

Hong Kong and Xinjiang: Oppression Adapted

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Protestors in the 2019-2020 Hong Kong protest

Hong Kong

Legal Repression:
The National Security Law (NSL). Laid the foundation for the censorship and surveillance that followed along with the ending of the “One Country Two Systems” Policy.

Surveillance:
Since the NSL was implemented surveillance infrastructure has been slowly expanding. In Hong Kong there is much less surveillance then there is in Xinjiang so it is much more targeted and focused surveillance. The main targets are usually pro-democracy protests, scholars and journalists.

Censorship:
Crackdown on Journalists is exemplified through the forced shutdown of the pro-democracy outlet Apple Daily and arrest of its founder Jimmy Lai. Meanwhile, social media censorship is enforced through a technique called “friction flooding.” This technique involves government-linked accounts flooding social media with spam and mundane content to drown out information about protests.

While resistance is visible in Hong Kong through protest and international visibility, Xinjiang's resistance is almost impossible due to its nature as a isolated surveillance state.

Key Differences	Hong Kong	Xinjiang
Legal Repression	<ul style="list-style-type: none">National Security Law (NSL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Detention Centers
Surveillance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Surveillance has been increasingTargeted SurveillancePolitically targets pro-democracy activists	<ul style="list-style-type: none">CheckpointsIntegrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP)Ethnically targets Uyghur Muslims
Censorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Crackdown on JournalistsFriction flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Great FirewallInformation Blackout

Explanation of Framework:

Legal Repression lays the foundation for authoritarian control by using laws to criminalize and punish dissent. The legal framework facilitates and legitimizes surveillance which monitors potential threats. This monitoring advances into censorship by silencing anti-government action and preventing the spread of dissenting ideas.



Xijiang

Legal Repression:
The Chinese government has built a network of what they call “re-education” or “vocational training“ centers where Uyghur Muslims are held without trial. In these centers they are forced into labor, renouncing their religion and physical/ psychological torture.

Surveillance:
Xinjiang has many armed checkpoints requiring residents to scan their IDs, get their phones checked and justify where they are traveling. This is mainly used to harass Uyghur Muslims nut all citizens have to submit. The Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP) is an app that collects data and identifies “suspicious behavior.”

Censorship:
There is extreme censorship in Xinjiang as they operate under “The Great Firewall which greatly restricts the information that can be accessed and posted. It is also very hard to get accurate information about Xinjiang as Journalist face restrictions and locals are punished for speaking out.



Detention Center in Xinjiang

Sources

