are other, even more dramatic illustrations of the expanded roles, capacities, and mentalities of modern regimes. State-led resettlement stands chief among these. With organized population transfers taking place on massive scales, the state does not simply say where an individual *can* go, but determines where thousands of people *will* go. With one simple command—move!—the state reshapes society, economy, and environment, while wading deep into the personal lives of citizens.[9]

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[6] Qian Guo, "Why is Xinjiang Still a New Dominion?," in *Toward Better Governance in China: An Unconventional Pathway of Political Reform,* ed. Baogang Guo and Dennis Hickey (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2010), 163-182.
[7] John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
[8] Craig Robertson, *The Passport in America: The History of a Document* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Tiejun Cheng and Mark Selden, "The Origins and Social Consequences of China's *Hukou* System," *The China Quarterly* 139 (September 1994): 644-668, doi: 10.1017/S0305741000043083.
[9] Christopher McDowell, "Development Created Population Displacement," *The Oxford Handbook of Refugee and Forced Migration Studies,* ed. Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Gil Loescher, Katy Long, and Nando Sigona (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 330, doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199652433.013.0020.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries are awash with examples of states forcefully moving peoples. Although Nazi Germany offers the most well-known case of forced resettlements (and removals), around the world many other regimes have also attempted to transfer millions of individuals within and beyond national boundaries for varying reasons.[10] In colonial and postcolonial Africa, population movements were orchestrated by states to assert control over land and resources.[11] During the Taishō and Shōwa eras, Japan sent its peoples to the frontiers of Peru, Brazil, and Paraguay in order to siphon off what it claimed were excess populations.[12] Japan also dispatched settlers to Korea in the early twentieth century in order to augment and expedite the formal colonization of that country.[13] In West Germany, Konrad Adenauer worked with the Turkish government to create the *gastarbeiter* program and absorb thousands of so-called "guest workers" from Turkey.[14] In Pol Pot's Cambodia (Democratic Kampuchea), people were wrested from the cities and sent deep into the countryside in response to the real and perceived threats posed by American bombers.[15] The apartheid regime in South Africa relocated millions of individuals in order to create racially homogenous communities and

[10] Bessel and Haake, eds., *Removing Peoples*.
[11] Catherine Boone, *Property and Political Order in Africa: Land Rights and the Structure of Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
[12] Toake Endoh, *Exporting Japan: Politics of Emigration toward Latin America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009).
[13] Jun Uchida, *Brokers of Empire: Japanese Settler Colonialism in Korea, 1876-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2011). Settler colonialism, of course, often took place without the specific sponsorship of colonial regimes. Even when it was sponsored by states, settlers often developed antagonistic relationships with their home governments. In addition to Jun Uchida's work on colonial Korea, see, for example, Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen, eds., *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century: Projects, Practices, Legacies* (New York: Routledge, 2005); John C. Weaver, *The Great Land Rush and the Making of the Modern World, 1650-1900* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003); David Prochaska, *Making Algeria French: Colonialism in Bône, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
[14] The bilateral sanctioning and encouragement of Turkish migration to divided Germany awaits a historian, but see Sebnem Koser Akcapar, ed., *Turkish Immigrants in Western Europe and North America: Immigration and Political Mobilization* (London: Routledge, 2012).
[15] Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime: Race, Power, and Genocide in Cambodia under the Khmer Rouge, 1975-79*, 3rd ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008).

institutionalize segregation.[16] During Tanzania's *ujamaa* village movement, the state sought to move up to five million people into new settlements for developmental purposes.[17] Even Roosevelt's New Deal America cleared lands in the west and sponsored migration in order to reduce unemployment, revitalize the economy, and stabilize society. [18] And finally, in cases deeply familiar to socialist China's leaders, the Soviet Union utilized population transfers to resolve or wipe out inter-ethnic animosities and, later, to develop the vast Siberian landscape.[19]

The abovementioned examples demonstrate just how common it is for states to move peoples, yet to date, very little consensus has been sought about why and how states embark on these hugely ambitious projects. How can we begin to reconcile the vastly different processes, experiences, and outcomes of resettlement and start to identify the commonalities of resettlement across the globe?

The case study of state-led urban-to-rural population resettlement in socialist China presented in this dissertation may offer some insights. The reasons for the resettlement of the urban youth to Xinjiang—as during other state-led population

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[16] David M. Smith, ed., *The Apartheid City and Beyond: Urbanization and Social Change in South Africa* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 2001).
[17] James C. Scott, *Seeing Like A State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 223-261.
[18] Brian Q. Cannon, *Remaking the Agrarian Dream: New Deal Rural Resettlement in the Mountain West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996).
[19] Nikita Khrushchev, *Reformer, 1945-1965,* vol. 2 of *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev,* ed. Sergei Khrushchev (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 316-351. On ethnic cleansing in the Soviet Union, see Terry Martin, "The Origins of Soviet Ethnic Cleansing," *The Journal of Modern History* 70, no. 4 (December 1998): 813-861; Niccolò Pianciola, "Famine in the Steppe: The Collectivization of Agriculture and the Kazak Herdsmen, 1928-1934," trans. Susan Finnel, *Cahiers du Monde russe* 45 (2004): 153-154; Amir Weiner, *Making Sense of War: The Second World War and the Fate of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 29. For a study of development-induced resettlement in the USSR, see Martin McCauley, *Khrushchev and the Development of Soviet Agriculture: The Virgin Land Programme 1953-1964* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1976). For a more comprehensive study of population movements in the Soviet Union, se Pavel Polian, *Against their Will: The History and Geography of Forced Migrations in the USSR* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2004).

transfers—were never explicitly written down.[20] This is because the removal and relocation of urban young people was not the product of a single individual, nor a single document. Resettlement policy was constructed, piecemeal, at many different offices and institutions in China's capital, its cities, its countryside, and its frontiers, evolving over a period of several years. It emerged from within institutions, on the streets, and inside homes; it was the product of conversations about real and perceived problems relating to economy, population, and revolution. Its aims and emphasizes evolved over time.

Yet as evidence on the rustication of China's urban youth to Xinjiang suggests, state-led resettlement has, at its core, always been about transformation. Whether in China, the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, Cambodia, the Balkans, post-war Japan, or elsewhere, population transfers have always been part of ambitious transformative agendas; they have always been used to satisfy state desires to change the territories and peoples under their control.

**A "Will to Improve"**

Whatever its modest achievements, urban-to-rural resettlement to Xinjiang also produced wrenching emotional and physical pain at an individual and familial level, poisoned state-society relations, and may have even had long-lasting ecological consequences for the water scarce Tarim Basin and other areas of Xinjiang and China. Yet even though the results of state-led resettlement are almost always disastrous—leading to war, genocide, ecological destruction, social unrest, individual trauma, and more—they are not quite the embodiment of what James C. Scott calls "authoritarian high-modernism."[21] Although population transfers require that a society has been made

[20] Lüdtke, "Explaining Forced Migration," 13.
[21] Scott, *Seeing Like A State.*

"legible," they are not always devised by an authoritarian state or, more often, a single authoritarian leader-thinker-doer (such as Hitler, Khrushchev, or Nyerere). In socialist China, for example, Mao Zedong did not issue his famous edict that "it is necessary for educated young people to go to the countryside and be re-educated by poor and lower-middle peasants" (*zhishi qingnian dao nongcun qu, jieshou qiong xia zhongnong zai jiaoyu, hen you biyao* 知识青年到农村去，接受贫下中农再教育，很有必要), until December 21, 1968.[22] By this time, a million or more young people had already been mobilized to leave their homes. Thus, Mao's statement was not so much a novel order as it was a re-articulation of preexisting practices and ideas, formulated by individuals situated deep inside in the Chinese bureaucracy.

As Tania Murray Li writes, "although there are occasions when a revolutionary movement or visionary announces a grand plan for the total transformation of society—the kind of plan James Scott describes as 'high modern,' more often programs of intervention are pulled together from an existing repertoire, a matter of habit, accretion, and bricolage."[23] Resettlement is more reflective of what Tania Murray Li's the "will to improve," an idea based on the Foucauldian theory of government.[24] Foucault maintained "government has as its purpose not the act of government itself, but the welfare of the population, the improvement of its condition, the increase of its wealth, longevity, health, etc."[25] Certainly, it was this spirit, however misguided, which inspired cadres in Beijing, Shanghai, Xinjiang, and elsewhere in China in the 1960s to move 100,000 young people.

[22] RMRB, December 22, 1968.
[23] Li, *The Will to Improve*, 6.
[24] See Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991).
[25] See Michel Foucault, "Governmentality," in *The Foucault Effect*, 100.

Their faiths in the "possibilities for the comprehensive planning of human settlement and production," were, in the words of James Scott, "uncritical, unskeptical, and thus unscientifically optimistic."[26]

If state-led urban-to-rural population resettlement in socialist China is an example of the ambitiousness of modern states, it is also a demonstration of the limits of state power. The program was, arguably, a disaster and a failure. Although 100,000 youth were sent to Xinjiang in just a five-year period, life on the frontier was full of hardships for the new arrivals. As the Production and Construction Corps struggled to tend to and provide for the Shanghai youth, the program, moreover, seldom produced the developmental, demographic, and ideological outcomes China's communist leaders desired. Despite the one-time goal of sending 100,000 young people to Xinjiang per annum, the resettlement program came to a complete halt in 1966 due to financial and logistical difficulties. As we know, the program's precipitous decline and controversial reputation did not end here.

The will and ability of the state to move people looks comical in retrospect. The number of Han Chinese remained small relative to the number of Uyghurs until the era of Reform and Opening (1979-). Since the beginning of the reform era, China's so-called "floating population" (流动人口 *liudong renkou*), or individuals who move without official approval from the state, has dramatically expanded in size. While illegal internal migration did take place during the Mao era (as described in subsequent chapters), China's market-oriented economy has propelled hundreds of millions of people to move since 1979.[27] Thus, it was only with the state's retreat has the number of Han Chinese in

[26] Scott, *Seeing Like A State*, 4.
[27] See Kam Wing Chan, "Migration and Development Strategies in Post-1949 China," in *Development-Induced Displacement in India and China: A Comparative Look at the Burdens of Growth*, ed. Florence Padovani (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2016), 7-8.

Xinjiang have come to achieve near parity with (or exceed) the number of Uyghurs, the region's titular majority.[28]

**Living History**

The lifespan of urban-to-rural population resettlement in socialist China was far longer than the official periodization (1963-1966) suggests. This single initiative had origins stretching back to the 1950s before coming to life in the early and mid-1960s. Although discarded in 1966, the afterlife of urban-to-rural resettlement extended into the reform period. With the gradual decline of *hukou* enforcement since the late 1980s, many of the "educated youth" have returned home to spend their retirement in Shanghai. Indeed, the "educated youth" and their families are ubiquitous on the streets of Shanghai today—strike up a conversation with a local and there is a good chance they have some familial connection to this history.

Urban-to-rural population resettlement is very much still "living history" in China today.[29] Future research may aim to unpack the powerful forms of self-identification which it has nurtured.

[28] Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 306-310.
[29] "Wo daidi shi nali ren?" ("Where am I from, after all?"), *Nanfang renwu zhoukan* (Southern People Weekly) (January 10, 2012).

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