

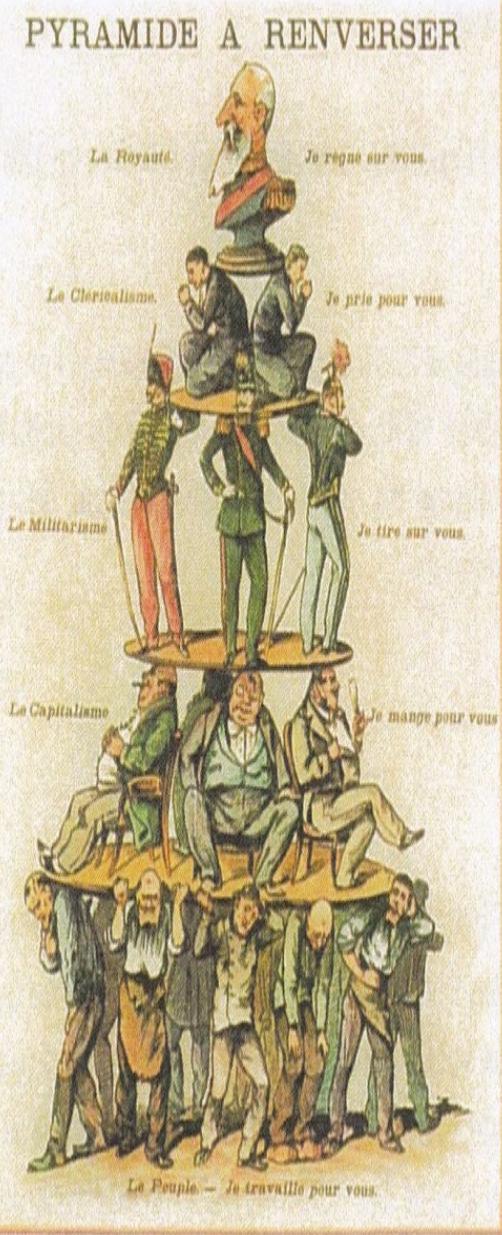
Lecture 2 Survey of China

# Social Structure in China

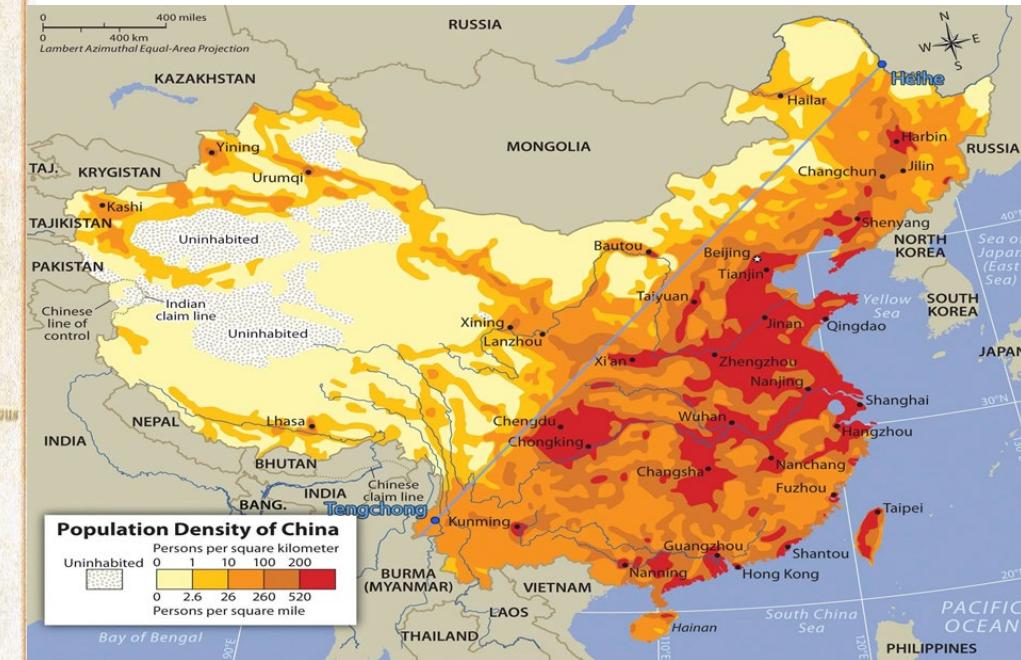
Instructed by Xiang Nan

# Social Structure

(sociological concept)  
stable structure of relations  
formed by all elements  
constituting a society



Structure of Social Status



Urban-rural Structure

# 1. Structure of Social Status

## (1) Before 1978 Economic Reform

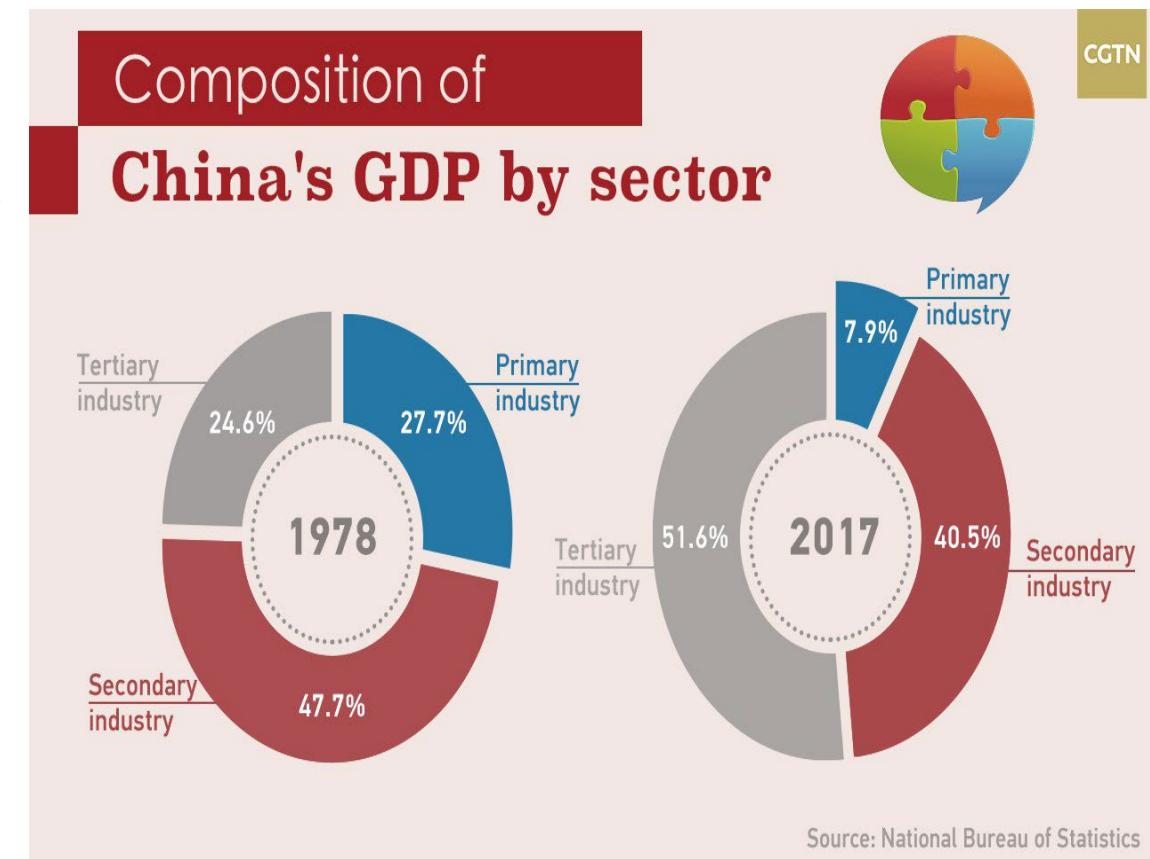
- Public ownership of means of production
- Predominance of primary industry and secondary industry

### **Social Status (Occupational) Structure**

- Equal Society: Division of labor
  - no hierarchical distinction between noble and humble occupations
  - Small difference in income
- Inverted “丁”-shaped structure
  - Cadres (administrators and professionals)
  - Workers
  - Peasant

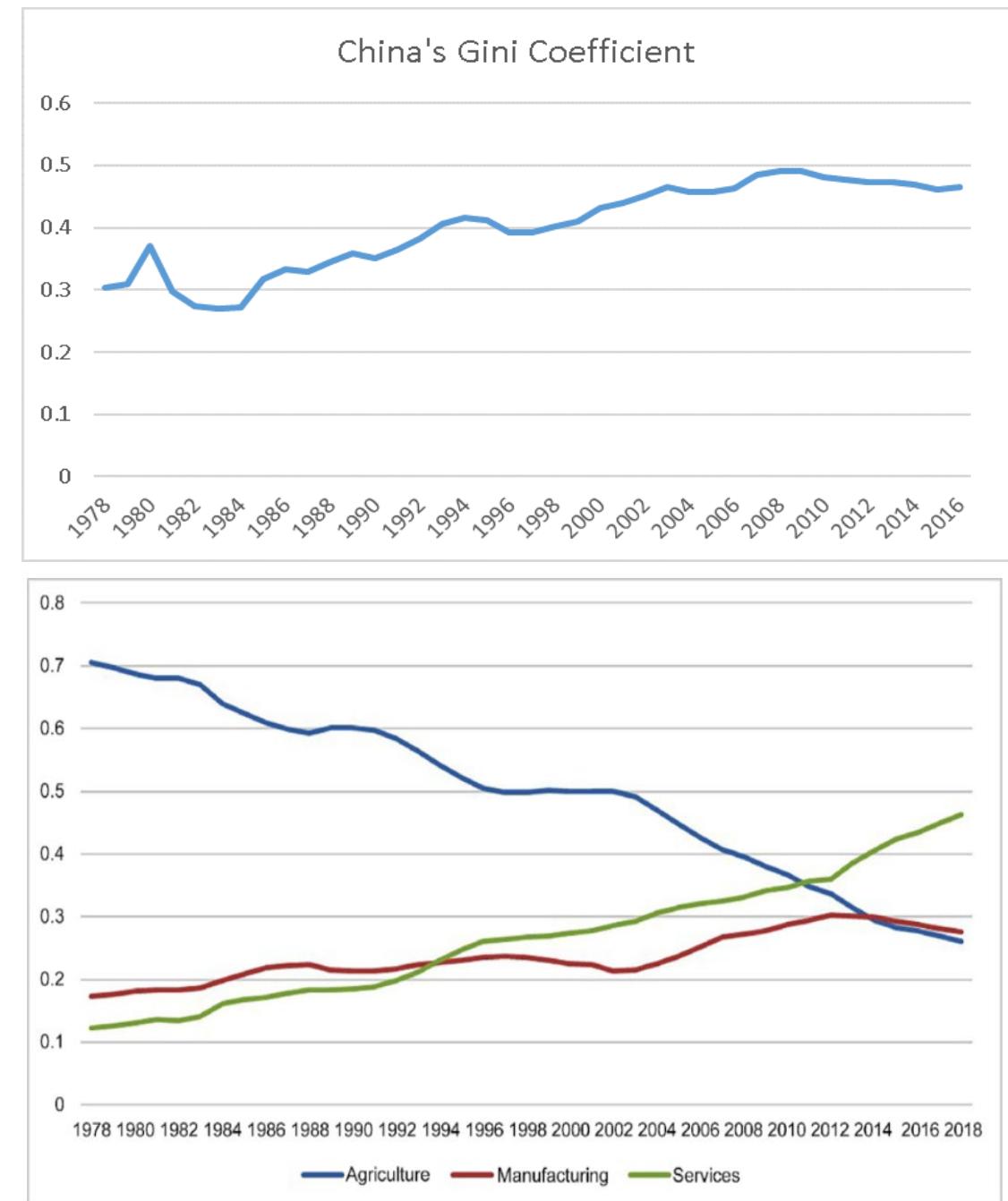
## (2) After 1978 Economic Reform

- public ownership playing a dominant role and diverse forms of ownership developing side by side
  - “allow some people to get rich first”
- change in industrial structure

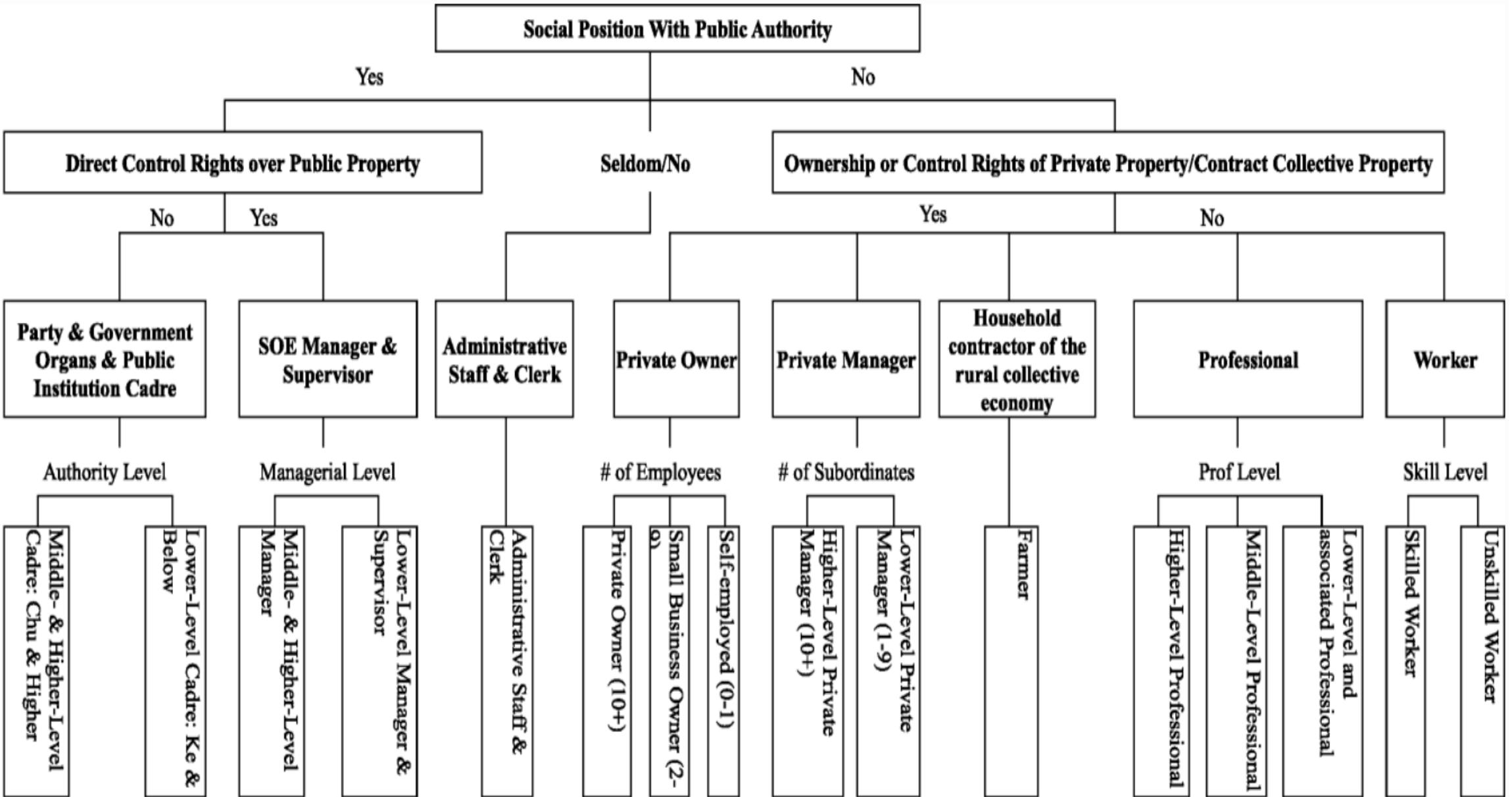


## Social Status (Occupational) Structure

- Increasing social stratification
  - larger income gap
  - diversified social classes and occupations
- “土”-shaped structure:
  - Shrinking low-income peasant class (urbanization)
  - Increasing middle-class occupations



The shares of employment of China by three sectors, 1978-2018.



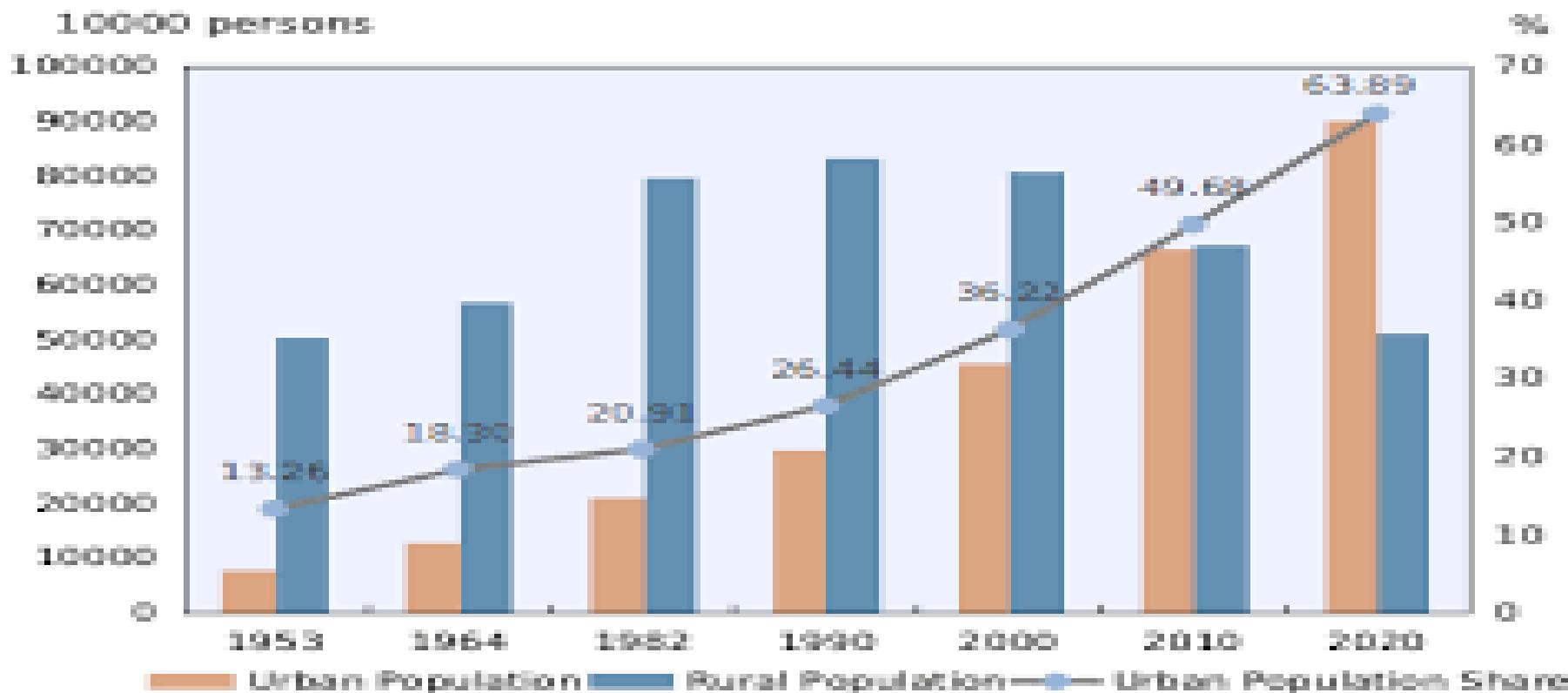
## Target

- More equitable olive-shaped social status structure
  - Further increase the income of low-income class
  - Adjust the income of high-income group
  - Expand the scale of middle-income group

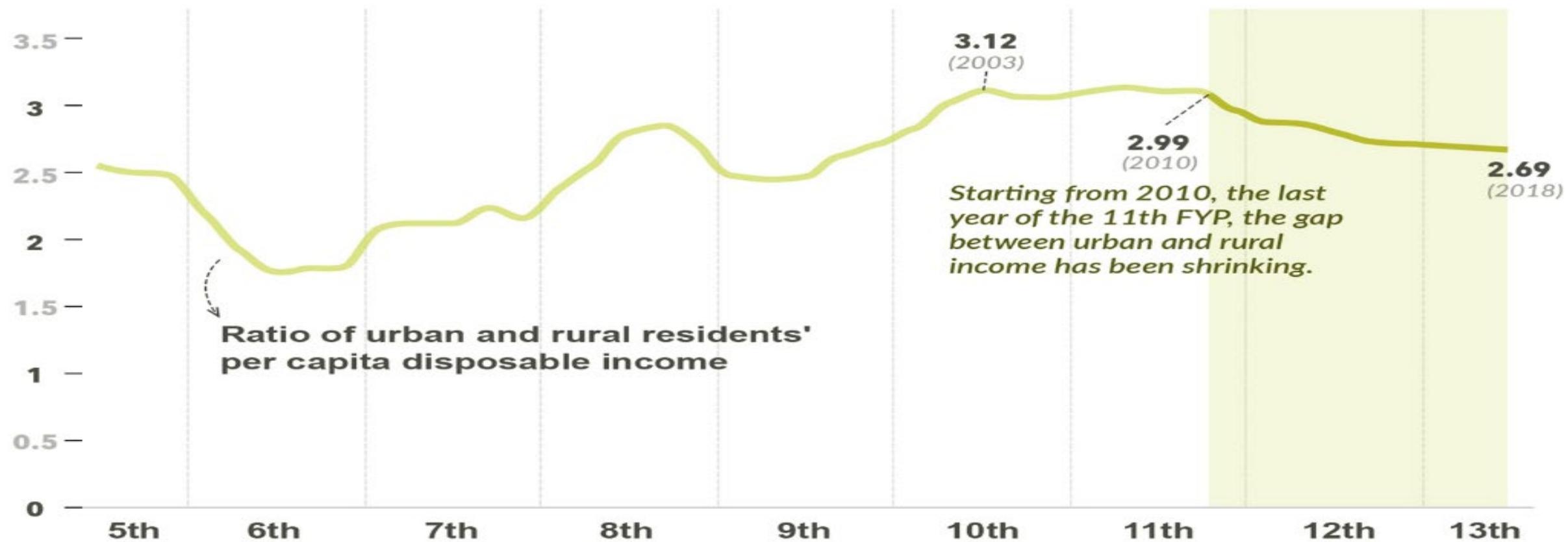


## 2. Urban-Rural Disparities

### Urban-rural Population Distribution

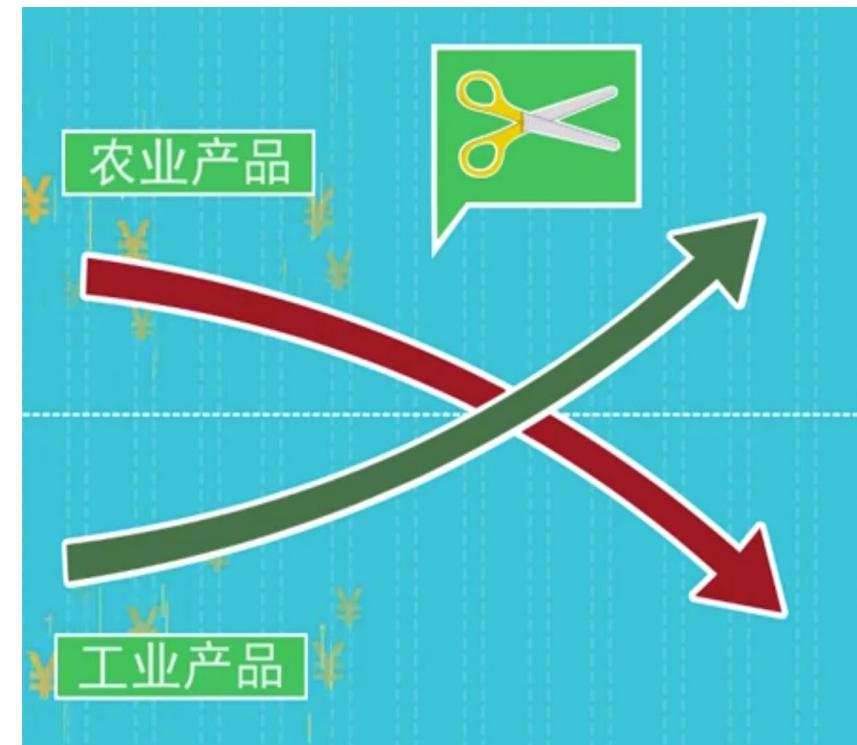


## Urban-rural income disparity



## Institutional Origin of Urban-rural Disparities

- (Before 1978) Socialist Planned Economy: to achieve rapid (urban) industrialization
- “price scissors” policy
- “household registration (hukou)” policy
  - Restriction of migration
  - Provision of social welfare
- Urban-rural disparities in economic development, income and welfare





户别	非农业家庭户口	户主
户号	300625	住址

承办人签章:

户别	农业家庭户口	户主姓名
户号	000122	住址

承办人签章:

**常住人口登记卡**

姓名	农业家庭户口		户主或与户主关系
曾用名			性别
出生地	湖南省		民族
籍贯	湖南省		出生日期
本市(县)其他住址	湖南省 1号		宗教信仰
公民身份证件编号			身高
文化程度	大学本科	婚姻状况	兵役状况
服务处所			未就业
何时由何地迁来本市(县)	2010-08-10		
何时由何地迁来本址	2010-08-10		

承办人签章: 登记日期: 年月日  
2010 08 10

**常住人口登记卡**

户别	居民家庭户口	户主或与户主关系	户主
姓名		性 别	
曾用名		民族	
出生地	湖南省	出生日期	
籍贯	湖南省		
本市(县)其他住址	湖南省	宗教信仰	
公民身份证件编号		身	
文化程度	大学本科	婚姻状况	已婚 兵役状况
服务处所			
何时由何地迁来本市(县)	2010-08-10 大(中)专学生		
何时由何地迁来本址	2020-08-25 分户13-2		

承办人签章: 登记日期: 2020年 8月 25日  
百家号/长沙小王

## After 1978: Emergence of A New Social Group --Rural Migrant Workers (农民工)

- Economic reforms to socialist market economy
  - Market allocation of labour force and resources
- Urban Area: Labour intensive industries
- Rural Area: Household responsibility system
  - Disbanding of Communes
  - Labour Surplus

### ➤ **Definition:**

- rural hukou residents leaving the village and going to cities to pursue work in the secondary and tertiary industries

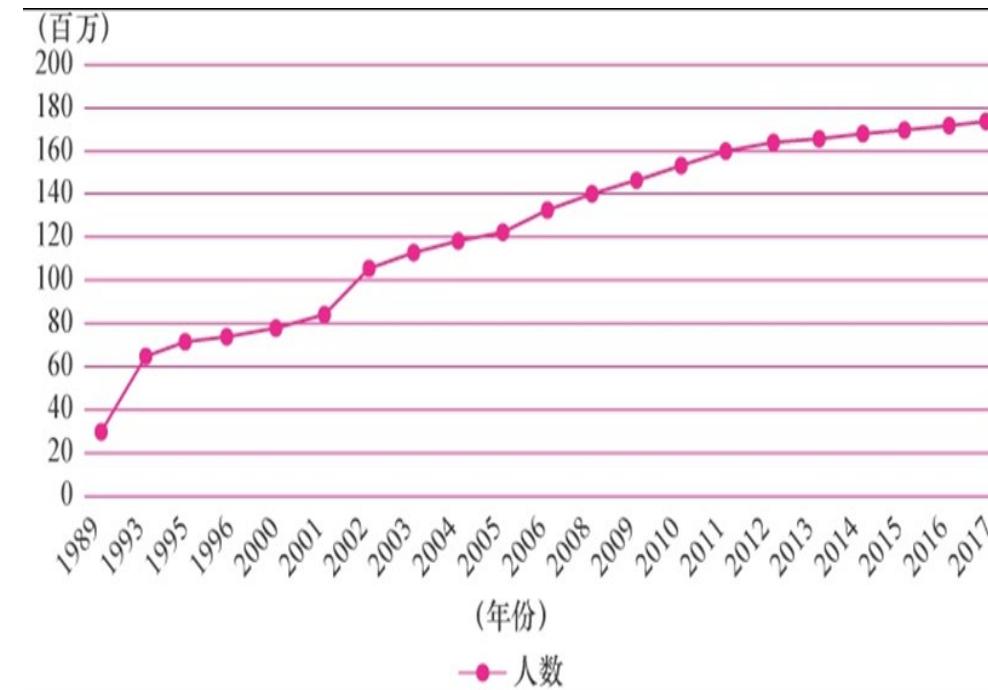
Gradual liberalization of  
migration restriction

- Question:
- Can you think of some jobs/ occupations that are often taken by rural migrant workers in China?



## CHARACTERISTICS of Rural migrant workers

- China's largest segment of urban labour force
  - constituting about 60% urban labour force
- Rural hukou status
- Urban worker (occupation)
- High population mobility (e.g. rural-urban-urban-rural)
- **Precarious work/ welfare condition**
  - double disadvantages



- Rural hometown
  - empty-nested elderly people
  - left-behind children



# Group Discussion

- Imagine you were a urban
  - government official,
  - employer,
  - resident (e.g. unemployed worker),
  - migrant worker
- then,
  - (1) Would you support or oppose granting hukou to migrant workers so that they can enjoy urban social welfare?
  - (2) Which of the following social welfare do you prefer to open to migrant workers (without hukou)?
    - a) Urban social Insurance
    - b) Compulsory education in public schools
    - c) low rental housing

Role	Granting Hukou to migrants? (Yes, Not-sure, No)	Social welfare open to migrants? (a, b, c)
Local government official		
Employer		
Urban hukou resident		
Migrant Worker		

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Incremental social inclusion of migrant workers

## (1) Incremental/selective Hukou transfer

- **small towns/ cities** lifted their control (unattractive)
- **medium-/ large cities** to grant local hukou to rural migrants with stable employment and residence
  - family reunification with a local hukou resident,
  - buy high-end commercial flats,
  - obtained higher education,
  - role-models



Blue-seal hukou



Point-based hukou system

## (2) Incremental inclusion to urban social welfare

### ➤ Social Welfare

- opening **contribution-based** social insurance programs to rural migrants

### ➤ Compulsory Education in Public Schools

Table 38.1 Participation in urban social insurance programmes (2017)

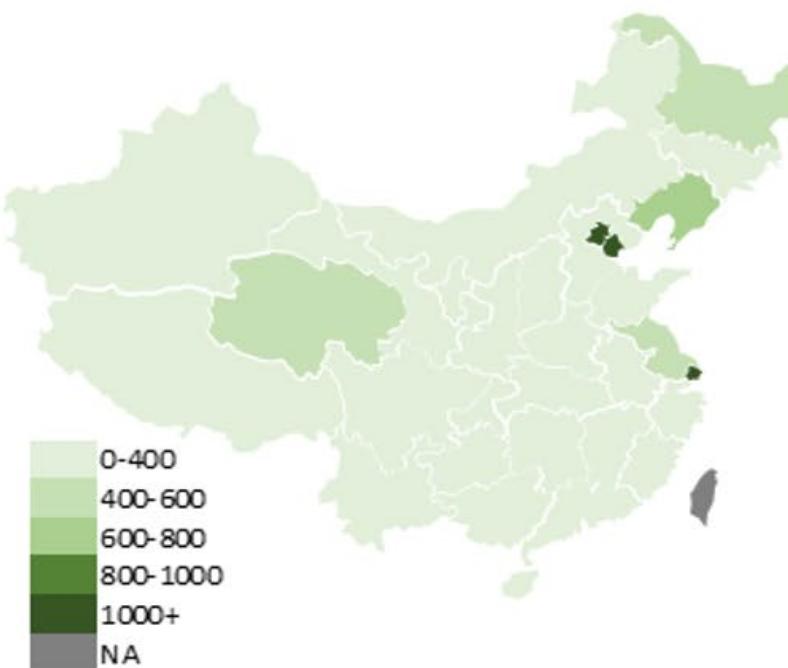
Social insurance programmes	Number of participants (urban employees) (million)	Proportion of urban employees (%)	Number of participating migrant workers (million)	Proportion of migrant workers (%)
Pension insurance for urban employees	292.68	69	62.02	22
Health insurance for urban employees	222.88	52	62.25	22
Unemployment insurance	187.84	44	48.97	17
Work accident insurance	227.24	54	78.07	27

Source: ILO. 2019. Improve China's floating population insurance system. <https://>

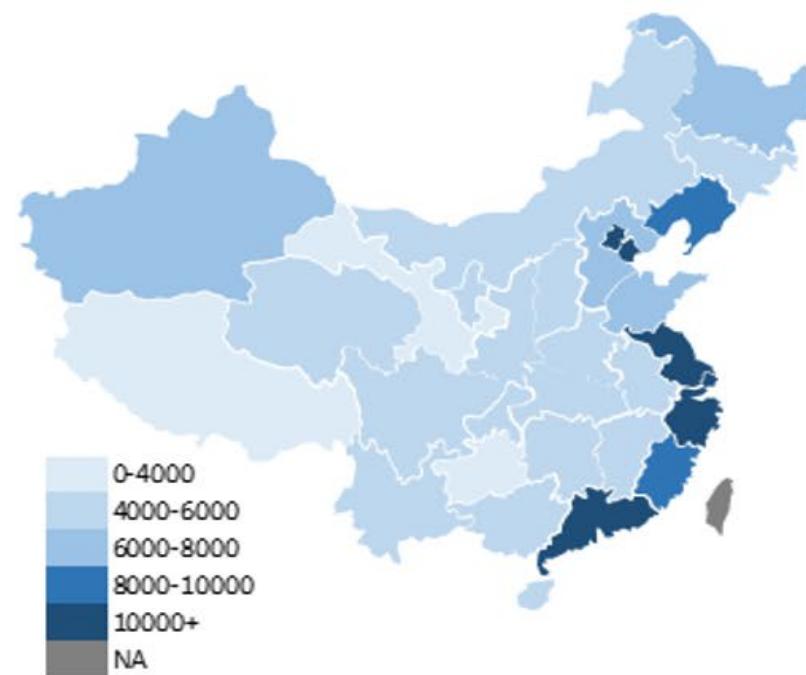
### 3. Regional Difference in Socio-economic Development

Figure: Provincial GDP Per Capita (RMB)

1978



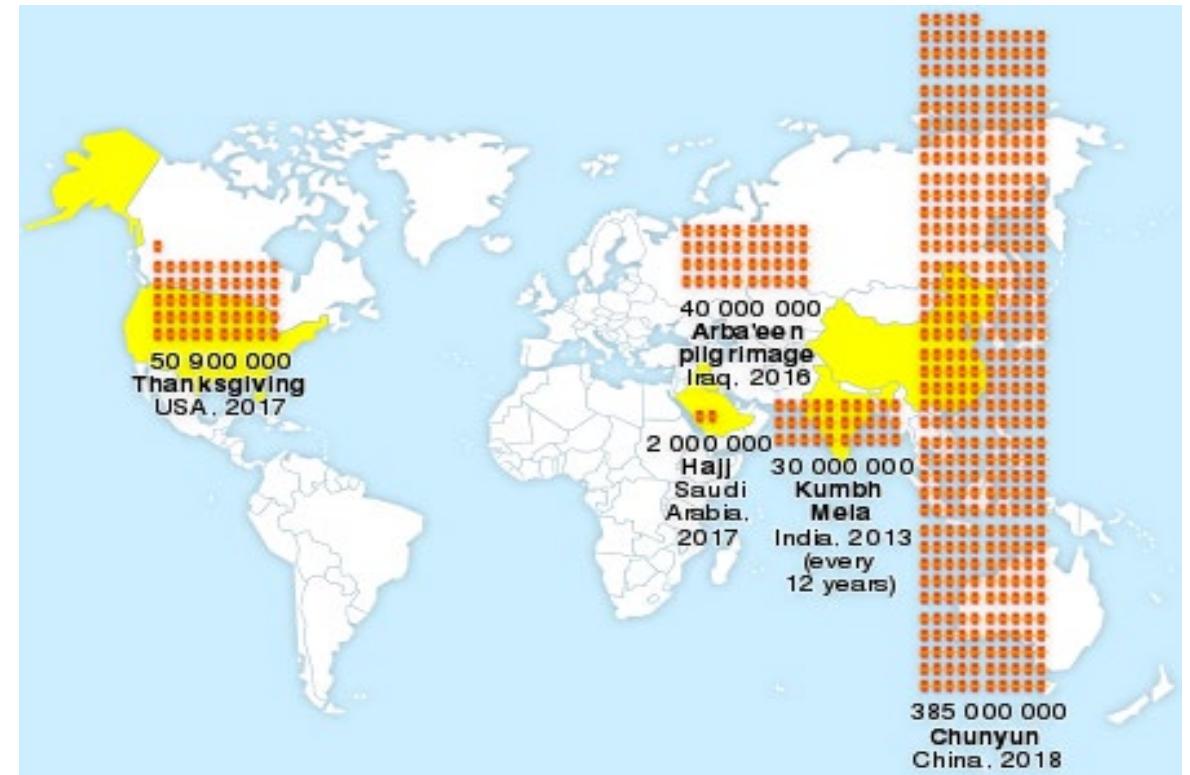
1998



2017



# Spring festival travel (春运 Chunyun)

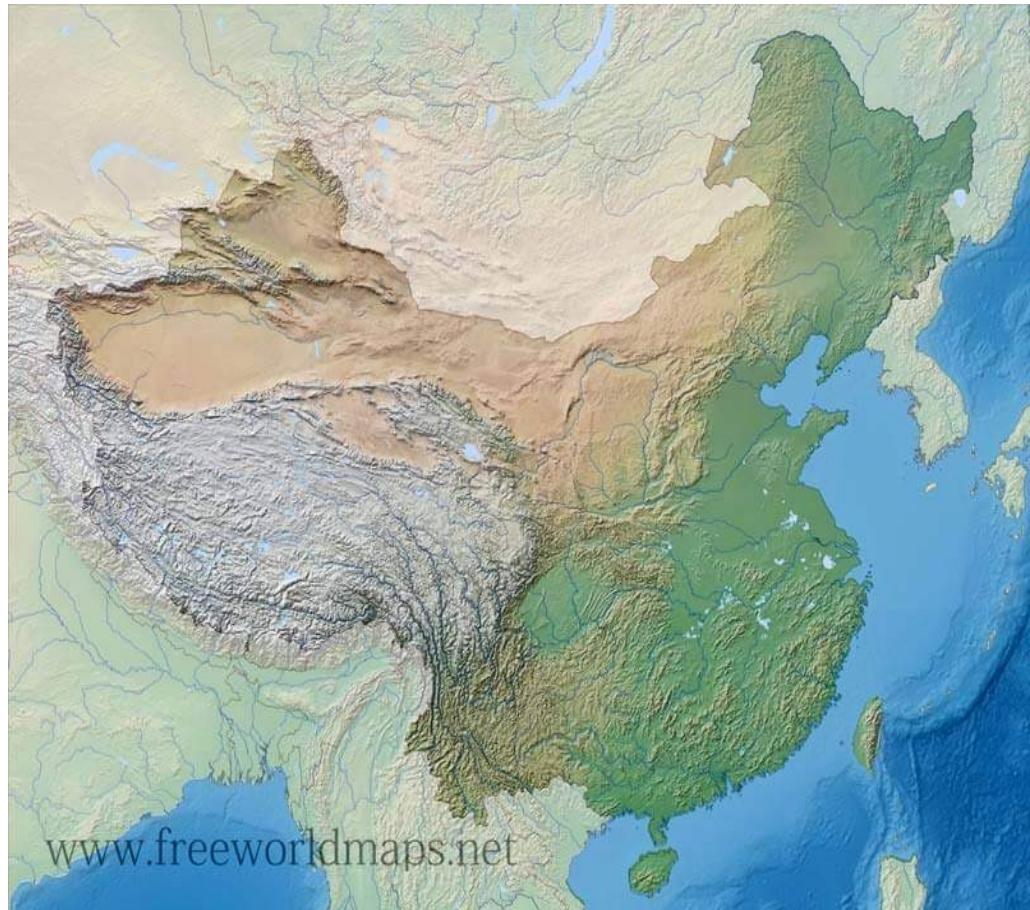


# Underlying Factors of Regional Disparity

(1) geographic conditions

(2) governmental development strategy

- Prior development of the eastern coastal region
  - Special economic zones
- Eastern coastal area: export-oriented economy (foreign trade)



## 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Coordinative development between regions

- China's Western Development Strategy
- Rise of Central China Plan
  - Strengthen the infrastructure construction
  - Economic structure adjustment
  - Environmental protection



# Summary

## China's economic development, social status structure and urban-rural disparities

Time Period	Economic Background	Social Status Structure	Urban-rural Disparities
Pre- 1978	Socialist planned economy	Inverted- T-shaped	
1978-1990s	Socialist market economy	±-shaped	Increasing
Target of 21st Century	Balanced development of economy and society	Olive-shaped	Gradually decreasing