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HEADLINES, WORLD

2,000 Possibly Killed in Muslim Uyghur Riot in Xinjiang, China

In Xinjiang a recent protest turned riot ended in approximately 2,000 dead, according to Uyghur leaders. Local sources have put the number in the thousands as well. Recent official Chinese sources, however, have provided a number of 96 killed.

The incident took place July 28, on the eve of Eid al-Fitr, one of the largest Islamic holidays celebrated at the end of the holy month of Ramadan. Chinese authorities had imposed heavy religious restrictions in Xinjiang, which provoked an Uyghur uprising, reportedly.

Official Chinese and Uyghur account of the incident differ.

According to some Uyghur sources, the events leading to the riot began when around 40 women were detained by authorities for wearing excessively Islamic clothing–a crime in Xinjiang. When the family members of these women went to request the women return home to prepare for the celebration, their requests were denied.

Later, a religious gathering took place. A large security force attended the gathering, which they considered illegal, and the confrontation escalated. Fifteen to 20 people were shot initially. Riots spread to nearby villages.

According to Chinese authorities, there had been an "organized and premeditated" attack, in which Uighurs used knives and axes to ambush cars and trucks. Former imam Nuramat Sawut was identified by authorities as the mastermind behind the attack. Sawut had been fired from his office at a village mosque recently for disrespect of the elderly and poor knowledge of Islam, state news Xinjiang Daily reported.

Xinjiang daily quoted Sawut's cousin, "He is the shame of our village. After the terrorist attack, everybody has drawn a clear line. We all support the Communist Party and the government in their efforts to strike a hard-line against terrorism and return a peaceful life to us."

Chinese accounts of the event also included a narrative in which a "gang" of Uighurs, connected to the terrorist group East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM),

attacked police and government buildings in Elishku township, to which the authorities reacted with "a resolute crackdown to eradicate terrorists."

Official reports initially reported that "dozens" of people had been killed, but later provided a figure of 96 deaths. Of the 96 deaths, officials reported that 37 were civilians killed in the incident and 59 were assailants shot dead by police. Thirty-five of the deaths were reported to be Han Chinese, two were Uyghurs, and the others were reported as "terrorists."

Ninety-six deaths make the incident the deadliest example of ethnic violence in five years for China. In 2009, 200 people were killed in Xinjiang riots.
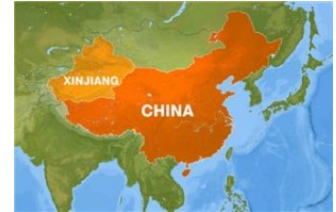
Additionally, 215 people were arrested.

Nury Turkel, Washington-based attorney active in the World Uighur Conference–a Germany-based group–made statements about a government action that was hidden. "Something terrible has happened that they are trying to sweep under the rug," said Turkel.

Overseas Uighurs have also made statements that the official account is false, and that authorities had put the town on lock down, blocking telephone and internet communications, for days.

Exiled Uighur leader Rebiya Kadeer, citing local sources, stated that at least 2,000 Uighurs may have been killed during the riots. Kadeer accused the Chinese authorities of covering up a "massacre" of Uighurs.

According to Kadeer, the riots began after a Uighur march to the police and government buildings protesting for justice "for the killing of innocent

Kadeer pictured with exiled Tibetan leader the Dalai Lama

villagers," including a police shooting death of a family
of five during a dispute over traditional headscarves. Some protesters attacked
government buildings and employees with sticks. Police shot down nearly all the
protesters and went on a house-to-house search, killing other people, Kadeer reported.
"We have evidence in hand that at least 2,000 Uyghurs in the neighborhood of Elishku
township have been killed by Chinese security forces on the first day and they 'cleaned up'
the dead bodies on the second and third day during a curfew that was imposed," stated
Kadeer, "without even condemnation from the outside world."

"It is clearly state terrorism and a crime against humanity by any standard committed by
Chinese security forces against the unarmed Uyghur population," said Kadeer.

Kadeer has lived as an exile in Washington, DC since her release from prison in China in
2005.

Han Chinese Source within Yarkand have put the
number at "possibly more than 1,000," and
attributing the violence to "East Turkestanis"
attacking people "with great, big chopping knives,"
and comparing the region to Iraq, adding that some
involved Uyghurs were foreign nationals from
overseas and from Pakistan.

So far, no independent reporting has come out of the area. Local doctors have said that
they are not able to answer questions about the injuries treated after the incident.

By James Haleavy

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Chinese authorities detained a man for spreading online rumours about violence in Xinjiang's Yarkant county. Government news outlet Tianshan News: the man wrote "extremely unrealistic" account of incident, "fabricated shocking details".

Man allegedly violated Chinese internal censorship controls.

Tianshan: Man allegedly confessed to fabricating details, inflating the death toll to "create a bigger impact online" and "to get other people's attention."
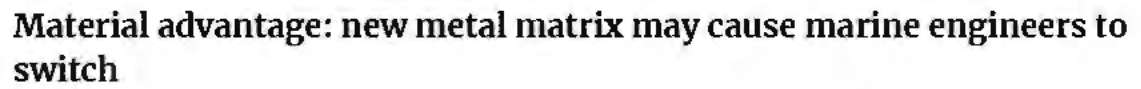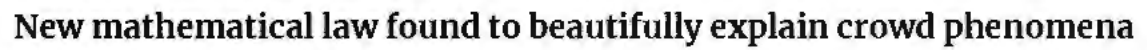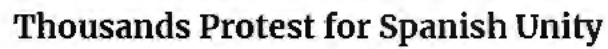
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Analysis of Genomic Admixture in Uyghur and Its Implication in Mapping Strategy

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Abstract   Go to: ⊻

The Uyghur (UIG) population, settled in Xinjiang, China, is a population presenting a typical admixture of Eastern and Western anthropometric traits. We dissected its genomic structure at population level, individual level, and chromosome level by using 20,177 SNPs spanning nearly the entire chromosome 21. Our results showed that UIG was formed by two-way admixture, with 60% European ancestry and 40% East Asian ancestry. Overall linkage disequilibrium (LD) in UIG was similar to that in its parental populations represented in East Asia and Europe with regard to common alleles, and UIG manifested elevation of LD only within 500 kb and at a level of $0.1 < r^2 < 0.8$ when ancestry-informative markers (AIMs) were used. The size of chromosomal segments that were derived from East Asian and European ancestries averaged 2.4 cM and 4.1 cM, respectively. Both the magnitude of LD and fragmentary ancestral chromosome segments indicated a long history of Uyghur. Under the assumption of a hybrid isolation (HI) model, we estimated that the admixture event of UIG occurred about 126 [107~146] generations ago, or 2520 [2140~2920] years ago assuming 20 years per generation. In spite of the long history and short LD of Uyghur compared with recent admixture populations such as the African-American population, we suggest that mapping by admixture LD (MALD) is still applicable in the Uyghur population but ~10-fold AIMs are necessary for a whole-genome scan.

Introduction   Go to: ⊻

Xinjiang, China has been a contact zone of the peoples from Central Asia and East Asia. In particular, the presence of a Tocharian (an extinct Indo-European language)-speaking population during the first millennium, the discovery of mummies with European features dating from 3,000–4,000 YBP (Years Before Present), and the existence of West Eurasian mitochondrial-DNA lineages clearly indicate the influence of populations of European descent in this region, and the signature of admixture between

East Asians and those of European descent is also evident.[1–8] A full analysis of genetic structure of the admixed populations in this region would shed light on the understanding of human migratory history and the admixture of East Asians and those of European descent. Because many human populations settled at Central Asia, which has been a complex assembly of peoples, cultures, and habitats,[9] The Uyghur population in Xinjiang demonstrates an array of mixed anthropological features of Europeans and Asians.[10] We are interested in both its admixture history and its potential for gene mapping.

Admixture of populations often leads to an extended linkage disequilibrium (LD), which could greatly facilitate the mapping of human disease genes.[11–14] Gene mapping by admixture linkage disequilibrium (MALD) has been shown to be of special value theoretically[11,15–22] and empirically.[1,23–36] However, typical admixture populations used for MALD often involve those formed by recent admixture between groups originating on different continents as a result of European maritime expansion during the past few hundred years. These include populations formed by two-way and three-way admixture between Europeans, West Africans, and Native Americans in the Americas, as well as populations formed by two-way admixture of Europeans with indigenous populations in Australia, the Pacific Islands, and Polar Regions.[12] Because the admixture events happened a few hundred years ago, parental populations and the admixture histories of the aforementioned populations are relatively clear; it is easy to obtain the panels of markers informative for ancestry.[28,34,35,37] Although Uyghur is a population presenting a typical admixture of Eastern and Western anthropological traits, its potential utility in MALD has been largely ignored because of its uncharacterized and suspected to be longer history of admixture as compared with other populations. It is more difficult to identify ancestry-informative markers (AIMs), and more such markers are required when admixture occurred beyond the time range which was considered ideal.[12]

Concerning the Uyghur population, there are many questions that remain unanswered: 1) What are the ancestral origins of Uyghur? 2) Was Uyghur formed by two-way or three-way admixture? 3) How much ancestry did each parental population contribute to Uyghur respectively? 4) How long ago did the admixture occur? 5) What is the LD pattern and magnitude in Uyghur? 6) Is Uyghur amiable to MALD? In this study, we try to answer these questions by dissecting the genetic structure of an Uyghur population sample at population, individual, and chromosome level by using a panel of high-density SNP markers on chromosome 21.

Subjects and Methods   Go to: ☑

Populations and Samples

Forty Uyghur samples were collected at Hetian of Xinjiang in China, where the Uyghur population was thought to be less affected by the recent migration of Han Chinese than are Uyghur populations in Northern Xinjiang. Genotype data of 60 CEU (Utah residents with ancestry from northern and western Europe) parents, 60 YRI (Yoruba in Ibadan, Nigeria) parents, 45 CHB (Han Chinese in Beijing) and 45 JPT (Japanese in Tokyo) were obtained from the database of the International HapMap Project.[38–40]

Markers and their Positions

A set of 26,112 SNPs on chromosome 21 was genotyped in 40 Uyghur. Illumina Beadlab technology was used in genotyping, and the method and the data of genotyping were previously described elsewhere.[41] Genotyped SNPs on chromosome 21 of 60 CEU, 60 YRI, 45 CHB, and 45 JPT samples were obtained from the International HapMap Project[38,39] (HapMap public released #21, 2006-07-20). After data filtration (e.g., deleting markers with missing data > 5% samples), we obtained 20,177 SNPs that were genotyped successfully in all five populations. Those SNPs that showed deviation from Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium within population were excluded with Fisher's exact test ($p < 0.05$), where p was estimated with Arlequin 3.0[42] with 100,000 permutations.

The physical positions of SNPs were based on the *Homo sapiens* Genome Build 36. The total chromosome region covered by 20,177 SNPs was 33.36 Mb. The average spacing between adjacent markers was 1.6 kb, with a minimum of 69 bp and a maximum of 189 kb, and the median between marker distance (BMD) was 811 bp. The genetic map positions of SNPs were based on the Rutgers combined linkage-physical maps,[43] which incorporate the latest human genome build, Build 36. We determined the genetic map positions of SNPs in centiMorgans by using a web-based linkage-mapping server that carried out a smoothing calculation to estimate genetic map positions, including those markers which were not mapped directly. The total recombination distance is 68.16 cM (from 0 cM to 68.16 cM), the average intermarker distance is 0.003 cM, the maximum is 0.49 cM, and the median is 0.001 cM.

Allele-Sharing Distance of Individuals, Analysis of Relatedness, and Estimates of F_{ST}

We used an allele sharing distance (ASD)[15,44] as the genetic distance between individuals. Within each population, we estimated the chromosomal level of relatedness between all pairs of individuals. We used a method-of-moments approach, implemented in PLINK, to estimate the probability of sharing 0, 1, or 2 alleles identical-by-descent (IBD) for any two individuals from the same homogeneous and random-mating population. Unbiased estimates of F_{ST} were calculated following Weir and Hill.[45]

Marker-Information Content for Ancestry

Four measurements were used in this study to calculate marker-information content for ancestry: allele-frequency difference (δ),[46] Wahlund's f,[47] Rosenberg's I_n,[48] and F_{ST}.[45] F_{ST} is a measurement that considers the variation of sample size; given that the sample sizes of CHB (45) and CEU (60) are different, we used F_{ST} as the primary measurement for marker information in this study.

Although these measures are highly correlated, as shown in Figure S1 (available online), we calculated and showed information of all the measures so that our results are comparable for other studies. The distribution of marker information of 20,177 SNPs, according to the above measures, is shown in Figure S2. Of the markers, 5.1% had δ values > 0.5, 5.7% had I_n values > 0.2, 4.5% had f values > 0.3, and 5.4% had F_{ST} values > 0.3; these values can be considered as the signal of very great genetic difference between populations.

Select Ancestry-Informative Markers

SNPs that have large allele-frequency differences between CHB and CEU were selected as ancestry-informative markers (AIMs). One threshold proposed for declaring a SNP to be highly informative for ancestry inference is $\delta = 0.5$,[46] which corresponds to $F_{ST} \in [0.250, 0.333]$ and. $I_n \in [0.131, 0.216]$.[48] Although F_{ST}, f, and I_n are all closely related to δ in the case of biallelic markers in two source populations, unlike δ they capture the dependence of information content on the position of allele frequencies in the unit interval. In this study, we selected AIMs according to F_{ST} value, with $F_{ST} \geq$ 0.35 (the upper bound of F_{ST} corresponding to $\delta > 0.5$), from 20,177 SNPs and obtained 602 AIMs. However, we noted that in many regions, adjacent markers had the same or similar F_{ST} values and formed 'blocks' of F_{ST}. One example of this is shown in Figure S3. We examined these "F_{ST} block" regions and found that they were actually haplotype blocks in both CHB and CEU and contained very few haplotypes; therefore, markers within these "F_{ST} blocks" would provide redundant information if they were all included. Furthermore, for STRUCTURE analysis, the program was not designed to model the LD that occurs between nearby markers (so called "background LD") within populations (i.e., the model is best suited for data on markers that are linked, but not so tightly linked).[49] Therefore, we picked "tag AIMs" by controlling the between-marker distance and removing those

redundant AIMs to avoid strong LD within CHB and CEU. At the same time, there were some greatly spanned chromosome regions (> 1 cM) without AIMs covered. We saturated these regions by selecting some AIMs with F_{ST} less than 0.35 but larger than 0.3. Finally, 83 of the original 602 AIMs were selected and used for further analysis. Distribution of marker information (F_{ST}, f, δ, and I_n) of 83 AIMs is shown in Figure 1. The average BMD of these 83 AIMs was 0.82 cM (398 kb), and median BMD was 0.57 cM (280 kb), with mean $\delta = 0.52$, mean $I_n = 0.20$, mean $f = 0.33$, and mean $F_{ST} = 0.47$. The final length of the chromosomal region that was covered by AIMs was 67.37 cM (32.7 Mb).
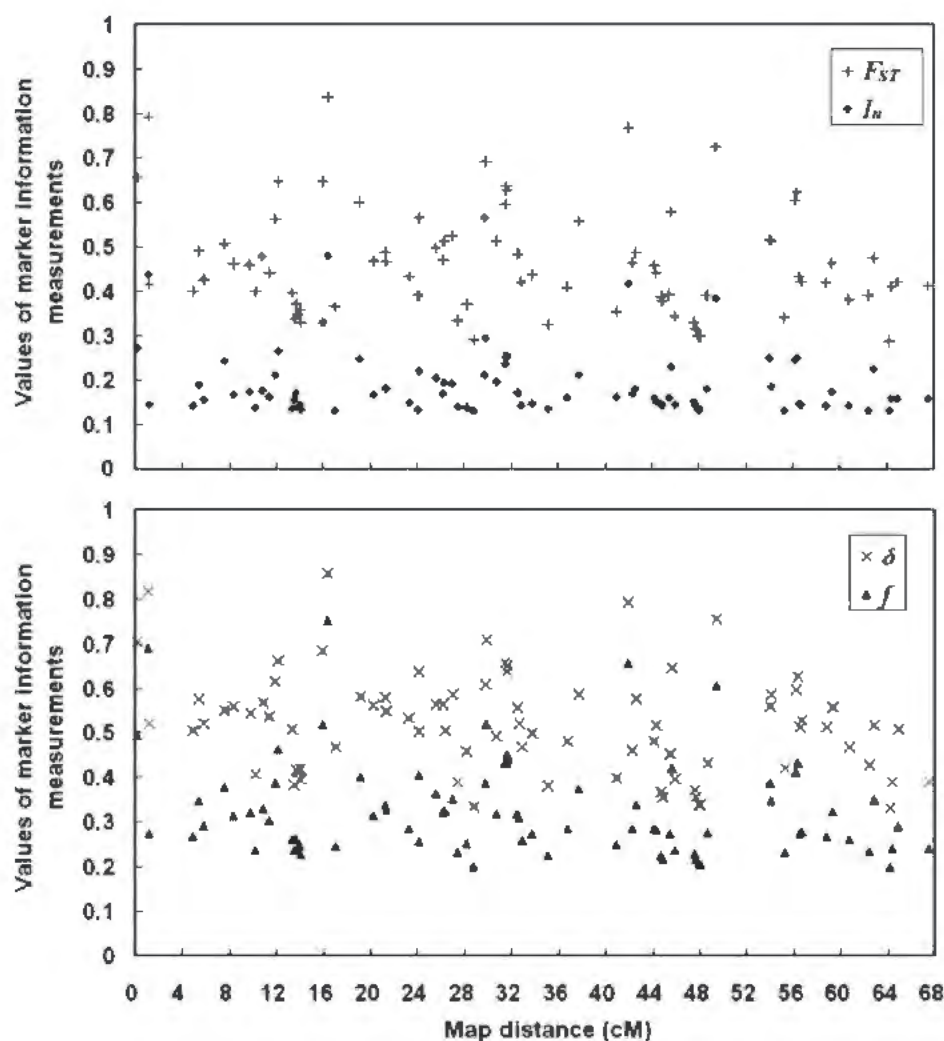
Figure 1

Distribution of Marker Information for 83 AIMs

Haplotype Inference

The linkage-disequilibrium analyses in this study were based on haplotypes generated from data with PHASE 2.1 software.[50] PHASE implements a Bayesian statistical method for reconstructing haplotypes from population genotype data, which has been shown to be superior to the EM algorithm for haplotype reconstruction at the individual level.[50] PHASE was run with the recombination model, 10,000 iterations, 100 thinning interval, and 10,000 burn-ins. The other parameters were set as the defaults.

Overall, 20,177 SNPs were broken into segments of 40 SNPs, with 20 overlapping SNPs between each two consecutive sections. Haplotypes were inferred by PHASE from each segment independently. Finally, the two haplotypes of each individual were reconstructed by combining all haplotypes segment by segment according to the inferred haplotypes of the 20 overlapping sites between consecutive sections. When the overlapping SNPs were inconsistent, we arbitrarily kept the results of the former segment.

The individual haplotypes for the panel of 602 AIMs that were informative for ancestry were reinferred, independent of the results of the 20,177 SNPs.

STRUCTURE Analysis

For analyzing the ancestry of Uyghur, the program STRUCTURE [49,51] was used. STRUCTURE implements a model-based clustering method for inferring population structure with genotype data. However, the model implemented in the program is best suited to data on markers that are linked, but not so tightly linked; therefore, we screened the markers by controlling space between adjacent markers larger than at least 200 kb (averaging about 0.5 cM for chromosome 21). We obtained ten data sets (S1~S10) by random sampling markers with BMD > 500 kb. The basic statistics of the ten data sets are described in Table S1. We used an admixture-model option and assumed that allele frequencies were correlated. The program was run with 100,000 iterations and 100,000 burn-ins.

For the inference of ancestry origin of chromosomal segments, STRUCTURE was used. In version 2.2, the program implements a model that allows for "admixture linkage disequilibrium,"[49] which performs better than the original admixture model when using linked loci to study admixed populations. It achieves more accurate estimates of the ancestry vector and can extract more information from the data. In this model, STRUCTURE reports not only the overall ancestry for each individual but also the probability of origin of each allele. We selected a panel of 83 AIMs for estimating the ancestry of alleles (see "Select Ancestry-Informative Markers" section for details). The estimated haplotypes from the 40 UIG individuals were examined together with the phased data from the 60 CEU and 45 CHB subjects. We used distances between the markers determined by both genomic-sequence and recombination-based data (Rutgers combined linkage-physical maps)[43] as map distances. We used a linkage-model option and assumed that allele frequencies were correlated. The program was run with 1000,000 iterations, 1000,000 burn-ins, and 500,000 admixture burn-ins.

Measures of LD

Several statistics have been used to measure the LD between a pair of loci.[52] The two most common measures are the absolute value of D' (denoted by |D'|) and r^2, both derived from Lewontin's D.[53] It was shown that in association studies, the sample size must be increased by roughly $1/r^2$ when compared with the sample size for detection of association with the susceptibility locus itself.[54,55] r^2 has a relatively clear interpretation in terms of the power to detect an association, and intermediate values of r^2 are also easily interpretable.[54,56] It is therefore more sensible to use r^2 to study LD. In addition, r^2 also shows much less inflation in small samples than does |D'|.[56,57] In this study, we used r^2 to measure LD between two SNPs.

Results   Go to: ⌄

Genetic Diversity and Relatedness of Individuals

Heterozygosity measures the genetic diversity within each population, and both expected heterozygosity (*He*) and observed heterozygosity (*Ho*) were calculated for each population by use of genotypes of 20,177 SNPs (Table 1). As expected, the East Asian populations (CHB and JPT) and the

European population (CEU) show lower *He* and *Ho* than does the African population (YRI). However, UIG has even an higher *He* and *Ho* than does YRI. Distribution of minor-allele frequency (MAF) of 20,177 SNPs in five populations (Figure S4) also showed that UIG has a higher proportion of common alleles (high MAF SNPs) than does YRI, a finding which is expected in admixture populations. Genetic difference between populations was estimated by pairwise F_{ST} (Table 2). Notably, F_{ST} between UIG and CEU (0.028) is much smaller than F_{ST} between UIG and CHB (0.037). Within each population, we further estimated the chromosomal level of relatedness between all pairs of individuals, as measured by the probability of identical-by-descent (IBD). Table 3 shows the IBD-sharing probability of individuals within each population. CEU and JPT have the highest average IBD (0.035), and UIG has the lowest average IBD (0.026). Both higher heterozygosity and lower IBD suggested the presence of substructure in UIG genomes and different origins of chromosomal segments.

Table 1

Observed Heterozygosity and Expected Heterozygosity within Populations

	Observed Heterozygosity		Expected Heterozygosity	
JPT	0.288	± 0.190	0.285	± 0.182
CHB	0.286	± 0.189	0.285	± 0.180
UIG	0.312	± 0.177	0.311	± 0.167
CEU	0.304	± 0.177	0.302	± 0.171
YRI	0.307	± 0.174	0.303	± 0.167

Table 2

Pairwise F_{ST} between Populations

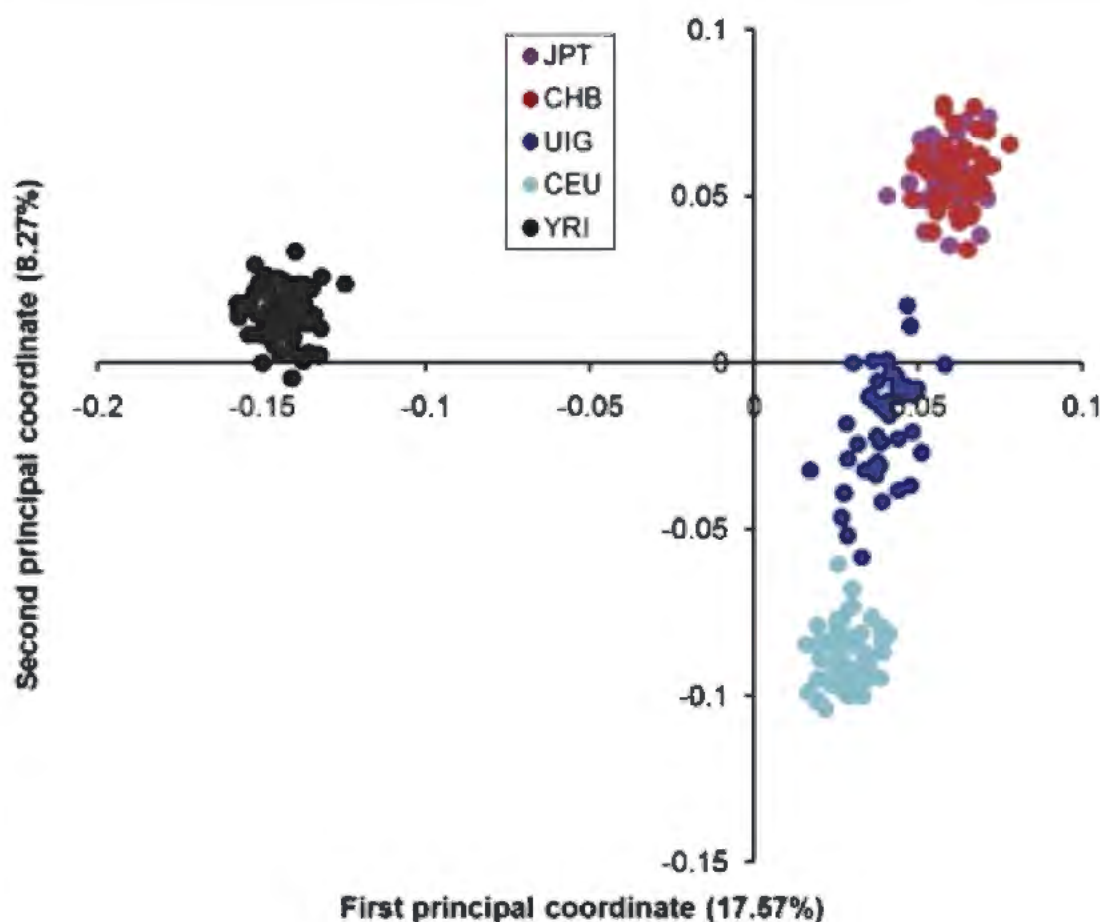|	JPT	CHB	UIG	CEU
CHB	0.007			
UIG	0.036	0.037		
CEU	0.105	0.107	0.028	
YRI	0.182	0.185	0.146	0.166

Table 3

Pairwise Identity-by-State (IBS) Sharing and Identity-by-Descent (IBD) Sharing within Populations

	IBS Sharing	IBD Sharing
JPT	0.703 ± 0.012	0.035 ± 0.046
CHB	0.706 ± 0.011	0.029 ± 0.041
UIG	0.704 ± 0.011	0.026 ± 0.039
CEU	0.709 ± 0.012	0.035 ± 0.044
YRI	0.712 ± 0.009	0.030 ± 0.039

Principal-Coordinate Analysis of Individuals

Principal-coordinate analysis (PCO) provides a useful means of revealing relationships among individuals. Figure 2 is a two-dimensional plot displaying the first two PCO axes for all individuals, with allele-sharing distance (ASD) used for all pairwise combinations of individuals. Individuals from one population cluster tightly, to the exclusion of individuals from other populations. The first two axes together explain 25.8 % of the total variation, and each of the remaining axes explains less than 1.5 % of the total variation. The first PCO axis shows a separation of the African and non-African populations and explains 17.57 % of the total variation; the second PCO axis explains 8.27 % of the total variation and shows a separation of the European and East Asian populations, with UIG individuals lying between them. This is also an expected result of UIG as an admixed population.
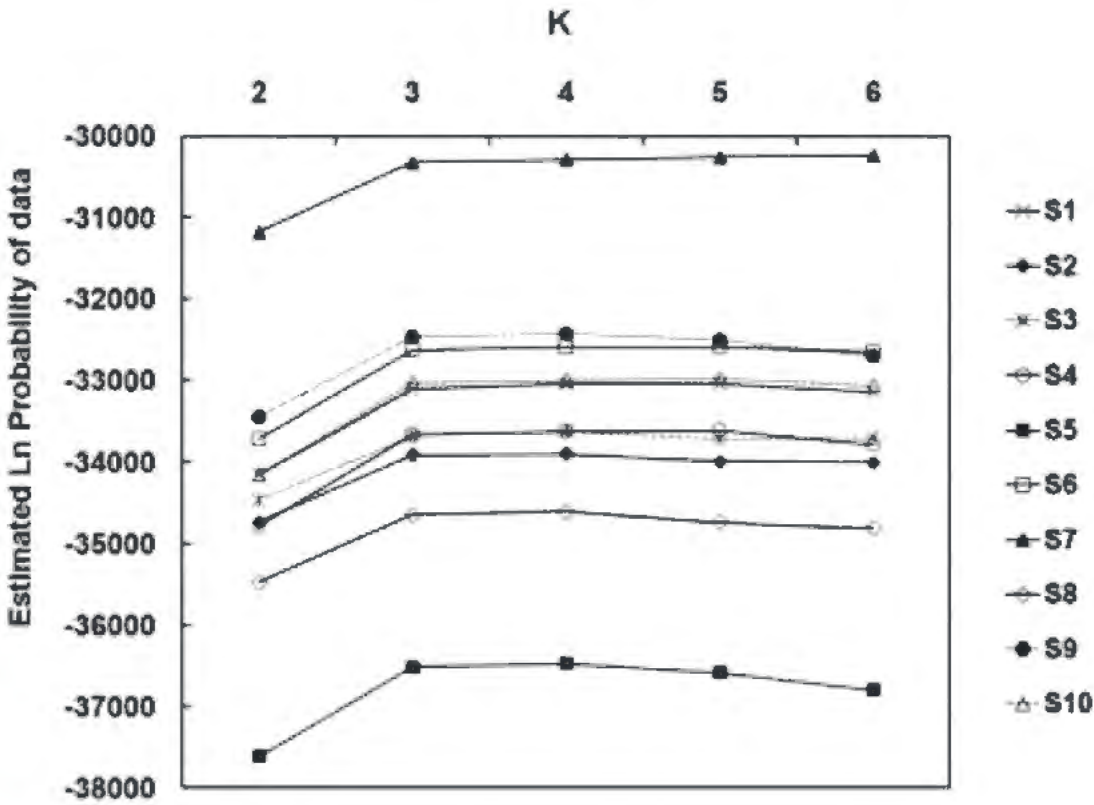

Figure 2

STRUCTURE Analysis and Estimation of Admixture Proportion of Individuals

Evidence of Two-Way Admixture Given the large number of markers in our dataset, genetic analyses can be performed at the level of individual, making no presumption of group membership. We applied a model-based clustering algorithm, implemented by the computer program STRUCTURE, to infer the genetic ancestry of individuals. Our approach is solely based on genotype, without incorporation of any information on sampling location or population affiliation of each individual. For each data set of which markers were randomly selected by controlling BMD > 200 kb, we ran STRUCTURE from K = 2 to K = 6. Ten repeats were done for each K and each data set. According to the distribution of Ln(Pr), as shown in Figure 3, the most probable and appropriate number of clusters should be three in our dataset. The three clusters correspond to African, European, and Asian populations. The middle plots in Figure 4 are the average results of ten data sets at K = 3 (there were some variations of the estimations of admixture proportion of UIG, as shown in Figures S5 and S6; each cluster depicted by one color corresponds to an ethnic group). The results showed that individuals from the same population often shared membership coefficients in the inferred cluster, with UIG individuals displaying strong admixture of both European and Asian clusters. The admixture proportion of populations are shown in Table 4. The UIG population has average of 56.2% of admixture from European ancestry and 41.7% of admixture from East Asian ancestry, and the other populations were dominated by single East Asian, European, or African cluster. Notably, the distribution of admixture proportions among UIG individuals is relatively even, with 48.7% the lowest admixture from European ancestry and the highest 62.2%. The standard deviation is only 3.8%, which is much smaller than the estimation for the African-American (AfA) population,58 suggesting a much longer history of admixture events for the Uyghur population compared with the AfA population.

Figure 3

Probability Estimations for the Number of Clusters, with Ten Randomly Selected Data Sets

The ordinate shows the Ln probability corresponding to the number of clusters (*K*) shown on the abscissa.
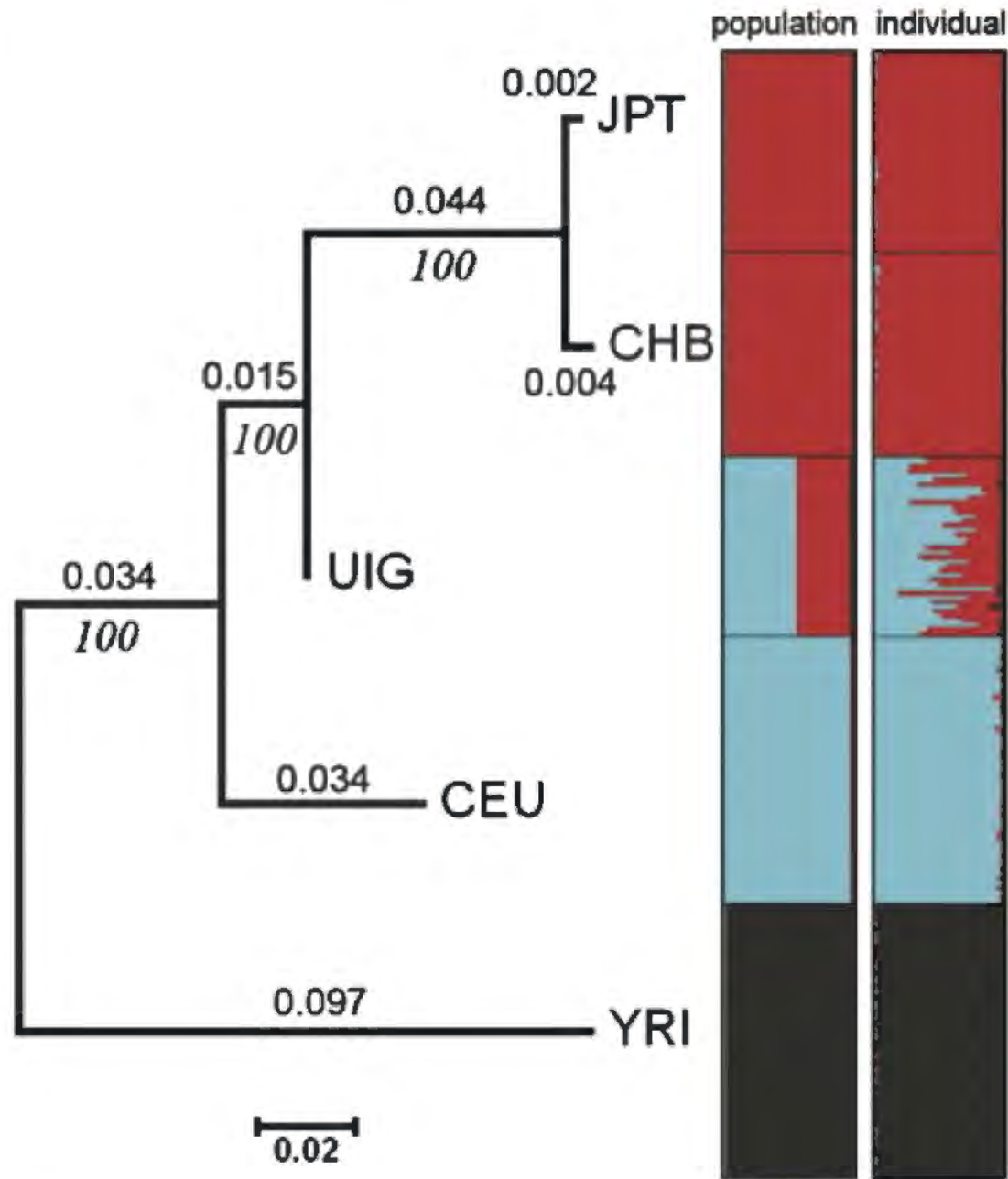
Figure 4

Phylogenetic Analysis and Structure Analysis of UIG and Four HapMap Population Samples

The left population tree is based on pairwise F_{ST} between populations, the middle plot shows admixture proportion at population level, and the right plot shows the admixture level at individual level.

Table 4

Population Admixture-Proportion Percentages Estimated from Random Markers

	Cluster1	Cluster2	Cluster3

	Cluster1		Cluster2		Cluster3	
JPT	0.6	± 0.2	1.2	± 0.3	98.1	± 0.4
CHB	0.7	± 0.2	1.4	± 0.4	97.9	± 0.5
UIG	2.1	± 0.8	56.2	± 3.8	41.7	± 3.9
CEU	0.8	± 0.2	97.8	± 0.3	1.4	± 0.2
YRI	97.9	± 0.6	1.1	± 0.3	1.0	± 0.3

Cluster1 corresponds to African ancestry.

Cluster2 corresponds to European ancestry.

Cluster3 corresponds to East Asian ancestry.

Admixture Proportion and Time of Admixture The STRUCTURE results from random markers showed that UIG was an admixed population with contributions from both European and East Asian ancestries. We thus selected AIMs according to allele frequency of CHB and CEU for further estimation of the admixture proportion of UIG. Table 5 shows the admixture proportions estimated from 83 AIMs. The UIG population has 60% of admixture from European ancestry and 40% of admixture from East Asian ancestry. Individual admixture proportion was estimated for each UIG individual, and Figure 5 shows the distribution of admixture proportions of UIG individuals. The proportion of East Asian ancestry in UIG individuals ranges from 15.7% to 59.7%, and the proportion of European ancestry in UIG individuals ranges from 40.3% to 84.3%. We ran a linkage model for 83 AIMs and obtained the estimation of recombination parameter r (breakpoints per cM). The posterior distribution of r is shown in Figure 6. On average, there were 1.26 breakpoints per cM, with a 90% confidence interval of [1.07, 1.46]. Under the assumption of a hybrid-isolation (HI) model, the admixture event of UIG was estimated to have taken place about 126 [107~146] generations or 2520 [2140~2920] years ago, assuming 20 years per generation.
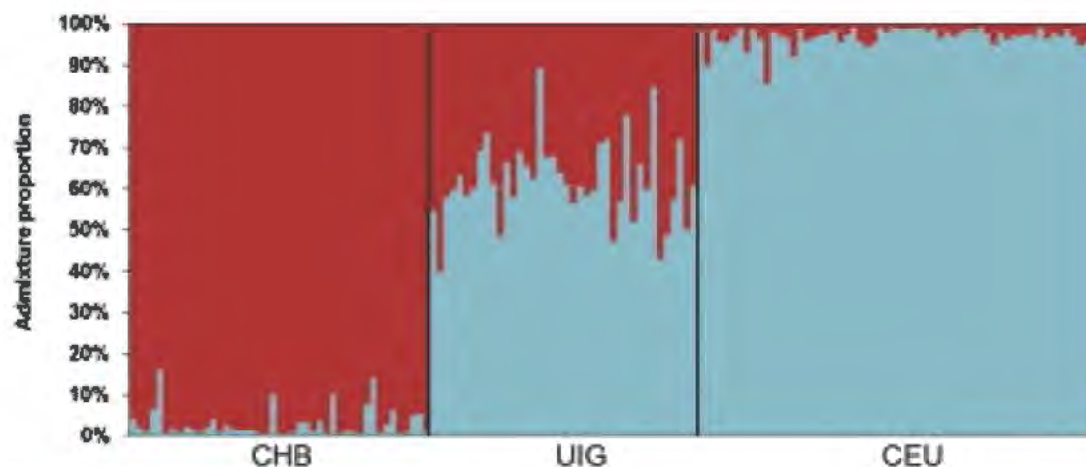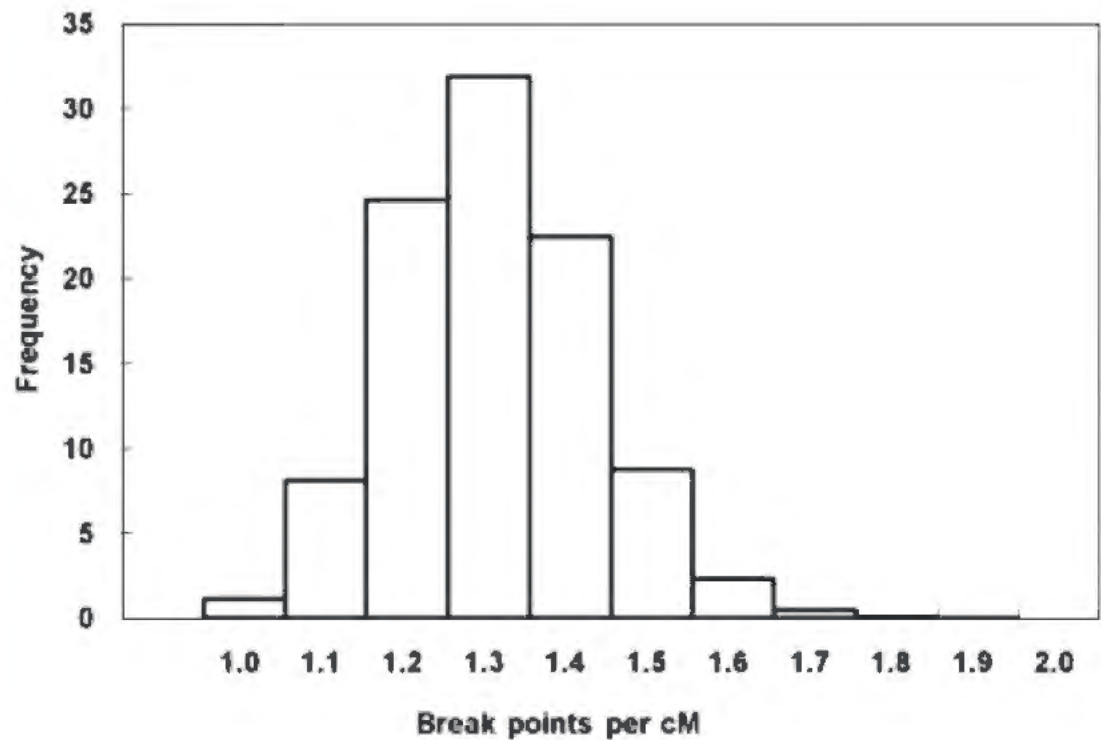

Figure 5

Summary Plot of Individual Admixture Proportions

The results of individual admixture proportions estimated from 83 AIMs. Each individual is represented by a single vertical line broken into two colored segments, with lengths proportional to each of the two

inferred clusters. Red indicates East Asian ancestry proportion, and blue indicates European ancestry proportion. The predefined population IDs (CHB, UIG, and CEU) are presented on the abscissa. The ordinate indicates the proportion unit.

Figure 6

Posterior Distribution of the Recombination Parameter r, per Centimorgan

Both the mean and median of r are 1.26, with a 90% confidence level of [1.07, 1.46], so the admixture event happened about 126 [107, 146] generations or 2520 [2140, 2920] years ago, assuming 20 years per generation.

Table 5

Population Admixture-Proportion Percentages Estimated from 83 AIMs

|	Cluster1		Cluster2	
CHB	3.1	± 0.1	96.9	± 0.1
UIG	60.0	± 0.1	40.0	± 0.1
CEU	97.1	± 0.1	2.9	± 0.1

Cluster1 corresponds to European ancestry.

Cluster2 corresponds to East Asian ancestry.

Note: estimations from ten repeat runs are of very little difference.

Inferred Ancestral Origins of Chromosomal Segments in UIG

Using selected AIMs, we further inferred the ancestral origins of chromosomal segments in 40 UIG individuals. We selected a panel of 83 AIMs encompassing an overall area of 63.37 cM on chromosome 21 for estimation of the ancestry of alleles. The STRUCTURE program[49] was run under the linkage model with the option of correlated allele frequency. The estimated haplotypes from the 40 UIG individuals were examined together with the phased data from the 60 CEU and 45 CHB subjects under a two-population model (K = 2).

With the assumption that East Asian and European populations were the only two parental populations, STRUCTURE provided the probability of an allele being derived from either the East Asian cluster or the European cluster. The natural logarithms of the probability ratio (LnPR) that an allele was derived from the East Asian cluster over the European cluster were estimated, and the results are depicted in Figure 7. The results provide information on the ancestry of the chromosome segments for each individual (see Supplemental Data for details). As expected, the UIG haplotypes showed contributions from both parental populations (Figure 7). The contribution from European ancestry was greater than that from East Asian ancestry in UIG. The mean contributions of ancestry were 60% (minimum 40.3% and maximum 84.3%) from European ancestry and 40% (minimum 15.7% and maximum 59.7%) from East Asian ancestry. Some segments existed for which ancestry was uncertain (shown in gray in Figure 7), because it is difficult to precisely define the length of the segments in UIG derived from each population sample. Notably, most ambiguous segments were distributed in the region with few or even no AIMs (AIM "deserts"). The cumulative frequencies of segment sizes that were derived from East Asian ancestry and from European ancestry are shown in Figure S7. The first quartile of segment size with East Asian ancestry was 0.55 cM, the second quartile was 1.68 cM, and the third quartile was 3.24 cM. For chromosomal segments with European ancestry, the first quartile of segment size was 0.83 cM, the second quartile was 3.14 cM, and the third quartile was 5.09 cM. The average sizes of chromosomal segments that were derived from East Asian ancestry and European ancestry were 2.43 cM and 4.07 cM, respectively.

[Figure 7]{.underline}
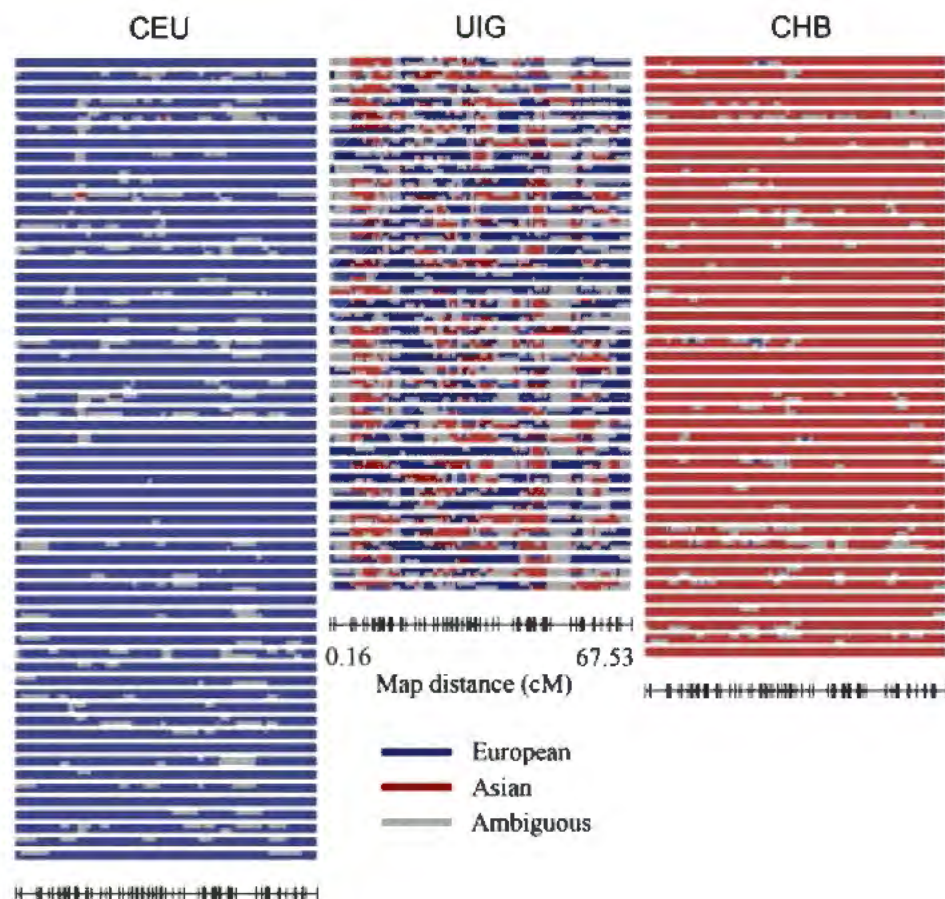
Inferred Ancestral Origins of a 67.37 cM Segment of Chromosome 21 in Three Populations

Each column represents a population. The first column shows 60 CEU subjects, the second column shows 40 UIG subjects, and the third column shows 45 CHB subjects. Chromosome pairs are depicted with spaces between individual subjects. The Ln of the ratio of the probability that each locus on each haplotype in each individual derived from either Asian or European ancestry was determined for each individual and coded as red (Ln Asian/European > 1.0), blue (Ln Asian/European < −1.0), or gray lines (Ln Asian/European < 1.0, > −1.0). The marker positions (Rutgers map) are depicted in the bottom of UIG plot, and are the same in the three populations.

Overall LD in Uyghur and its Parental Populations

The extent of LD was examined across Chromosome 21 in UIG, Han Chinese (CHB), and European (CEU) samples for markers with minor-allele frequency (MAF) ≥ 0.05 ([Figure 8](#)a; [Tables S2 and S3](#)) and for markers with MAF ≥ 0.15 ([Figure 8](#)b; [Tables S4 and S5](#)). Proportions of marker pairs with LD at different levels of r^2 (<0.1, $\geq$0.1, $\geq$0.2, $\geq$1/3, $\geq$0.5, $\geq$0.8) were plotted against between-marker distance (denoted as BMD hereafter). Interestingly, the admixed population UIG did not show stronger LD than did CHB and CEU. In fact, for both groups of SNPs, UIG showed weaker LD at each level of $r^2 \geq 0.2$. For example, when $r^2 \geq 0.8$ for common alleles and BMD $\leq$ 300kb, the proportion of marker pairs in UIG was only 68% of CHB and 75% of CEU. Furthermore, the extent of LD in marker pairs of UIG is very similar to that of CHB and CEU; i.e., LD levels of $r^2 \geq 0.2$ extend no more than 300 kb in all three populations, and strong LD levels ($r^2 \geq 0.8$) extend less than 100 kb.
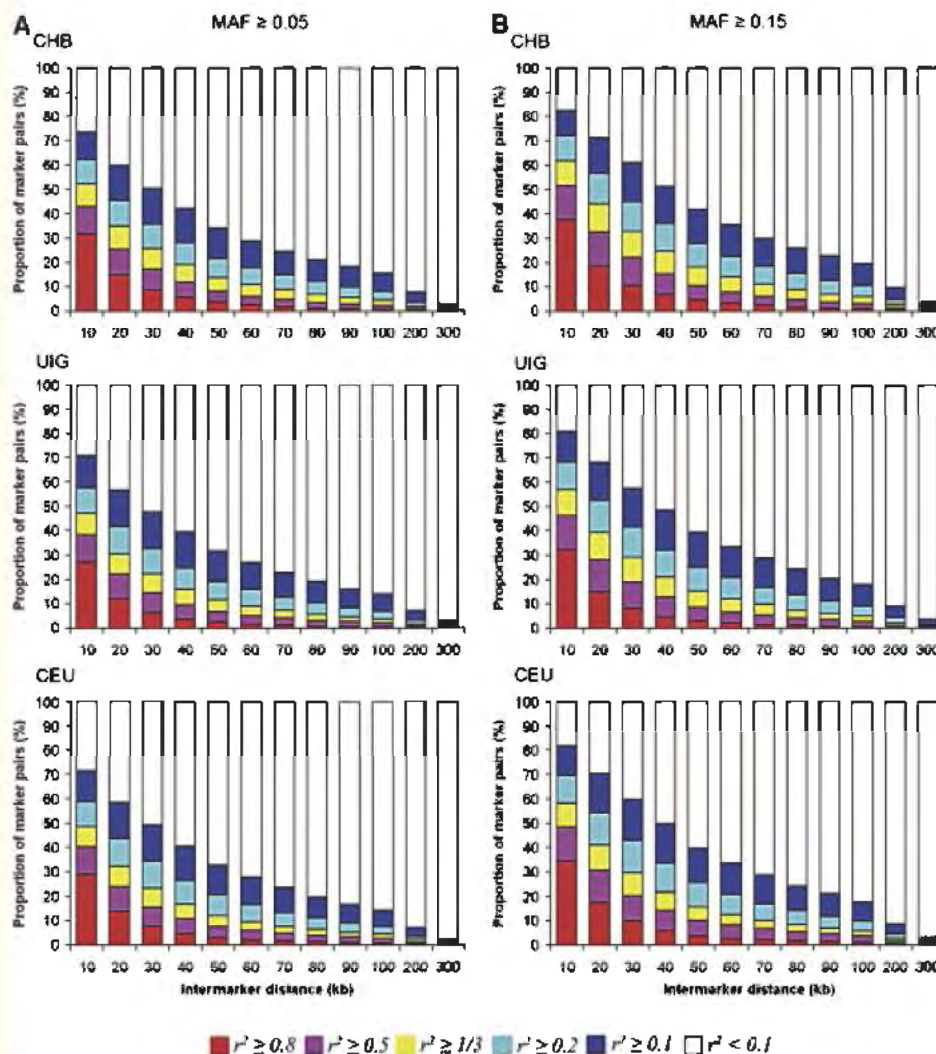
Figure 8

Comparison of the Proportion of Marker Pairs of Different r^2 Levels in UIG and its Parental Populations

(A) LD was calculated from markers with MAF $\geq$ 0.05 in each population.

(B) LD was calculated from markers with MAF $\geq$ 0.15 in each population.

Magnitude and Extension of LD in UIG with AIMs

Previous studies reported that extended LD in admixed populations such as AfA was concealed by unselected markers and that increased LD in AfA was correlated with increasing allele-frequency differences between the markers of Europeans and Africans.[59,60] We showed in a recent study that LD in an admixed population correlates with allele-frequency difference between parental populations,[58] which can be measured by F_{ST}.

We selected 602 SNPs with large F_{ST} (mean F_{ST} = 0.48, mean δ = 0.52) between CHB and CEU as AIMs and compared the magnitude and extension of LD in all three populations by using these AIMs. We calculated r^2 for each of the marker pairs (a total of 180,901 pairs) by using the haplotypes inferred by the PHASE program. To investigate the extension of LD, we compared the distributions of r^2 in 180,901 marker pairs in three populations. The LD in UIG extends a little further than do those in CHB

and CEU, especially when $0.2 > r^2 \geq 0.1$ ([Figure 9](#); [Tables S6 and S7](#)). For example, in UIG, LD extends to 2,000 kb at a level of $r^2 \geq 0.1$ (corresponding to Kruglyak's useful LD[54]). In contrast, LD at a level of $r^2 \geq 0.1$ extends to no more than 300 kb in both CHB and CEU samples. However, the proportion of marker pairs with higher LD, as high as $r^2 \geq 0.8$ in UIG, is even smaller than that of CEU ([Figure 9](#) and [Table S7](#)). In fact, at a level of $r^2 \geq 0.8$ and within 200 kb, the proportion of marker pairs in UIG only slightly exceeds that of CHB (1.12-fold) and is even smaller than that of CEU (0.69-fold). At the other r^2 levels, the proportion of marker pairs in UIG is, on average, larger than that of CHB and CEU. For example, at a level of $r^2 \geq 0.5$, the proportion of marker pairs in UIG is 2.18-fold of that in CHB and 1.04-fold of that in CEU; at a level of $r^2 \geq 1/3$ (the Ardlie's useful LD,[56]), the proportion of marker pairs in UIG is 2.63-fold of that in CHB and 2.09-fold of that in CEU; at a level of $r^2 \geq 0.2$, the proportion of marker pairs in UIG is 1.33-fold of that in CHB and 3.26-fold of that in CEU; and at a level of $r^2 \geq 0.1$, the proportion of marker pairs in UIG is 2.65-fold of that in CHB and 5.38-fold of that in CEU. Therefore, when AIMs were used, elevated LDs in UIG were mostly observed in the range of $0.1 \leq r^2 < 0.8$ and at BMD < 2,000 kb.
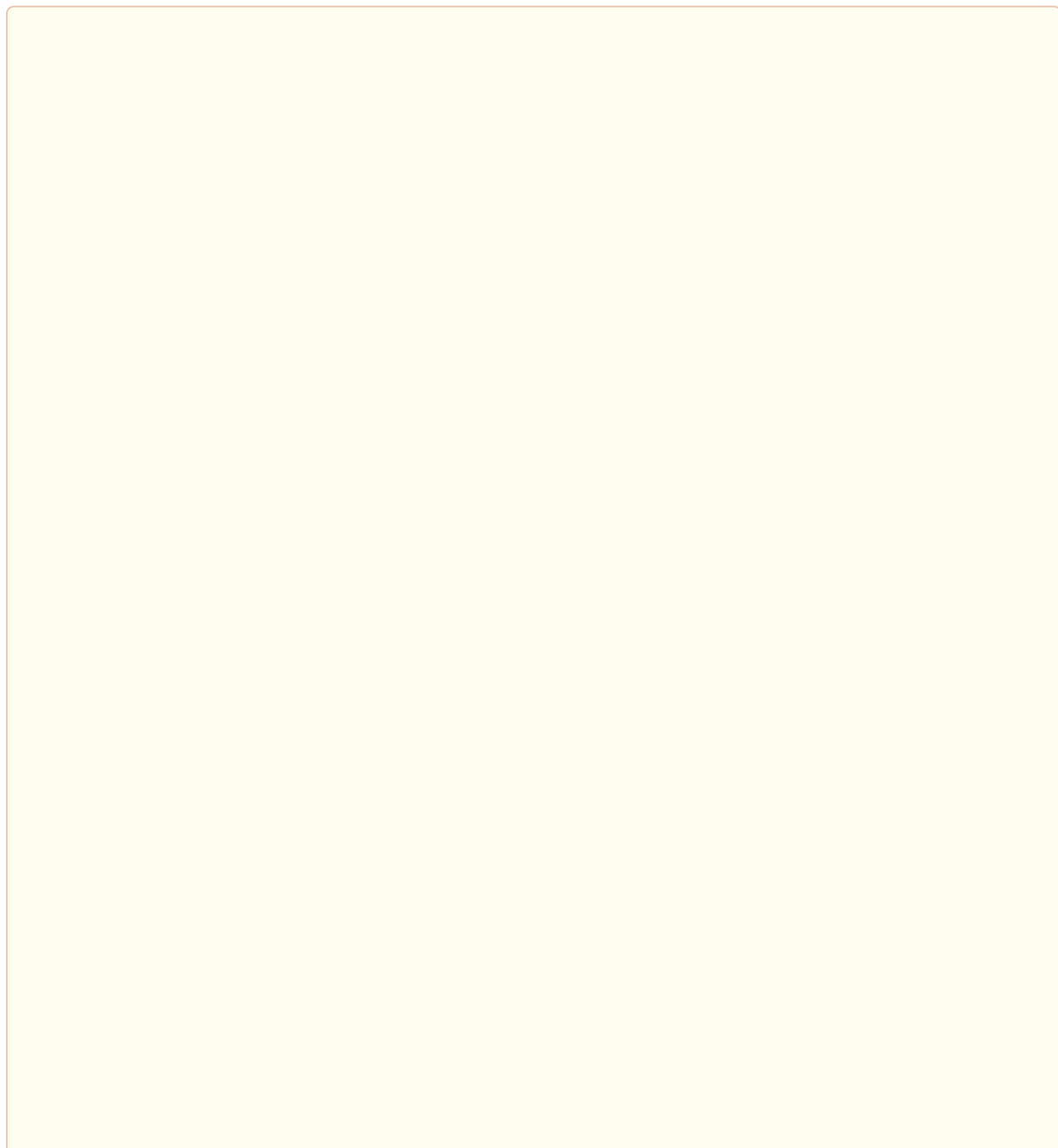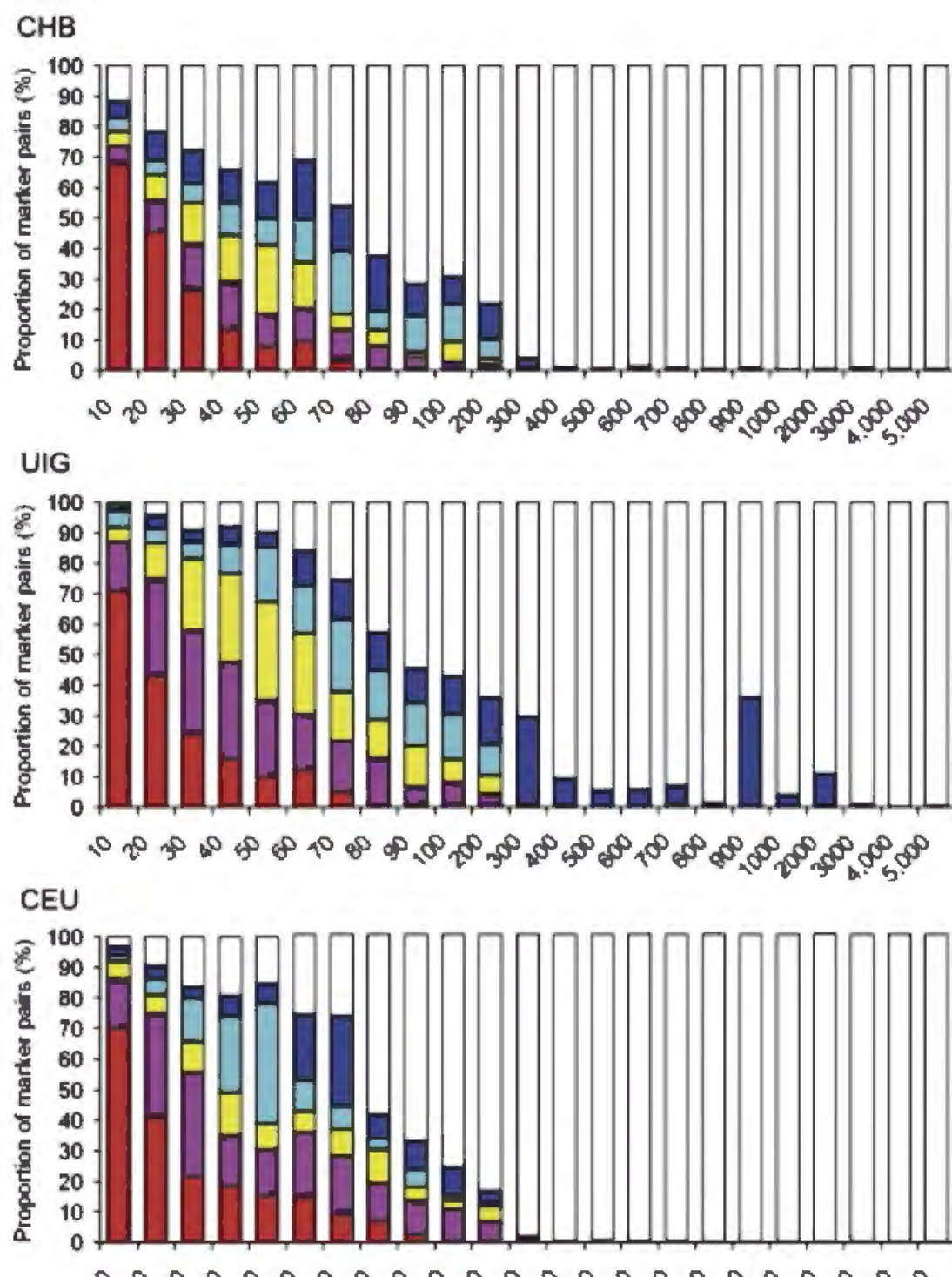
Figure 9

Comparison of the Proportion of Marker Pairs of Different r^2 Levels in UIG and its Parental Populations for 602 AIMs

Discussion

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In this report, we dissected the genetic structure of a Uyghur population sample at population, individual, and chromosome level by using 20,177 markers densely distributed across the entire chromosome 21.

At population level, STRUCTURE analysis showed that UIG was a typical two-way admixed population with ancestries contributed from both East Asian and European origins. In this study, we included only population samples from three continental groups; i.e., African, European, and East Asian population samples. We did not test the other possible sources of UIG's ancestral origin, such as South-Asian and Southeast Asian ancestries. However, because STRUCTURE posterior probabilities strongly supported two-way admixture, it is unlikely that there was a third parental population of UIG with genetic components that are substantially different from those of European or East Asian ancestry. The admixture proportion was estimated as 60% from European ancestry and 40% from East Asian ancestry; thus, European ancestry contributed slightly more to Uyghur genomes than did East Asian ancestry. This result is consistent with pairwise F_{ST} between populations estimated from entire markers: average F_{ST} between UIG and CEU was 0.028, which is much smaller than F_{ST} between UIG and CHB (0.037). The Uyghur samples used in this study were collected in Hetian, which is located in Southern Xinjiang, where the Uyghur population was thought to be less affected by the recent migration of Han Chinese than are Uyghur populations in Northern Xinjiang. Therefore, our estimation in this study is expected to be different from that of some previous studies on UIG samples collected in northern Xinjiang,[2,8] where more interaction occurred between Han Chinese and Uyghur; for example, the estimation of European admixture proportions in some previous studies on UIG samples collected in northern Xinjiang was 30%. In addition, previous studies investigated only very few loci or even just a single locus.[1,2,7,8] However, this discrepancy in admixture estimation should not significantly alter the mapping strategy.

At the individual level, the proportion of East Asian ancestry in UIG individuals ranges from 15.7% to 59.7%, and the proportion of European ancestry in UIG individuals ranges from 40.3% to 84.3%. The distribution of admixture proportions among UIG individuals is relatively even, and the variation is much smaller than the estimation of variation in the AfA population.[58] It is unlikely that such results were due to sampling of closely related individuals, because the IBD values within UIG samples were the lowest in all populations (CHB, JPT, CEU, YRI) (Table 3). Furthermore, the ancestry variation among individuals could even be overestimated, given that the result was based on the data of one single chromosome. This result suggests a much longer history of admixture events for the Uyghur population compared with the AfA population, because recombination over many generations has interwoven chromosome segments derived from both ancestries and drift of ancestries among individuals has become very small.

At the chromosomal level, we inferred the ancestral origins of UIG chromosome segments: the average size of chromosome segments that were derived from East Asian and European populations were 2.4 cM and 4.1 cM, respectively. The estimated recombination rate was about 1.07–1.46 breakpoints per cM. Under the assumption of a hybrid-isolation (HI) model, the admixture event of UIG was estimated to have taken place about 107–146 generations, or 2140–2920 years ago assuming 20 years per generation. The word "Uyghur" (alternatively Uygur, Uigur, and Uighur) originates from the Old Turkish word "Uyγur." On the basis of its Old Turkish phonetics, the word "Uyγur" was rendered differently in Chinese during different periods of China's history. The most ancient translation of the word "Uyγur" in Chinese was "Yuanhe," which appears in *Weishu* (History of the *Wei* Dynasty), which was compiled during the period of *Northern Qi* (550–577 AD). The ancestors of the Uyghur (Gaoche) can be traced to the Chidi and Dingling in the third century B.C. (See Sima Qian, '*Shiji*' Vol. 110: Xiongnu). Therefore, the estimated admixture time could be concordant with the historical record. However, this result could be underestimated due to the assumption of a hybrid-isolation (HI) model. In this model, we assumed that Uyghur was formed by a single event of admixture during a short period of time, which might not be true of the real history of the Uyghur. Considering the geographical location where the Uyghur settled, continuous gene flow from populations of European and Asian descent was very likely. Because the time estimation in this study was based on the information of recombination or linkage disequilibrium (LD), which decays with time of generations, LD could have

been maintained to some extent, and recombination information could have been diluted if there had been continuous gene flow; thus, the time of admixture could be underestimated. In addition, the time of admixture could be underestimated because the distribution of the length of chromosome segments might be biased toward large segments due to the large spacing between markers and the uncertainty in the ancestry estimation of some alleles. Furthermore, switch errors are almost inevitable when haplotypes are inferred from genotype data of unrelated individuals. For the inferred haplotype data of 83 AIMs, we estimated the switch error rate as 1 per 22 SNPs in CEU, 1 per 25 SNPs in CHB, and 1 per 19 SNPs in UIG. In other words, on average there would be four potential phasing errors in CEU, three potential phasing errors in CHB, and four potential phasing errors in UIG. However, we think the switch errors have limited influence on the downstream analysis, i.e., the estimation of ancestral origin of chromosomal segments, because of the following reasons: (1) the recombination rate (breakpoints per cM) estimated from phased data is consistent with that estimated from unphased data; (2) considering the recombination rate, the frequency of breakpoints is much higher than that of switch errors—for example, the breakpoint rate in UIG is estimated at an average of 1.26 per 1 cM, or 85 breaks per 67.4 cM, whereas the switch error in UIG is only about 4 per 67.4 cM; (3) for many AIMs, we observed several UIG individuals with both alleles derived from the same ancestry; i.e., the phase information is not so important for those markers and individuals.

Regardless of the model of admixture, UIG showed much weaker LD compared with more recently admixed populations, such as the AfA population.[58] In fact, using all markers, we showed that LD in UIG is indeed similar to or even weaker than that of Han Chinese and European American samples. UIG manifests extended LD only when AIMs are used, but not when all SNPs are included—elevated LDs in UIG were mostly observed in the range of $0.1 \leq r^2 < 0.8$ and at BMD < 2,000 kb. In contrast, LDs in AfA at this level ($r^2 \geq 0.1$) extended to more than 20,000 kb when AIMs were examined.[58] The average size of the UIG chromosome segments that were derived from East Asian and European ancestry were estimated as 2.4 cM and 4.1 cM, respectively, which were also much shorter than the average size of AfA chromosome segments that were derived from African and European ancestry (30.1 cM and 13.7 cM, respectively).[58]

In spite of the long history and short LD of Uyghur as compared with more recently admixed populations such as the AfA population, the MALD strategy can be still feasible for some particular diseases. Basically, the following requirements need to be met for MALD:[14] First, MALD-based identification of disease genes requires a measurable difference in the frequency of disease-causing alleles between the parental populations. Second, admixture ideally needs to be at least two generations old to reduce the initial disequilibrium across chromosomes and between unlinked loci, whereas LD within chromosomes remains strong.[12,18] For the Uyghur population, this is not a problem, as we showed above. Third, a set of markers that specifically differentiate chromosomes derived from the parental populations is needed.[28,37] As we mentioned earlier in Subjects and Methods, in 20,177 SNPs on chromosome 21, for 5.1% of markers with $\delta > 0.5$, 5.7% of markers with $I_n > 0.2$, 4.5% of markers with $f > 0.3$, and 5.4% of markers with $F_{ST} > 0.3$, the average between marker distance is about 0.06 cM, which should be adequate for performing MALD in UIG. Fourth, a level of admixture that is greater than 10% (both ancestry contributions range from 10% ~90%) is needed for MALD to be feasible.[22] As we estimated in this study, both parental populations contributed more than 40% to Uyghur's genomes. Finally, the extent of admixture LD will determine how many markers are needed for MALD. Recent admixture populations, such as the AfA population, have been estimated to require 2,000–3,000 markers, which is 200–500 times fewer than those that are required for whole-genome haplotype-based mapping.[18,47,61] Because the extended LD of the Uyghur population is about 10 percent of that of the AfA population, we estimated 10-fold markers; i.e., about 20,000–30,000 AIMs are needed for a whole-genome scan by MALD in the Uyghur population. This is still economically sensible compared with the current cost of whole-genome scans with 500,000 random markers.

However, all the analyses and the results we presented are based on the analysis of a single chromosome; whether the conclusions can be generalized on a genome-wide level needs to be further studied.

Web Resources   Go to: ☑

The URLs for data presented herein are as follows:

>Arlequin version 3.11 program, http://cmpg.unibe.ch/software/arlequin3/
>International HapMap Project, http://www.hapmap.org/downloads/index.html.en
>PHASE 2.1 program, http://www.stat.washington.edu/stephens/software.html
>PLINK program, http://pngu.mgh.harvard.edu/~purcell/plink/
>SNP Genetic Mapping, http://actin.ucd.ie/cgi-bin/rs2cm.cgi
>STRUCTURE 2.2 program, http://pritch.bsd.uchicago.edu/structure.html

Supplemental Data   Go to: ☑

Seven supplemental figures and seven supplemental tables are available with this paper online at http://www.ajhg.org/.

Supplemental Data   Go to: ☑

> **Document S1. Seven Figures and Seven Tables:**
>
> Click here to view.^(336K, pdf)

Acknowledgments   Go to: ☑

References   Go to: ☑

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CHAGHATAY LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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CHAGHATAY LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.

Development of Chaghatay. Languages from three different Turkic language groups were spoken in Central Asia before the Russian conquest. Chaghatay is the common designation for a language belonging to the Western Uighur, or Eastern Turkic, language group, the easternmost of the three. The other two groups were the Oghuz (including Turkman, Khorasani Azeri and Turkish, and Turkish in Turkey) and the Kipchak (Qipcaq/Qepčāq). Uighur and Kipchak have retained such archaic features as initial *t* and *k*, which became voiced *d* and *g* in the languages of the Oghuz group. (For general surveys of the distribution of the Turkish languages see Poppe, Menges, Benzing and Menges.)

Western Uighur developed in three stages: Ḵᵛārazm (Choresm) Turkish or Early Chaghatay (7th-8th/13th-14th centuries), Classical and Late Chaghatay (9th-13th/15th-19th centuries), and modern Uzbek (see central asia xiv. turkish-iranian language contact). There are variations in the labels for these stages, however (cf. Eckmann, 1966, pp. 1-10). Soviet scholars (e.g., Shcherbak) refer to both the first two stages as Old Uzbek, whereas most other Western scholars label the first stage "Ḵᵛārazm Turkish." The term Early Chaghatay, which was introduced by M. F. Köprülü (*İA* III), will be used here (linguistically, what is labeled "Ḵᵛārazm Turkish" is the direct predecessor of Classical Chaghatay, and it is better to reserve the term for Turkish spoken in Ḵᵛārazm). Comparison of certain forms and words from these three linguistic stages in Central Asia (as in Eckmann, 1957) reveals a sharply declining percentage of words inherited from Old Turkish (8th century): 67.9 percent in the time of the Qarakhanids (or Ilek Khans; 388-607/998-1211), 51.8 percent in Early Chaghatay, but only 14.3 percent in Classical Chaghatay, which may thus also be regarded as an early stage of Uzbek.

Of all the Turkic languages Chaghatay enjoyed by far the greatest prestige. Ebn Mohannā (Jamāl-al-Dīn, fl. early 8th/14th century, probably in Khorasan), for instance, characterized it as the purest of all Turkish languages (Doerfer, 1976, p. 243), and the khans of the Golden Horde (Radloff, 1870; Kurat; Bodrogligeti, 1962) and of the Crimea (Kurat), as well as the Kazan Tatars (Akhmetgaleeva; Ysnpov), wrote in Chaghatay much of the time. Even Old Ottoman literature is characterized by many attempts, not always successful, to write in Chaghatay, for instance, a decree of Mo

(Arat), the "Taḵnīs" of Fożūlī (ca. 885-963/1480-1556; Fuzûlî, pp. 462-64), and the works of many lesser authors (Sertkaya, 1970-76). Chaghatay exerted a strong

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influence on Kipchak and Oghuz, whereas grammatical forms from these two languages occurred more rarely in Chaghatay, being limited mainly to poetry, where they were adopted in order to satisfy the constraints of the ʿarūż meters (e.g., qalmïš-am, long-short-long, instead of qalmïš-man, long-long-loug).

János Eckmann has provided a general survey of the development of oriental Turkish (1957; for more detailed expositions, see Eckmann, 1959a; idem, 1959c; Shcherbak; Brockelmann). The best Chaghatay dictionary has been compiled by Moḥammad Mahdī Khan (d. 1160/1747); the most useful grammars are those by A. M. Shcherbak and Eckmann (1966).

Iranian linguistic influence on Chaghatay. As the cultural centers of the Turks shifted from the northeast to the southwest, Iranian influences increased proportionately. Inscriptions from the 2nd/8th century, when the center of the Old Turkish empire lay in Mongolia, contain only a few Iranian loanwords, particularly titles (Aalto; Rossi). With the blossoming of Uighur culture in Khocho in the 3rd/9th century an increasing number of Sogdian and early Persiau words found their way into the Uighur dialect of Old Turkish (see chinese turkestan viii). When Qarakhanid literature began to develop in southwestern Xinjiang (Kāšḡar and Balāsaḡūn) in the 5th/11th century and at the same time Islam spread through the area, Persian words, including borrowings from Arabic, became more connnon. In the 8th/14th century Ḵᵛārazm, where the Persian influence was much stronger, became a cultural center. Under the Timurids Herat (capital of Šāhroḵ, r. 807-50/1405-47), Saunarkaud (capital of Oloḡ Beg, r. 850-53/1447-49), and Shiraz (seat of the prince Eskandar Mīrzā, d. 827/1423-24) were the main literary centers in the first half of the 9th/15th century, and Herat remained so through the reign of Sultan Hosayn Bāyqarā (875-912/1470-1506). After the Timurids were succeeded in Transoxania by the Shaibanids in 906/1500 (see central asia v, vi), Bukhara, Samarkand, Ḵᵛārazm, Balk (Šaybānīḵān), and Farḡāna became the Chaghatay cultural centers. The Timurid Bābor founded the Mughal dynasty in 932/1526, after which Afghanistan and India also played an important role. With the formation of the Central Asian khanates in the 11th/17th century Chaghatay continued to be written only in Ḵīva and Ḵokand; in Bukhara the written language was generally Persian (cf. Eckmann, 1959b; idem, 1959c).

A number of Persian grammatical features were adopted in Chaghatay, for example, postpositions (e.g., tā "nntil," ṭaraf "towards"), conjunctions (e.g., ägär "if," ki general subordinating conjunction), eżāfa (jism i nātuvānïm "my weak body"), yā-ye ešārat (oq-ī ki yadïn čïqtï "the arrow which flew from the bow"), and yā-ye waḥdat (köprüg-ī gä yätär "he comes to a bridge"; see Brockelmann, pp. 159-60, 186-87, 196-97, 393-427; Kales, pp. 13-15; central asia xv). Beginning in the 9th/15th century a large number of Persian loanwords also came into use (see Table 35).

Even when Chaghatay authors deliberately set out to write in Turkish they were not able to avoid usiug Persian words. For example, when the vizier and poet ʿAlī- Šīr Navāʾī (844-906/1441-1501), encouraged by Sultan Ḥosayn Bāyqarā, wrote Moḥākamat al-loḡatayn in order to prove the superiority of Turkish over Persian (See CENTRAL ASIA iv. HISTORY UNDER THE MONGOLS AND TIMURIDS), he used a language that contained 62.6 percent Persian and Arabic words (sample: 122 of 195 words).

Throughout history Turkish words have also entered Persian (Doerfer, I, pp. 3-5, 37-44). In the 5th/11th century the primary source was Saljuq Turkish, in the 7th-

9th/13th-15th centuries Mongolian and Chaghatay, and beginning in the 10th/16th century Azerbaijani Turkish. The Chaghatay vocabulary in Persian was, however, generally limited to macaronic verses (e.g., Quraši, beg. 14th cent.: *čandān bezī ay šāh ke gūyad tork-ī/yavlaq qarï bolmïš Münmiš tegin* "live so long, o king, that a Turk may say: very old has Münmiš tegin become!" where the first part is Persian, the second Early Chaghatay; cf. Doerfer, *Elemente* I, p. 20); formulas in decrees (e.g., *sözümiz* "our word"); names of years in the duodecimal animal cycle (See [calendar](#)); and terms for hunting and animal husbandry, matters of state and administration, and warfare (e.g., in the work of the historian Mīrkʷānd, 836/903/1433-98, another protégé of Sultan Ḥosayn Bāyqarā). Persian literature from Central Asia, on the contrary, contains very few Turkish elements. For instance, Navāʾī's contemporary, the poet ʿAbd-al-Raḥmān Jāmī (817-98/1414-92), still another protégé of Sultan Ḥosayn, used no Turkish words. (For Turkish influence on the Iranian languages spoken in Central Asia, especially Tajiki Persian, see [central asia xv](#); Doerfer, *Elemente*; idem, 1967).

Mutual literary influences. The first important monuments of Early Chaghatay literature, from the 8th/14th century (Eckmann, 1964a; Köprülü, *İA* III, pp. 280-85), all exhibit strong Persian influence. Iranian influence in Central Asian Turkish literature can be traced even farther back, as can perhaps also Turkish influence in Iranian and Persian literature. Analyses of Middle Persian poetry and modern popular literature in various Iranian dialects have revealed structural similarities with Old Turkish literary patterns (Benveniste; Bertel's, pp. 53, 74-75; Boratav, pp. 112-13; Köprülü, *İA* I, pp. 637-40; idem, 1986, pp. 137-41; idem, 1934, p. 219; Mann, pp. 32, 36; Massé, *Croyances*, p. 492; Pagliaro and Bausani, pp. 132, 527-35; Rempis; Rypka, *Hist. Iran. Lit.*, pp. 49-52, 74, 92, 134, 694-97). The structure of Old Turkish poetry can be reconstructed from a comparison of the oldest Turkish literature with modern forms that have not been influenced by Persian poetry (Bang and Gabain; Birtek; Bombaci, 1969, p. 35; Boratav; Dilçin, pp. 39-58; Doerfer, 1964b, pp. 867-70; idem, forthcoming; Gandjeï, 1958b, esp. pp. 144-52; Köprülü, *İA*, pp. 645-48; idem, 1919, p. 7; Kowalski, esp. pp. 157-64; Radloff, 1870; Stebleva, 1965, pp. 29-37; idem, 1971a; idem, 1971c, pp. 86-87, 296-98; idem, 1971b, pp. 80-81; idem, 1970; idem, 1976; Tekin; Zhirmunskiĭ, 1965; idem, 1970, pp. 40-48, 50-52; Yesevî). Meter depended on the number of syllables (often seven or eight), rather than on stress or quantity; caesuras occurred naturally between identical structures of meaning. The strophe normally consisted of four verses, more rarely two. Rhyme was usually effected through identical grammatical endings, the end of each verse being stressed on the last syllable; suffixes were assonant. The most frequent rhyme schemes were *aaab* and *aaba*. Alliteration was only occasionally used, but both parallelism and repetition of words were common.

These patterns survived in the works of Aḥmad Yasawī (d. 562/1166) and his successors, who wrote in simple language (Bodrogligeti, 1974; Bombaci, 1969, pp. 113-14; Eckmann, 1964b, p. 365; Eraslan, p. 193; Gandjeï, 1958b, pp. 151-53; Köprülü, *İA* III, pp. 283, 285, 288, 311; idem, *İA* I, pp. 644-46; idem, 1919, pp. 102,119-21; Kowalski, p. 162; Yesevî). On the other hand, *ʿarūż* had been adopted by Turkish writers in its Persian form in the 5th/11th century (Köprülü, *İA* I; idem, 1919, p. 15; idem, 1986, pp. 134-35; Rypka, *Hist. Iran. Lit.*, p. 923). The oldest Turkish example of *ʿarūż* is to be found in the *Qutaḏġū Bilig* of Yūsof Ḵāṣṣ Ḥājeb (written 462/1070), a *maṯnawī* in the *motaqāreb* meter (Bombaci, 1969, p. 110; Gandjeï, 1958b, pp. 149-50; cf. Yūsof, tr. Dankoff). Contrary to previous assumptions (Köprülü, *İA* I, pp. 644-46; Stebleva, 1971c, p. 287; idem, 1976, p. 158), Yūsof used it quite correctly (Tekin, 1967). Maḥmūd Kāšġarī (d. after 476/1094), on the other hand, used the *ʿarūż* imperfectly, relying on the number of

syllables and sometimes resorting to graphic devices (e.g., omitting letters marking long vowels) in order to simnlate a perfect ʿarūż (Stebleva, 1971c). This lack of facility in the use of the ʿarūż remained typical of Turkish literature for some tiine afterward (Bombaci, p. 53; Eckmann, 1964b, p. 134; Gandjeï, 1958b, p. 153; Köprülü, İA III, p. 249; idem, İA I, pp. 645-46; Rustamov, p. 129; Stebleva, 1971c, p. 287; 1976, p. 158; see also Doerfer, forthconring, b).

The question of the origin of the robāʿī (quatrain), which was popular in both Iranian and Turkish literatures, is controversial. E. E. Bertel's (p. 88), Tadeusz Kowalski (pp. 161-63), and L. Z. Rustamov (pp. 77-81) suggested that in Iranian literature it was borrowed from Turkish folk literature. On the other hand, Alessio Bombaci (p. 54), Köprülü (İA I, p. 646; 1919, p. 15), and I. V. Stebleva (1970, pp. 137-38) have argued that in Turkish literature it was a borrowing from Iranian. Paul Horn (apud Kowalski, p. 37), Gerhard Doerfer (1964a, pp. 839-40), and V. M. Zhirmunskiĭ (1970, p. 39) have taken the view that the Iranian and Turkish forms developed independently. Finally, Köprülü (1934, pp. 115-22) argued formerly that the similarities resulted from mutual influence in ancient times. The four-line strophe has a long luistory in Turkish literature (Köprülü, 1919, p. 7; 1986, pp. 137-41; 1934, p. 113; Stebleva, 1970, p. 147), the earliest known examples being from Turkish songs partially quoted by the poets Abu'l-Najm Aḥmad b. Qūs Manūčehrī (d. 432/1041), Badr-al-Dīn Qawwāmī Razī (d. ca. 560/1165), and Jamāl Qurašī (fl. 7th/13th century), and a robāʿī composed by Fakr-al-Dīn Mobārakšāh in 602/1206 (Köprülü, 1934, pp. 28-32, 113-22). In Persian literature, ou the other hand, it took a highly original form (Bertel's, p. 88).

During the period 710-70 (1310-1369 a series of poetic, juridical, linguistic, and religious works, including translations of the Koran, were written in Chaghatay. Most were based to soue degree on older works, for instance, Qoṭb's Kosrow o Šīrīn (written ca. 742/1341; ed. Hacieminoğlu; idem, ed. Zajączkowski), composed after Neżāmī's work nnder the rule of the Golden Horde, and an anonymous translation of Taḏkerat al-awliā' by Farīd-al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (Eckmann, 1964a; Köprülü, in İA III, pp. 280-85). In the first half of the 9th/15th century there were also several less distinguished writers like ʿAṭā'ī, Sakkākī, and Loṭfi (Rustamov; cf. Eckmann, 1964b, pp. 306-26; Köprülü, in İA III, pp. 290-94). The apogee of Chaghatay literature was reached during the reigu of the Timurid sultan Ḥosayn Bāyqarā, in the work of Mīr ʿAlī-Šīr Navāʾī, whose style remained a model for the ensuing period (Bombaci, 1969, pp. 130-83, esp. 145-63; Eckmann, 1964b, pp. 329-57; Köprülü, 1934, pp. 257-66; idem, in İA III, pp. 289-302; Navāʾī, ed. Alpay; idem, ed. Devereux; idem, ed. Dmitrieva; Levend). Persian influence was also strong at that time. Particularly admired were the poets Ferdowsī (d. 411/1020), Neżāmī Ganjavī (d. 599/1203), Saʿdī (691/1292), Ḥāfeẓ (d. ca. 792/1390), Amīr(-e) Kosrow Dehlavī (q.v.; d. 725/1325), Salmān Sāvajī (d. 778/1376), and Jāmī. Bilingualism must have been widespread among Islamic peoples in Central Asia (Pagliaro and Bausani, p. 752), for many Turkish-speaking Chaghatay poets composed works in Persian (Bombaci, 1964, p. xxvii; Eckmann, 1964a; idem, 1964b; Köprülü, 1919, pp. 113-22; Rypka, *Hist. Iran. Lit.*, p. 500; Togan, p. 231). In Persia itself there was a nucleus of Chaghatay writers in Shiraz, and Chaghatay was also written in Qazvīn and Isfahan (Eckmann, 1964a, pp. 295-96; idem, 1964b, p. 326; Gandjeï, 1971a; idem, 1971b; Köprülü, in İA III, pp. 278, 305). In India Bābor wrote in Chaghatay (Köprülü, in İA III, pp. 314-316).

Trauslation of Persian works into Chaghatay was common, for instance, Navāʾī's translation of works by Jāmī (Eckmann, 1964a, pp. 293-96; idem, 1964b, pp. 309, 366-69; Köprülü, in İA II, pp. 296, 301, 321), while, in comparison, translations of

Chaghatay works into Persian were rare. The earliest are of relatively late date, from the reign of Tīmūr (771-804/1370-1405); among later translations note, for instance, that by Faḵrī Herātī and Ḥakīm Šāh Moḥammad Qazvīnī's of Navā'ī's *Majāles al-nafā'es* in the 10th/16th century (Eckmann, 1964b, pp. 355, 370, 374-75; Gandjeï, 1969; Köprülñ, in *İA* III, pp. 279, 316; Rustamov, pp. 85, 131-32; Rypka, *Hist. Iran. Lit.*, pp. 634-39); some earlier Persian authors did, however, effect Turkish terms (Gandjeï, 1958b; Minorsky; Pagliaro and Bausani, pp. 480-81).

Turkish poets of the 9th/15th century used meters based on '*arūż*, especially in the important *tuyuḡ* (quatrain), for which the meter *ramal-e mosaddas-e maqṣūr* (long short long long/long short long long/long short long) and the rhyme scheme *aaba* (as in the *robā'ī*) were used; an important example is Navā'ī's *Mīzān al-awzān* (Eckmann, 1964b; Köprülü, in *İA* III, p. 292; idem, in *İA* I, pp. 647-49; Köprülü, 1919, pp. 204-56; Navā'ī, ed. Devereux, pp. 14-15; Pagliaro and Bausani, p. 534; Rustamov, pp. 75-81; Stebleva, 1970).

Under the Shaibanids (832-1007/1429-1598) Chaghatay became the predominant literary language of Transoxauia and was used by some of the great khans themselves (Šībānī Khan and 'Obayd-Allāh Khan [see central asia vi] both left *dīvāns*; cf. Eckmann, 1964b, p. 361; Köprülü, in *İA* III, p. 318), except in the khanate of Bukhara, where it gradually disappeared (Eckmann, 1964b, p. 387). The Chaghatay literature of the 11th-14th/17th-20th centuries seems largely epigonic; so far, however, little research has been done on this literature (cf. Eckmann, 1964b, pp. 377-402; Ḵāleṣ).

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(Gerhard Doerfer)

China Targets Uyghurs with Severe Human Rights Abuses

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Abstract

The Uyghur people are a Turkic ethnic group whose homeland of East Turkestan is located in northwestern China. In order to maintain and strengthen its control in the region, China's government targets Uyghurs with severe human rights abuses, as this paper will attempt to explain. Accurate reporting from the Uyghur homeland is hard to come by. China routinely imprisons Uyghur journalists and limits access to foreign journalists reporting from the region. As a result, regional developments are poorly documented, especially in cases of violence and those in which Uyghurs who speak out against Chinese government policies are imprisoned.

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Introduction

Restrictions on Uyghur Journalism

In August 2015, the Washington, DC-based Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) wrote about Mehbube Ablesh, a Uyghur journalist who was detained in China in 2008. Her only crime had been to question Chinese policies around Mandarin-only education and China's heavy-handed security measures surrounding the Olympics.[1] Her three-year sentence had long passed and no one knew of her whereabouts since her detention, though the San Francisco-based group Dui Hua had discovered in 2010 that her sentence should have expired in 2011.[2] Four years later, there was still no confirmation that she had been released.

Ablesh's detention and the uncertainty surrounding her release were a familiar story to UHRP. UHRP issued a statement relating Ablesh's detention to a broader crackdown on Uyghur journalists. "Other Uyghur journalists have faced long prison sentences for merely keeping people informed. When a country locks up its reporters and writers, it is a clear indicator that it is not interested in governing with accountability and transparency," wrote UHRP Director, Alim Seytoff in August 2015.[3]

What unfolded following UHRP's inquiry provided no clear answers about Ablesh's release. Radio Free Asia's (RFA) Uyghur service, which had originally covered the 2008 arrest, reported on UHRP's inquiry about the journalist. RFA then received an email with an accompanying phone number saying Ablesh was safe. When they called, the response was inconclusive, according to a report by the RFA Uyghur service.[4] In the end, no one knows for sure if Ablesh is safe. If she is, she may be wary of speaking to journalists, lest she wind up back in a prison cell.

Uyghur journalists in China are routinely targeted. China is the world's leading jailer of journalists, and fourteen out of 49 of journalists imprisoned there are Uyghurs, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.[5] Many of them were online journalists rounded up after unrest in the regional capital, Urumchi in 2009. RFA itself has borne a great cost to provide critical reporting. Three brothers of one Uyghur service reporter, Shohret Hoshur, have been arrested in reprisal for his journalism and one remains in prison today.[6] Targeting family members is a common tactic China employs against Uyghurs in China and overseas.[7]

The result of China's tight control over information about Uyghurs often results in vague and inconclusive reporting on major occurrences, as in the case of Mehbube Ablesh's uncertain release. An example from the summer of 2014 illustrates this point:

On July 29, 2014, Chinese state media reported that 24 hours earlier, knife-wielding Uyghur "terrorists" had killed or injured dozens of bystanders before being shot by police in Yarkent County. Sources on the ground said that rather than terrorists targeting police, protesters had assembled to speak out against restrictions of Ramadan celebrations and security forces shot the demonstrators, the Uyghur American Association reported that day.[8]

Overseas observers struggled to understand what occurred. "*None of these accounts can be independently confirmed and it is not clear why official media took so long to report the violence,*" the BBC wrote on July 30.[9] The next day, the New York Times wrote: "*Discovering the truth about the growing unrest in Xinjiang is challenging. Government restrictions make independent reporting difficult, and Uyghurs who provide foreign journalists with information about such politically charged matters can face severe punishment.*"[10]

Events that transpired followed a pattern that has emerged since the 2009 Urumchi unrest of China's state limiting access to information. Immediately, authorities shut down the Internet and cell phone service in the region. By Sunday, August 3, state media reported a new story —a total of 96 were dead, including 35 ethnic Han and 59 alleged "terrorists" shot dead by police.[11] Days later, a Uyghur man was arrested for spreading rumours after posting online reports that thousands were actually killed in the event.[12]Washington, DC-based Uyghur democracy

leader Rebiya Kadeer reported that various sources had told her at least 2,000 were killed in the riots.[13] Human rights activists overseas called for a transparent investigation into the incident.

But no investigation occurred. In September 2014, Mark Stone wrote for UK's Sky News that, "In the month that has passed, a number of journalists have tried to get access to the township. All have been stopped at military roadblocks and turned around." [14] Though he was able to visit Yarkent, answers were elusive. He wrote, "The mobile Internet network was still out in the region. Locals told us that it had been down since the incident. None though would elaborate on the incident itself. Everywhere we went we sensed a huge degree of intimidation. The Chinese authorities are known to lock up any Uyghurs seen talking to foreigners. Unconfirmed reports claim hundreds of Uyghurs have been detained for a variety of crimes in recent months." His report concluded, "*And so we failed to find out the truth about the massacre. Chinese government intimidation worked.*"

Since Mark Stone's visit to Yarkent in September 2014, no other foreign reporters have ventured to the region, or have come any closer to verifying the death toll in the incident. In August 2015, Radio Free Asia reported that farmers in Yarkent have struggled economically because of new restrictions imposed by authorities in the past year.[15]Mass jailing has left land unfarmed and families impoverished and local residents are forbidden to travel outside their area to look for work. The news from Yarkent is bleak and questions from the July 2014 incident remain unanswered.

In 2015, the pattern played out once again. This time, Radio Free Asia broke a story about an attack on a mine in September 2015 that left 40 casualties –a story that went unreported in the Chinese news.[16] Two months later, China finally released information about the September incident in the wake of terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015, announcing that Chinese police killed seventeen alleged "terrorist" suspects, including several women and children, in relation to the attack.[17] When French reporter, Ursula Gauthier, questioned whether repressive Chinese policies rather than international terrorism triggered the attack, she herself was targeted by a smear campaign in Chinese state media and at the end of 2015 her journalist visa was revoked.[18]

Since the start of the Xi Jinping presidency in 2013, East Turkestan has witnessed more violence than ever in recent memory, but there is no free press to report on the incidents or the heavy-handed measures that China employs against Uyghurs. Silencing journalism by and about Uyghurs achieves the Chinese government's goal of preventing both the outside world from understanding the Uyghurs' situation and the Uyghur people from discussing systematic abuses of their own legal rights. Although the constitution of China and regional autonomy laws guarantee many freedoms to Uyghurs, including the rights to speak their own language, practice their religion, and exercise free speech, these are frequently subverted by state policy and practice.

Bilingual Education – Eliminating Uyghur Language in Schools

Uyghur language rights are under attack from the Chinese state in the education system. Bilingual education, the sensitive issue that landed Uyghur journalist Mehbube Ablesh in prison, refers to an education model in which Uyghur instruction is limited to Uyghur literature classes, and all other subjects are taught in Chinese. The model has been implemented all the way down to the preschool level in East Turkestan. In spite of assurances in both the Constitution and Law on Regional Autonomy, Uyghurs are denied the right in the state system to educate their children in their mother tongue.

Underscoring the threat to the Uyghur language represented by the shift in the education system are statements from state officials that portray Uyghur as "incompatible with modernity," as UHRP documents in a recent report.[19] The report notes the non-participatory nature through which Uyghur language has been phased out of the education system. It states: "In a further comparison with broader development policy, Uyghur participation in devising 'bilingual education' was absent.

Implementation of bilingual education has followed a pattern of discrimination and Uyghur teachers have suffered as well as students. The vast majority of Han Chinese teachers in the bilingual education system can only speak Mandarin, not Uyghur. For Uyghur teachers, on the other hand, fluency in both Uyghur and Mandarin is required, and Uyghur teachers whose Mandarin is insufficient face unemployment, a trend paralleled in other industries and clearly documented in the education sector. RFA reported that at least 1,000 primary school teachers lost their jobs from 2010-2011 alone because of unsatisfactory command of Mandarin.[20]

As part of a larger campaign of population transfer to relocate ethnic Han Chinese from inner China to East Turkestan, the state has attracted Mandarin teachers by offering incentives to relocate teachers to the region. Evidence provided by Uyghurs living overseas calls into question the qualifications of some recently relocated Han teachers, though this issue has not been systematically studied. According to one interview with a former teacher from an elementary school in Kashgar's Yengisheher County, among dozens of supposed university graduates in her program were graduates of less competitive 4-year technical schools 2-year technical schools, and others with fake diplomas, all of whom were attracted by government packages. She added that due to segregated housing, none of the Han teachers had any opportunity to learn Uyghur. [21]

Researcher Guljennet Anaytulla wrote a paper in 2007 about the challenges in implementing the bilingual preschool program in Kashgar. [22] "*Although all of them* [*the Uyghur teachers*] *had undergone training in Han* [*Chinese language*], *most of them expressed themselves poorly in Han, had not mastered the basic tonal variations and used inaccurate pronunciations… For these and other reasons, the teachers experienced great mental pressure, and even the best of them were unable to give full rein to their abilities.*" As for the students, "*Most children in the younger, intermediate and older classes learned by rote and did not know the meanings of the songs they memorised.*" In another class, students had to read textbooks because they were unable to understand the poor Mandarin of their teachers –including both the Uyghurs and even some Han with thick regional accents.

Nor is Mehbube Ablesh the first Uyghur person to face prison time for defending Uyghurs' right to be educated in their own language. Though he did not criticise bilingual education, linguist Abduweil Ayup was jailed in 2013 for his work to open a Uyghur language preschool in Kashgar. Educated in China and abroad, Ayup was awarded a Ford Foundation scholarship to attend the University of Kansas from 2009-2011. After returning to China, in 2012 Ayup and two business partners opened a Uyghur language kindergarten in Kashgar. Authorities shut the school in March 2013, though it reopened in January 2014. [23]

Ayup and his associates were taken in police custody on August 20, 2013. For nearly nine months, Ayup was imprisoned with no formal charges against him. In December 2013, family members told Radio Free Asia that Ayup was in poor health and his family was denied visiting him or bringing him medicine.[24] Finally, on May 17, 2014, the prosecutor's office of Urumchi issued a formal letter detailing the charges that Abduweli was accused of having collected "illegal donations." Their fundraising means included online fundraising as well as "selling honey and T-shirts emblazoned with the school's insignia," according to the New York Times.[25] He was sentenced to eighteen months in August, and released on appeal in October.

The education system has thus emerged as a primary battlefield in which Uyghurs' language rights are under fire. Even as many Uyghurs recognise the value in the job market of becoming bilingual in Mandarin, the forced removal of Uyghur language from schools as early as preschool threatens Uyghurs' employment in the education sector, degrades the quality of education for Uyghur youth and also jeopardises young Uyghurs' ability to master the Uyghur language, which is a core component of the Uyghur identity.

Religious Restrictions

Besides language, religion is another major signifier of the distinctive Uyghur identity. Uyghurs practice Islam informed by their rich religious history along the Silk Road, a route traversed by Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Nestorian Christianity and shamanism, all of which have formed an important part of the Uyghurs' religious heritage and have left their mark on contemporary religious practice, as well as strands of Sunni and Sufi Islam.[26] In the People's Republic of China, where the ruling Chinese Communist Party is officially atheist and heavily regulates practice for all religions, Uyghurs are routinely denied the right to practice their religion freely.

Chinese authorities have increasingly made normal religious practice for Uyghurs illegal. Even the basic act of entering a mosque is severely restricted. [27] Among those categories of people who are forbidden from entering a mosque include government employees, which in the Chinese system includes teachers as well as those employed in the massive state run sector. In addition, Communist Party members are not allowed to practice, in line with the Party's official policy of atheism. Finally, and most alarmingly, no person under the age of eighteen is permitted to worship in the mosque.[28] Nowhere else in China does this draconian measure exist. The extent of restriction on young people to worship is a major threat to transmission of Uyghur religion, as well as culture, to the next generation.

To further prevent religious education of children, it is a crime in China for anyone to provide non-state sanctioned religious education. The crime is harshly punished. An example is Merdan Seyitakhun from the city of Ghulja, who was imprisoned in 2008 for providing religious education to Uyghur children and sentenced to life for "acts of separatism." From March to June 2008 alone, authorities detained eleven other Uyghur men from Ghulja and Nelka Counties for teaching Islam. Merdan's father told Radio Free Asia reporters: "The government accused them of teaching religion, engaging in illegal religious activities, of 'splitting the country'… They were teaching morality and religion to youths who had been on the street and teaching them to do good deeds."[29]

Human Rights Watch, in a 2005 report on religious restrictions for Uyghurs, shed further light on the extent of the ban on religious education for children. One parent stated, "*This is a Uyghur school and we are mostly Uyghurs working here. But neither at home nor at work are you supposed to talk to the children about religion. You just talk about it and it is illegal. Even with my own son, I am not supposed to tell him about Islam. How can this be possible*?" [30] The report also included a school's reprimand of students' religious worship, which stated, "Some students who are studying in our school, namely your children, have not been concentrating fully on their studies as they have been praying and keeping the fast and becoming involved in some religious activities, thus disobeying Document No. 5 1996 of the Autonomous Region Education Commission which says that students should not participate in religious activities (praying, keeping the fast and other religious activities) and also disobeying our school rules."[31]

School officials regularly prohibit young people from fasting during Ramadan and even force them to eat at school. The New York Times reported in 2008 that information on regulations banning fasting during Ramadan for Uyghurs varied by locality.[32] Some local governments posted regulations on their websites before Ramadan requiring restaurants to stay open during daylight hours. Enforcement on fasting by young people was particularly severe: the local university in Kashgar tried to force students to eat during the day by prohibiting them from leaving campus in the evening to join their families in breaking the daily fast. Residents of Kashgar say the university locked the gates and put glass shards along the top of a campus wall, before eventually building a higher wall altogether.

In recent years, various aspects of normal Uyghur religious practice have been increasingly restricted, from marriages to funerals.[33] Certain Muslim names have been banned for Uyghurs in the city of Hotan, according to an official announcement published online by Radio Free Asia. [34] One of the largest targets has been people's physical appearance –beards for men, and head coverings for women. Following regional restrictions on beards and head coverings, the capital city of Urumchi banned headscarves beginning in January 2015. [35] This restriction in particular has been brutally enforced, with police pulling women's veils during home-to-home searches, and violently responding to objections. [36]

Authorities have eliminated another aspect of Uyghur religious worship, shrine pilgrimage and shrine festivals at shrines or mausoleums, called *mazar*. Authorities have banned all major shrine festivals, once an important part of Uyghurs' regional religious observance, according to scholar Rian Thum.[37] Part of a broader campaign restricting mobility of Uyghurs, villagers are also restricted from travel to another village to

worship. Enforcement of this provision was especially brutal in a recent incident in which police shot at villagers who were attempting to worship in a village other than their hometown.[38]

Combined with the Chinese state's policy to remove the Uyghur language from schools, these strict regulations on Uyghurs' religious practice form a campaign of assimilation targeting the very essence of Uyghur identity, which clearly violates freedoms to speak their language and practice their religion that are guaranteed in China's own domestic laws. At the same time, the state denies Uyghurs the right to speak freely about their situation. Not only are international reporters prevented from covering Uyghur stories, but Uyghurs in China are strictly prohibited from voicing their opinions, particularly in the online sphere.

Internet Freedom

Beginning in the early aughts, the Internet provided an emerging space in which Uyghurs could discuss issues affecting their community and the rapid changes taking place in East Turkestan in the Uyghur language. A number of websites in the Uyghur script were developed, connecting Uyghurs to one another and to the outside world. Most popular on the websites were their BBS forums, in which users could register to post messages to share with others. Innovative young Uyghurs developed technical skills to code the websites and build a Uyghur language space online.[39]

It all changed on July 5, 2009. In June 2009, several Uyghur workers were murdered in southeastern China, and Internet users in Urumchi arranged for a peaceful demonstration to call on officials to investigate and prosecute the killers. The demonstration was harshly suppressed by Chinese authorities, and violence erupted across the city. The repercussions were manifold. Young Uyghur men were rounded up and extrajudicial killings were common, though an accurate accounting of how many were killed, arrested or forcibly disappeared during July 5, 2009 remains unknown to this day.[40]

The online sphere created by Uyghurs prior to July 2009 was decimated in the authorities' reaction to the unrest. First, the Internet, as well as all international calling and text messaging service, was disabled region-wide. The unprecedented Internet outage lasted for 10 months, until May 2010. This had a significant impact on the regional economy, as well as personal communication.[41] The length of the outage and the size of the geographic area that were disconnected are unprecedented globally, though the strategy of cutting Internet access in a turbulent region for shorter periods of time has since become a common tactic used by the Chinese state.

All websites in the region, including every Uyghur site, were taken down. By that time, the BBS forums of the most popular three websites had amassed over 200,000 users, who contributed over 2 million posts in 145,000 threads.[42] These were all wiped clean from the Web. In what has been labelled a massive digital book burning, years of dialogue and discourse was deleted. [43] Indeed, the full-scale closure of the Uyghur web at the time was also an attempt to silence Uyghurs from acting as citizen journalists and recording disappearances, extrajudicial killings and police brutality endemic at the time.

Furthermore, nearly all talented Uyghur webmasters who ran the sites were rounded up and imprisoned. Of the 14 Uyghur journalists recorded in the CPJ imprisoned census, six of them –Memetjan Abdulla, Tursunjan Hezim, Gulmire Imin, Niyaz Kahar, Nijat Azat, Gheyrat Niyaz – were arrested for working on websites prior to July 5. [44]

One website that truly stood out prior to July 5, 2009 was run by the economist Ilham Tohti. Ilham Tohti was a noted Uyghur academic and economics professor at the Minzu University in Beijing. Tohti's site was unique in that it was not only in Uyghur, but also in Mandarin. He conceived the site as a bridge between the Uyghur and Han Chinese communities, a rare opportunity for dialogue between the groups.

Professor Tohti used his platform as a respected economist and scholar to write economic analyses on his website, all in Mandarin. His primary aim, as embodied by the site, was to strengthen the relationship between the indigenous Uyghurs and the massive number of Han immigrants, and to study the economic effects of development in the region for the indigenous Uyghur people.[45] After the 2009 Internet shutdown, Professor Tohti moved his website overseas and reopened it in 2010. Given China's efforts to educate Uyghurs in Chinese, Professor Tohti embodied the success of that policy and was a steadfast supporter of CCP rule in East Turkestan, aimed toward improving the quality of that rule for Han and Uyghurs alike.

Nevertheless, Professor Tohti was subjected to frequent harassment by the Chinese authorities. He was arrested on January 15, 2014. On September 23, 2014, he was sentenced to life imprisonment after a trial that fell far below international standards.[46]In addition, seven of Ilham Tohti's students were handed prison sentences of up to eight years in December 2014: Perhat Halmurat, Shohret Nijat, Mutellip Imin, Abduqeyyum Ablimit, Atikem Rozi, Akbar Imin and Luo Yuwei (an ethnic Yi) were all sentenced for their work as volunteers on Professor Tohti's website, Uighurbiz.[47]

Violence and Escape

China's policies aimed to assimilate the unique Uyghur identity, harsh policing of these policies, and the state's ongoing crackdown on any attempt by Uyghurs to discuss the issues affecting their community have given rise to two trends. The first are the involvement of Uyghurs in increasing numbers of violent incidents, and the second, Uyghurs fleeing the country to seek asylum or refugee status abroad.

In light of increasing reports of violence affecting Uyghurs in China, the UHRP conducted an analysis of media reports of 125 violent incidents involving Uyghurs during the period of 2013-2014. The trends evident in the reports were alarming, particularly the death count, a high of 715 in two years (this figure did not include reports of thousands killed in Yarkent in 2014). Among the dead, alleged perpetrators of the attacks were

killed at the highest rate of around four per incident, versus two civilians and one state agent. Among the known ethnicities of those killed, Uyghurs averaged four per incident versus one Han.[48]

The defining feature of the incidents was an absence of verifiable reporting, confusion on the details provided in media reports, and in many cases, a state-enforced media blackout or local Internet outage in the immediate aftermath. Only 30%, or 37 of the 125 total incidents were reported in Chinese media.[49] In addition, the Chinese strategy of silencing the media obscures details, causes, death tolls and arrests for any incident.

Facing China's multifaceted repression, many Uyghurs and their families have attempted to flee China to escape persecution. In response, China has flexed its foreign policy muscle to encourage neighboring countries to deport Uyghurs found within their borders back to China, with particular success on its western borders. China has applied pressure to neighbouring countries to the west such as Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, both of which have deported Uyghurs seeking asylum.[50] Pakistan and Nepal have also deported Uyghurs in recent years.[51]

Faced with increasing obstacles on the western borders, beginning in the aught Uyghurs began to follow routes of escape developed by Chinese from inner China through southeast Asia, with the ultimate aim to join a community living in asylum in Turkey. This route has proven no less perilous in recent years, with a number of Uyghurs sent back to China from southeast Asian countries susceptible to China's economic and diplomatic pressure. After twenty Uyghurs were deported to China from Cambodia in 2009, the New York Times wrote that Cambodia had signed 14 deals with China worth US$1 billion.[52] From 2010-2014, Malaysia,[53] Myanmar,[54] Vietnam,[55]Thailand[56] and Laos[57] all deported Uyghurs fleeing East Turkestan back to China to face persecution. One Uyghur returned to China from Vietnam in 2014 died in prison in Guangxi "under mysterious circumstances" while serving an eleven-month sentence for "illegal travel."[58]

Turkey has played a critical role in resettling refugees throughout the crisis of refugee refoulement by Central Asian and more recently Southeast Asian nations. This role was no more evident than in a recent fiasco in Thailand, which involved a group of nearly 400 Uyghurs who had fled China and were discovered in Thailand by Thai authorities in 2013. As the Uyghurs endured a prolonged wait to be cleared for refugee resettlement, at least one child died in the poor conditions of the refugee camps.[59] At last in July 2015, the Thai government recognised 159 of the Uyghurs as refugees and allowed them to resettle in Turkey. Days later, Thailand announced it would deport 109 of the Uyghurs back to China, where they faced persecution and even torture. Worse still, families were torn apart by the separate decisions, and parents split from their children.[60]

For millions of Uyghurs who remain in their homeland, heavy clouds hang over the future. China has recently proposed the Silk Road Economic Belt project, a large-scale development project to strengthen ties between China and Central Asia, South Asia, the Middle East and Europe. It promises to follow a similar trajectory to past projects –a lack of consultation with Uyghur communities, forced resettlement and destruction of traditional Uyghur urban and agricultural spaces. Massive numbers of Han Chinese will continue to move to the region for employment in sectors in which indigenous people face discrimination.

Meanwhile, the space for the traditional Uyghur culture continues to shrink, with expanding religious restrictions, increased Mandarin-only education and limitations on Uyghurs' mobility. Even online, though new websites have replaced those taken down after 2009, self-censorship prevents netizens from discussing issues affecting the Uyghur community in a substantive way and it is unlikely a new Chinese website like Ilham Tohti's Uighurbiz will emerge. Indeed, under Chinese President Xi Jinping's rule, the space for rights defenders in civil society has narrowed even for the ethnic Han, with a broad state crackdown on human rights lawyers and activists. Reporting on incidents affecting Uyghurs will remain limited and international and domestic observers alike will struggle to decipher the number of dead and arrested, let alone to investigate Chinese state claims of extremism and Uyghurs' accusations of police brutality.

In this context, the safe haven provided by countries like Turkey and the United States for Uyghurs fleeing Chinese persecution is extremely important. Uyghurs living overseas have the freedom to discuss human rights abuses in their homeland and inform the world about China's crackdown on the Uyghur people. They also play a critical role in fighting for the rights of political prisoners in China like Ilham Tohti, whose insightful commentary represents a true path to resolving unrest in the Uyghur homeland. Openness and transparency are key to confronting grave human rights abuses and ultimately achieving peace in East Turkestan.

Conclusion

Even as it silences the press, China has launched a campaign of assimilation against the Uyghur identity and particularly its transmission to young people. The Uyghur language has been phased out of schools, Uyghur teachers have been fired for failing to speak fluent Mandarin and Uyghurs who have promoted education in their mother tongue have been arrested. Religious restrictions have grown in severity, and education of Uyghur children has been a main focus of the government's campaign to control Uyghur religious practice. Religious dress, traditional practices such as fasting during Ramadan, and religious festivals have been curtailed.

The Internet is also tightly controlled, preventing Uyghurs from exercising free speech online. Although Uyghur language websites provided a space to discuss some social issues in the early aughts, after unrest in 2009 China disabled the Internet across the region for ten months, deleted Uyghur websites and imprisoned the administrators of the biggest Uygur language sites. Moderate Uyghur scholar Ilham Tohti was imprisoned in 2014 for running a Mandarin website that allowed Uyghurs to communicate with Han Chinese. After restoration of Internet access to the region, its usage has been characterised by self-censorship and strict regulation.

In the absence of independent reporting or free discussion by Uyghurs in the region, it is difficult for observers outside of China to ascertain the human rights situation of the Uyghur people in the context of a growing number of fatal incidents in the region. The Uyghur Human Rights Project analysed media reports produced by journalists both in and outside of China covering violent incidents that occurred from 2013-2014. The

analysis revealed a trend for Uyghurs to be killed at the highest rate in these incidents. Exact figures on how many Uyghurs have been killed and imprisoned by the Chinese state is unclear because of reporting limitations. Nevertheless, unless China reforms its policies, the trend of extrajudicial killing and enforced disappearance is likely to persist.

As more Uyghurs flee the country, China has exerted pressure on neighbouring countries to return them for domestic imprisonment. The testimony of Uyghurs who have successfully fled from China is a crucial means to know the situation in the Uyghur homeland, and the Uyghur diaspora represents a powerful force to defend Uyghurs' human rights. In this context, international intervention in the forms of supporting refugees and publicly protesting China's abuses of Uyghur human rights is critical.

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China's drive to settle new wave of migrants in restive Xinjiang

Residency rules in the region, the scene of violent attacks blamed on Muslim militants, are the most relaxed in the country, but relations between ethnic Han Chinese and local Uygurs remain distant and strained

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The resource-rich, far-western region is home to more than 10 million Uygurs, a Turkic minority with stronger cultural links to Central Asia than to the rest of China, dominated by the Han ethnic majority.

It sees sporadic violence the authorities blame on Islamist separatists, which has increased in intensity and spread beyond its borders in recent years.

Waves of mass migration from China's heartland have raised Xinjiang's Han population from six per cent in 1949 to 38 per cent four years ago.

Now Beijing hopes to trigger a new influx with the most liberal residency rules in China.

Fang, who is Han and in her 20s, took a three-day train ride from China's ancient capital Xian to reach her new home in Hotan. The oasis town by the Taklamakan desert is renowned for its jade and fruit, but held little charm for her.

"I hate it here," she said. "It's completely foreign, I don't think I'll be able to adjust to life here."

She and her builder husband are among the first to take advantage of new rules announced six months ago and she says they may stay despite her misgivings.

In cities across China, migration is strictly controlled, with new arrivals struggling for years to secure the all-important household registration, or hukou, entitling residents to education, healthcare, social insurance and more. Larger cities require advanced degrees, special skills or a job at a well-connected or government-owned company.

But in southern Xinjiang, the latest regulations mean a hukou is available with no educational or skill requirements at all.

Nationwide changes to the system are in the pipeline with urbanisation a key driver of the Chinese economy, but the fact that the Uygur-dominated area has been chosen for the country's most liberal rules is striking.

More than 200 people died in Xinjiang-linked incidents last year according to official media reports, including a bloody mass stabbing in Kunming in southwestern China.

"The hukou reforms are about trying to encourage Han migration to southern Xinjiang, even though it's not phrased in that way," said James Leibold, an expert on ethnic relations in China at Australia's La Trobe University.

"The idea behind that is to encourage more inter-ethnic mingling and hopefully by bringing more Han, the quality and the civilisation of southern Xinjiang will increase."

At the same time the government is trying to stem population growth among minorities.

Propaganda throughout rural Hotan encourages residents to "have fewer children and get rich quick", with a 3,000 yuan (HK$3,800) payout for those who forgo having the third child allowed to many ethnic minority couples under China's family planning rules, compared to one or two for Han.

MOST POPULAR

Security concerns and poor business opportunities would put off many potential migrants, Leibold said.

But that did not stop construction worker Du Yun, from the southwestern province of Sichuan, who arrived in November.

"I prefer the air in Sichuan, we don't have sandstorms, but the social benefits are better in cities," he said.

Areas of Xinjiang have at times been part of different states, including Russia, sometimes independent, but it has largely been ruled by Beijing since the late 1800s.

After the Communists won China's civil war in 1949, it saw waves of migration from the east.

The semi-military Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps settled demobilised soldiers on work farms and today runs businesses including real estate, insurance, plastics and cement across the region, with its own universities and media.

Throughout Xinjiang, the Han and Uygur communities live almost entirely separately.

At one bazaar nearly all the patrons and merchants were Uygur, and blamed rising prices on new arrivals.

"The government has plenty of money, but any subsidies we're entitled to just get taken by officials," said Abduljan, who was buying lamb. "But we can't do anything, we have no voice, no power."

Almost none of about two dozen Han Chinese living in Hotan interviewed for this article spoke Uygur.

"Even if these policies do manage to attract Han to places like Hotan it doesn't mean they will intermingle," Leibold said.

"They'll just live in segregated communities and they'll be guarded by the People's Armed Police," he added.

"To create a truly cohesive society you need first and foremost trust, and interethnic trust is in extremely short supply."

More than 300,000 people live in Hotan, but at night it is a ghost town.

Eighteen people were killed in an assault on a police station four years ago, according to the authorities, who say all the attackers who mounted a fatal car crash in Beijing's Tiananmen Square 18 months ago were from Hotan.

Now most Han are afraid to go out after sunset and those who gather for nightly dances under a Mao Zedong statue in the main square are guarded by armed police.

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The security presence is ubiquitous and many Uygurs similarly avoid the streets during darkness, citing harassment in the form of constant identity checks and probing questioning.

"The police, the checkpoints, the guns," said a Uygur man who refused to give his name. "It's all here to make the Han feel safe."

South China Morning Post

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The Washington Post

China's war on terror becomes all-out attack on Islam in Xinjiang

By Simon Denyer
September 19, 2014

SHACHE COUNTY, China — The month of Ramadan should have been a time of fasting, charity and prayer in China's Muslim west. But here, in many of the towns and villages of southern Xinjiang, it was a time of fear, repression, and violence.

China's campaign against separatism and terrorism in its mainly Muslim west has now become an all-out war on conservative Islam, residents here say.

Throughout Ramadan, police intensified a campaign of house-to-house searches, looking for books or clothing that betray "conservative" religious belief among the region's ethnic Uighurs: women wearing veils were widely detained, and many young men arrested on the slightest pretext, residents say. Students and civil servants were forced to eat instead of fasting, and work or attend classes instead of attending Friday prayers.

The religious repression has bred resentment, and, at times, deadly protests. Reports have emerged of police firing on angry crowds in recent weeks in the towns of Elishku, and Alaqagha; since then, Chinese authorities have imposed a complete blackout on reporting from both locations, even more intense than that already in place across most of Xinjiang.

A Washington Post team was turned away at the one of several checkpoints around Elishku, as army trucks rumbled past, and was subsequently detained for several hours by informers, police and Communist Party officials for reporting from villages in the surrounding district of Shache county; the following day, the team was again detained in Alaqagha in Kuqa county, and ultimately deported from the region from the nearest airport.

Across Shache county, the Internet has been cut, and text messaging services disabled, while foreigners have been barred. But in snatched conversations, in person and on the telephone, with the few people in the region brave enough to talk, a picture of constant harassment across Xinjiang emerges.

"The police are everywhere," said one Uighur resident. Another said it was like "living in prison." Another said his identity card had been checked so many times, "the magnetic strip is not working any more."

On July 18, hundreds of people gathered outside a government building in the town of Alaqagha, angry about the arrest of two dozen girls and women who had refused to remove their headscarves, according to a report on Washington-based Radio Free Asia (RFA).

Protesters threw stones, bottles and bricks at the building; the police opened fire, killing at least two people, and wounding several more.

Then, on July 28, the last day of Ramadan, a protest in Elishku was met with an even more violent response, RFA reported. Hundreds of Uighurs attacked a police station with knives, axes and sticks; again, the police opened fire, mowing down scores of people.

China's official Xinhua news agency said police killed 59 Uighur "terrorists" in the incident, although other reports suggest the death toll could have been significantly higher.

According to the Chinese government's version, the angry crowd subsequently went on a rampage in nearby towns and villages, killing 37 civilians — mostly ethnic Han Chinese. The region has been in lockdown ever since, with police and SWAT teams arresting more than 200 people and drones scanning for suspects from the air.

Xinjiang is a land of deserts, oases and mountains, flanked by the Muslim lands of Central Asia. Its Uighur people are culturally more inclined towards Turkey than the rest of China.

China says foreign religious ideas — often propagated over the Internet— have corrupted the people of Xinjiang, promoting fundamentalist Saudi Arabian Wahhabi Islam and turning some of them towards terrorism in pursuit of separatist goals. It also blames a radical Islamist Uighur group — said to be based in Pakistan's lawless tribal areas and to have links to al-Qaeda — for a recent upsurge in violence. In March, a gruesome knife attack at a train station in the city of Kunming left 33 people dead, while in May, a bomb attack on a street market in Urumqi killed 43 others.

In response, President Xi Jinping has vowed to catch the terrorists "with nets spreading from the earth to the sky," and to chase them "like rats scurrying across the street, with everybody shouting, 'Beat them.' "

But the nets appear to be also catching many innocent people, residents complain. "You should arrest the bad guys," said one Uighur professional in Urumqi, "not just anyone who looks suspicious."

Some 200,000 Communist Party cadres have been dispatched to the countryside, ostensibly to listen to people's concerns. Yet those officials, who often shelter behind compound walls fortified with alarms and barbed wire, appear to be more interested in ever-more intrusive surveillance of Uighur life, locals say.

In Shache, known in Uighur as Yarkand, an official document boasts of spending more than $2 million to establish a network of informers and surveillance cameras. House-to-house inspections, it says, will identify separatists, terrorists and religious extremists – including women who cover their faces with veils or burqas, and young men with long beards.

In the city of Kashgar, checkpoints enforce what the authorities call "Project Beauty" — beauty, in this case, being an exposed face. A large billboard close to the main mosque carries pictures of women wearing headscarves that pass muster, and those — covering the face or even just the neck — which are banned.

Anyone caught breaking the rules faces the daunting prospect of "regular and irregular inspections," "educational lectures" and having party cadres assigned as "buddies" to prevent backsliding, the billboard announced. In the city of Karamay, women wearing veils and men with long beards have been banned from public buses.

Terrorism — in the sense of attacks on civilians — is a new phenomenon in Xinjiang, but the unrest here has a much longer history, with many Uighurs chafing under Chinese repression since the Communist Party takeover of the country in 1949, and resentful of the subsequent flood of immigrants from China's majority Han community into the region.

What has changed is the growth in conservative Islam, and the increasing desperation of Uighurs determined to resist Chinese rule.

Until a decade or two ago, Xinjiang's Uighurs wore their religion lightly, known more for their singing, dancing and drinking than their observation of the pieties of their faith. But in the past two decades a stricter form of the religion has slowly gained a foothold, as China opened up to the outside world.

While worship was allowed at officially sanctioned — and closely supervised — mosques, a network of underground mosques sprang up. Village elders returning from the Hajj, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, brought back more conservative ideas; high levels of unemployment among Uighur youth, and widespread discrimination against them, left many searching for new ideas and new directions in life. The rise of Islam was, in part, a reaction against social inequality and modernity.

But Joanne Smith Finley of Britain's Newcastle University, an expert on Uighur identities and Islam, says religion has become a "symbolic form of resistance" to Chinese rule in a region where other resistance is impossible.

When hopes for independence were cruelly dashed by mass executions and arrests in the city of Ghulja — or Yining in Chinese — in 1997, Uighurs had nowhere else to turn, she said.

"People lost faith in the dream of independence," she said, "and started looking to Islam instead."

Not every Uighur in Xinjiang is happy with the rising tide of conservatism: one academic lamented the dramatic decline in Uighur establishments serving alcohol in the city of Hotan, while insisting that many young girls wear veils only out of compulsion.

But China's clumsy attempts to "liberate" Uighurs from the oppression of conservative Islam are only driving more people into the hands of the fundamentalists, experts say.

"If the government continues to exaggerate extremism in this way, and take inappropriate measures to fix it, it will only force people towards extremism" a prominent Uighur scholar, Ilham Tohti, wrote, before being jailed in January on a charge of inciting separatism.

Xu Yangjingjing contributed to this report.

China-Turkey relationship strained over Uighurs

By Selin Girit
BBC News, Istanbul

9 July 2015

REUTERS

Burnt Chinese flags, attacks on Chinese restaurants, alleged attacks on tourists who were mistaken for being Chinese and protests across the country.

For the last 10 days anti-Chinese sentiment has been on the rise in Turkey.

Turkish Muslims and Uighurs from the far western region of China share ethnicity and have close cultural and religious ties.

The protests started following reports that Uighurs in China had been banned from fasting during the holy month of Ramadan.

Muslims worldwide observe Ramadan, when the faithful abstain from eating and drinking during daylight hours.

"Our people have been saddened over the news that Uighur Turks have been banned from fasting or carrying out other religious duties in the Xinjiang region," Turkey's foreign ministry said in a statement last week.

In response, **China said it fully respects the freedom of Muslim religious beliefs** and the accusations that religious rites had been banned in Xinjiang this Ramadan were "completely at odds with the facts" and exaggerated by the western media.

It said: "No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in religion or no religion. They may not discriminate against religious citizens and non-religious citizens."

Cihan Yavuz's Chinese restaurant, Happy China, was attacked by an angry mob in Istanbul last week.

"People are scared to come here, scared of another attack," he said.

"If people want to protest the Chinese government, they can hold demonstrations in front of its embassy. It's not right to use violence for the sake of protesting," he said.

There were further reports of disturbances in Istanbul on Saturday as the Grey Wolves - the youth wing of the far right nationalist party MHP - held a march.

Chinese tourist guide Miray Hamit said four or five men with knives attacked a tourist in her group.

"They asked us where we were from and when we said we were Chinese they started hitting one of us.

"A Turkish tourist guide and I intervened to stop the attack. We all got scared. One of us got injured, though nothing serious thankfully. I got hit too," she said.

Miray Hamit thought the attackers were not necessarily affiliated with the Grey Wolves rally and could have just been passing.

'We trust Turkey'

Turkish media though reported a group of Korean tourists believed to be Chinese were attacked during the Grey Wolves' protests, an allegation they deny.

The head of Grey Wolves in Istanbul, Ahmet Yigit Yildirim, alleged the scuffles that took place were actually between the police and protesters and no harm was done to any tourists. He said no complaint was made against them.

"The safety of every tourist coming to our country is our responsibility. We can't tolerate any sort of violence," he said.

Police sources were unable to speak to the BBC. However, the Korean consulate in Istanbul said they had not received any complaints or reports of any attacks against Korean citizens in the city.

In the Turkish media the leader of MHP, Devlet Bahceli, hinted at the possibility that a Korean may have been confused with a Chinese.

But Chinese tourists do not seem deterred by the rising anti-China sentiment in Turkey.

"We are aware of what's going on. But we didn't encounter any problems. We trust Turkey. Turkish people have been very friendly to us," tourist Lucky Zhang said.

This week, the Chinese government issued travel advice to its citizens travelling to Turkey and warned them against getting too close to protests or filming them.

Who are the Uighurs?

- Uighurs are ethnically Turkic Muslims

- They make up about 45% of the Xinjiang region's population; 40% are Han Chinese

- China re-established control in 1949 after crushing short-lived state of East Turkestan

- Since then, there has been large-scale immigration of Han Chinese and Uighurs fear erosion of their culture

- Xinjiang is officially designated an autonomous region within China, like Tibet to its south

Xinjiang profile

Why is there tension between China and the Uighurs?

Q&A: East Turkestan Islamic Movement

The colourful propaganda of Xinjiang

'Why do you have a beard?'

Turkey is one of the most popular destinations for Uighurs fleeing China.

In 2009, then Deputy Prime Minister Bulent Arinc said there were more than 300,000 Uighurs living in Turkey.

Mehmet Soylemez, a Turkish academic living in China since 2006 said the exodus increased especially in the last two years.

"Uighurs do not lead a comfortable life in China because of restrictions on religious rituals or social inequality.

"Those who feel pressurised or those who have been in and out of prison prefer to leave the country," he said.

A Uighur who moved to Turkey in December 2014 and wished to remain anonymous fearing reprisal from the Chinese authorities, said he experienced "atrocities" first hand.

"Last year, on a holy night in Ramadan almost 50 members of our family gathered to have a meal.

"My daughter came and told me that we were surrounded by soldiers. They detained us, questioned us till early morning. They asked for $1,000 (£650; 905 euros) each to set us free.

"When you sit at your house with four to five friends, when you pray, they break the door and start questioning you.

"'Why do you have a beard? Why are you reciting from the Koran? Why are the women covered?'" they ask.

"Then they put you in prison. They even detained my 10-year-old son with his four friends."

He said he passed through Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Malaysia to reach Turkey.

Now he, his wife and four children live in a flat in Istanbul, with five other families.

The Chinese government has been trying to control religious expression in Xinjiang by imposing rules on the Uighur community.

Critics say it is exacerbating the situation.

Some controls witnessed in parts of Xinjiang include:

- Women forbidden from wearing veils

- Uighurs are also not allowed to buy knives in some parts

- Praying is strictly regulated. People under 18 are not allowed in mosques

- Couples have to apply to the government for a marriage certificate and may not be married in secret by an imam

- Only older Uighur men are allowed to have beards

The colourful propaganda of Xinjiang

'Miss my country'

Ramadan is a sensitive time in Xinjiang following a rise in attacks blamed by Beijing on Islamist militants over the past two years. Hundreds have died in the violence.

Chinese authorities deny pressurising the Muslim minority in the country.

But the Uighur man said he did not intend to go back.

"I miss my country. It's where I was born, where I grew up.

"But I'm happy in Turkey. I'm free. I can dress however I like. I can conduct my religious rituals. If I ever go back, they will put me in prison immediately," he said.

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THE EPOCH TIMES

Professor Takada Jun condemns large-scale surface nuclear tests in China as Devil's conduct. Without considering the hazardous impact on the surrounding area, China is the only country in the world that is carrying out these kinds of nuclear tests. (Zhang Benzhen/The Epoch Times)

Chinese Nuclear Tests Allegedly Caused 750,000 Deaths

BY EPOCH TIMES STAFF

March 31, 2009   Updated: October 1, 2015

Professor Takada Jun condemns large-scale surface nuclear tests in China as Devil's conduct. Without considering the hazardous impact on the surrounding area, China is the only country in the world that is carrying out these kinds of nuclear tests. (Zhang Benzhen/The Epoch Times)

On March 18, Japanese professor Takada Jun revealed at a nuclear forum that the Chinese regime carried out 46 surface nuclear tests from 1964 to 1996, causing 750,000 civilian deaths in surrounding areas.

At the "Chinese Nuclear Test Disasters on the Silk Road and the Japanese Role" symposium, sponsored by the Japanese Uyghur Association, Dr. Takada Jun, a professor at the Sapporo Medical University and a representative of the Japanese Radiation Protection Information Center, revealed the disastrous problems of China's nuclear tests. Dr. Takada said that the Chinese regime has never allowed any form of independent or outside environmental evaluation, analysis, or study of adverse affects on human health possibly cause by the tests.

Dr. Takada said that the 46 nuclear tests were carried out at the Lop Nur site in northwestern XinJiang Province, home of the Uyghur people. The tests had a cumulative yield of over 200 megatons. Though the area of the tests is sparsely populated, many cities on the ancient Silk Road trade route are downwind from Lop Nor and have been exposed to much nuclear fallout from the variety of tests conducted. Prior to 1981, the fallout from surface tests was a major contributor to an increase in the incidences of cancer and birth defects.

The professor also said that the largest surface detonation was a 4 megaton thermonuclear bomb, which was 10 times more powerful than the former Soviet Union's large-scale tests. The fallout from the test allegedly caused an estimated 190,000 deaths and 1,290,000 suffered from radiation poisoning within an area 136 times the size of Tokyo. According to an inside source, 750,000 people allegedly died as a result.

Chinese nuclear tests began on Oct. 16, 1964, with the above ground detonation of a 20,000-ton bomb, followed by a two-megaton surface explosions in 1967. The largest was a four-megaton explosion on Nov. 17, 1976. China changed to doing atmospheric tests in 1980 and underground tests from 1982 to 1996.

Takada said China is the only country in the world that carries out these large-scale surface tests in living areas.

The Director of the Japanese Uyghur Association criticized the tests. "The former Soviet Union would carry out nuclear tests in an enclosed barb-wired area, but the Chinese regime didn't even inform the local residents," he said. "The victims included not only the Uyghur people, but also Han Chinese. The authorities disregarded any semblance of humanity and treated the people living there as lab rats." He urged Japan, the first victim of nuclear weapons, to share the information with the rest of the world and help the victims.

In July and August of 1998, the British Channel 4 broadcasted a special documentary, "Death On the Silk Road." A team of doctors and filmmakers posed as tourists in order to assess the possible effects from the nuclear tests in China. From the interviews conducted in local villages, they found a large number of infants with cleft lips or mental retardation. Among the Uyghur people, many were suffering from malignant lymphoid leukemia

Among the Uyghur people, many were suffering from malignant lymphoid leukemia. Incidences of cancer in Uyghur began rising in 1970 and by 1990, it was more than 30% higher than the national average. The cancer incidence in the capital city Urumqi doubled that of other areas during 1993 to 2000.

Based on data he collected in Kazakhstan near the Chinese border and his research on affects of nuclear fallout, Professor Takada also evaluated the impact in the area and published his findings in a book. He won an award for his contributions.

The experience of Professor Tamio Kaneko, a historian who visited the Xinjiang area, also supports the story. An expert in Asian history, Tamio filled his house with ancient relics from central Asia. But he didn't dare to bring back pebble samples in Lop Nur because they have hundreds or thousands of times more radiation than regular samples.

Kaneka recalled that while he was at the research site, his eyes watered profusely and bleed slightly. He also suffered from a sore throat and frequent nose bleeds. His tears won't stop in the Spring because of the pollen, a residual effect of the radiation.

Takada expressed his concern and anger over highly promoted tourism on the Great Silk Road. Tourist sites are actually in the radiation area, making travel highly risky to innocent people, especially those who visited before 1996.

Mr. Dili Anwar, a Uyghur exile living in England, said, "China conducts nuclear tests not only for itself, but also provides the testing site to Pakistan. We all know that Pakistan conducted a nuclear test one week after India's test. In fact, Pakistan had already tested twice in China before that."

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Crackdown and Consent: China's War on Terror and the Strategic Creation of a Public Discourse in the U.S.

Kehaulani R. Jai
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Crackdown and Consent: China's War on Terror

and the Strategic Creation of a Public Discourse in the U.S.

By

Kehaulani Jai

Submitted to Scripps College in Partial Fulfillment

of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts

Professor Thomas Kim

Professor Claire Li

12.14.15

Jai

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Jai

Abstract

Scholars have extensively detailed China's conflation of the Uyghur issue in Xinjiang with the international war on terror following September 11, 2001. Less studied is how the U.S. responded to China's framing of the Uyghur as terrorists, and of the Chinese government's characterization of Xinjiang as a region fraught with violence and extremism. On the whole, scholars who have addressed this latter issue conclude that China successfully coopted the U.S., and consequently cracked down on Xinjiang without substantial international outrage. On the basis of a review of official U.S. documents before and after 9/11, I argue that the U.S. response to China's framing of the Uyghur is not as clear-cut, and that multiple and conflicting U.S. responses emerged to the Uyghur-terrorist discourse. Specifically, the U.S. shifted from purely framing the Uyghur as victims of human rights abuses to projecting three new frames onto the Uyghur: victims of the war on terror; a minority group that may resort to violent methods of protest; and suspected terrorists. This new interpretation holds important ramifications for how scholars should understand China's treatment of the Uyghur, as well as for Sino-U.S. relations.

Keywords

Introduction

On July 5th, 2009, a riot[1] in China directed the attention of the international community towards

a previously obscure area and people group: the Uyghur.[2] The riot, which was originally a

peaceful protest, took place in Ürümqi, the capital of Xinjiang, and left more than 1,700 injured

and 197 dead, involving thousands of rioters—most of whom were ethnic Uyghur—in a country

notorious for harsh repression and no civil right to protest.[3] Indeed, such a public demonstration

of similar size had not been seen in Communist China since protesters advocated for democracy

at Tiananmen in 1989.

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[1] Though the 2009 Ürümqi incident began as a peaceful protest, this event is referred to here as a riot because the demonstration escalated into a violent conflict between the Han, Uyghur, and Chinese police. Also, in major news sources like *Xinhua* and *The New York Times,* this event is referred to as a riot. Edward Wong, "Riots in Western China Amid Ethnic Tension," *New York Times,* July 5, 2009, accessed December 12, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/06/world/asia/06china.html.

[2] Although this ethnic group is referred to as both the Uyghur and the Uighur, this paper uses the prior spelling because major Uyghur organizations like the Uyghur American Association and World Uyghur Congress refer to themselves as the Uyghur.

[3] Yufan Hao and Weihua Liu. "Xinjiang: Increasing Pain in the Heart of China's Borderland." *Journal of Contemporary China* 21.74 (2012): 205, accessed October 5, 2015, doi:10.1080/10670564.2012.635927.

Jai

Despite a series of incidents in Xinjiang stemming from years of repressive policies and growing Uyghur ethnic identity, it was not until the 2009 Ürümqi riots that the Uyghur became the public locus of China's ethnic tension. Like the Tiananmen protests, the struggle in Xinjiang brought to light domestic turmoil in China. Also, this incident similarly sparked calls for more democracy and human rights in China as well as accusations of government cruelty reminiscent of Tiananmen. However, while the Tiananmen protests called for political reform and modernization modeled on the democratic West, the Ürümqi riots primarily revolved around frustration over discrimination, ethnic tension, and lack of religious freedom. Furthermore, Tiananmen involved students and workers, and took place during China's economic emergence in Beijing—one of China's most modern cities; whereas the Ürümqi riots involved the Uyghur— a politically underrepresented and economically disadvantaged ethnic group—in the relatively undeveloped region of Xinjiang. Another key distinction that can be drawn between Tiananmen and Ürümqi is how the protesters and rioters were framed: in Tiananmen, those involved were called supporters of "bourgeois liberalism."[4] In Ürümqi, the Uyghur were framed as "separatists" "extremists," and even suspected as "terrorists."[5] This choice to connect unrest in Xinjiang with terrorism is largely due to geopolitical factors: Xinjiang has been an indispensable geopolitical and economic asset to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) since its integration into mainland China, but it now represents a serious domestic and international challenge. Yufan Hao and Weihua Liu expressed this well when they wrote that the "Xinjiang issue involves China's core

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[4] *Encyclopedia Britannica Online*, s.v. "Tiananmen Square Incident," accessed December 2, 2015, http://www.britannica.com/event/Tiananmen-Square-incident.

[5] Thomas Cliff, "The Partnership of Stability in Xinjiang: State-Society Interactions Following the July 2009 Unrest," *China Journal* 68 (2012): 80, accessed December 2, 2015, ISSN: 1234-9347.

Jai

interests and the most serious challenge Beijing faces is how to cope with ethnic tension in a

highly sensitive region bordered by politically unstable countries like Afghanistan."[6]

The significance of Xinjiang has led many scholars to analyze the various underlying

causes of the ethnic tension behind the Urumqi riots, and to examine how the Chinese

government has sought to manage this tension through education, social programs, and economic

incentives. Since 9/11, scholars have focused attention on whether and how the U.S. sponsored

"war on terror" has influenced China to associate the Uyghur Muslim population with global

terrorism. Many scholars, specialists, and officials in the U.S. argue that China's "cooperation"

in the war on terror has functioned as a thinly-veiled excuse to pursue political ends unrelated to

halting terrorism. This body of scholarship has led to special attention directed at the Uyghur in

Xinjiang, and the tracing of China's quick inclination to blame violence in Xinjiang on Muslim

Uyghur terrorists back to 9/11. Read in this light, the Uyghur uprising is the beginning of

China's effort to portray cracking down on Xinjiang as simply part of the global war on terror.

For these scholars, it is not surprising that in the immediate aftermath of the Ürümqi riots,

China's major newspaper *Xinhua* speculated that terrorism was involved and placed the Uyghur

at the top of the list of terror suspects:

> "As the casualties rise from the July 5 riot in Ürümqi . . . experts have warned that terrorism might be the
> real driving force behind the violence. Terrorism expert Rohan Gunaratna said in a telephone interview
> with *Xinhua* on Friday that the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), which China alleges instigated the riot, is
> closely associated with the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a separatist group that has been
> labeled by the U.N. Security Council as well as the Chinese and U.S. governments a terrorist
> organization."[7]

Scholars have extensively examined how official Chinese statements like this one

demonstrate the government's intent to co-opt the U.S. war on terror for its own political ends.

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[6] *Ibid.*

[7] Yan Hao, Ruibin Geng and Yuan Ye, "Xinjiang Riot Hits Regional Anti-terror Nerve," *Xinhua,* June 18, 2009.
Accessed September 28, 2015. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-07/18/content_11727782.htm.

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This paper goes further by analyzing how this leveraging also impacts the U.S. discourse

surrounding the Uyghur. In order to thoroughly explore and explain this issue, this paper does

the following: examine the various ways the scholarly community explains the CCP's treatment

of the Uyghur issue in Xinjiang; discuss China's leveraging of the war on terror to justify its

crackdown on Xinjiang; and evaluate official U.S. statements and the developing public

discourse they represent. Ultimately, this research leads to a new interpretation of how 9/11

changed the situation for the Uyghur, even thousands of miles away in the U.S. Though prior to

9/11, in U.S. official documents, the Uyghur were either unacknowledged or framed as victims

of human rights abuses, following the advent of the international war on terror and the anti-

Muslim discourse it created, the Uyghur's identity in U.S. politics became more prominent and

necessarily multifaceted: the Uyghur became no longer just human rights victims, but also

victims of the war on terror, and contradictorily, possible terrorists themselves. Overall, this new

framing reveals that in response to China's portrayal of Xinjiang as the locus of its war on terror,

U.S. framing of the Uyghur is no longer binary, but diverse and complex.

Xinjiang: a catch-22 situation 进退维谷的情况

To fully understand the situation in Xinjiang, it is important to first grasp the history and

significance of this region: The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous, abbreviated to XUAR and

written as 新疆自治区 in Chinese, is located in China's extreme northwest, and is the country's

largest province. Although most people view China as ethnically and culturally homogenous,

Xinjiang is multi-ethnic, with the Uyghur, or 维吾尔族, constituting only a slim majority of the

population (9.832 million in Xinjiang) over the Han (8.363 million), who make up the

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overwhelming majority of China's population at 91 percent.[8] This region has a tumultuous

history, and conflict between groups vying for power in Xinjiang is not a recent development.

Indeed, Xinjiang experienced multiple periods of domination by local warlords in the intervals

between the collapse of one Chinese dynasty, and the consolidation of power in the next. This

fluctuation between eras of external rule by Chinese empires and internal domination by

warlords ended in 1949 with the entrance of the People's Liberation Army into Xinjiang.

However the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region was not formally established until 1955.[9]

China's history of losing and regaining its foothold in Xinjiang is connected with the

region's politically valuable geographical location. As Figure 1 shows, China borders eight

separate countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrghizstan, Tajikistan, Russia, the Republic of Mongolia,

India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

Figure 1: Map of China and Xinjiang Border Countries

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[8] Linda T.H. Tsung and Ken Cruickshank, "Mother Tongue and Bilingual Minority Education in Xinjiang." *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 12.5 (2009): 551, accessed September 28, 2015, doi: 10.1080/13670050802153434.
[9] Hao and Liu, "Xinjiang: Increasing Pain," 206-207.
Figure 1: Wannabe Polyglot, "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region," accessed November 13, 2015, https://ibbeijinger.wordpress.com/2013/05/23/xinjiang-uyghur-autonomous-region/.

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Geopolitically, Xinjiang is of vital importance to China, which is completely landlocked along

its western borders. Furthermore, Xinjiang serves as a buffer between conflict in the Middle East

and Mainland China, although this tension historically spills over into Xinjiang, especially from

Afghanistan and Pakistan. Therefore, Xinjiang is considered virtually a cultural-political fault

line and an area of instability and confrontation between the Middle East and Asia.

Besides its geopolitical significance, Xinjiang holds economic significance for China. As

one-sixth of China's landmass, the region houses immense natural resources and potential for

economic development. In addition to being the passageway of the new Eurasian continental

bridge, Xinjiang is the most important energy base in China, and contains 115 of the 147 raw

materials found in the entire country.[10] Furthermore, if Xinjiang were to become independent,

Tibet, Inner Mongolia, and other regions with strong ethnic identities, could quite possibly

follow, and China would lose more than half it's territory and critical resources—a blow which

would severely set the Chinese economy on a downward course. Nevertheless, the chance of

losing Xinjiang always existed, as ethnic tension, primarily between the Uyghur and Han

peoples, threatens to destabilize the region. This increasing tension is largely due to the

increasing Han population in Xinjiang province—a purposeful policy decision on the part of the

CCP to dilute the Uyghur population and thereby diffuse ethnic conflict.[11] However, contrary to

expectations, this strategy of ethnic dilution has had the opposite effect, as it is reported

"attitudes of racial and cultural superiority have become commonplace as the Han population in

Xinjiang grows."[12]

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[10] Hao and Liu, "Xinjiang: Increasing Pain," 211.

[11] Barry Sautman, "Paved with Good Intentions: Proposals to Curb Minority Rights and Their Consequences for China," *Modern China* 38.1(2012): 11, accessed November 14, 2015, doi: 10.1177/0097700411424563.

[12] Zang Xiaowei, "Uyghur-Han Earning Differentials in Urumchi." *The China Journal* 65 (2011): 144, accessed October 10, 2015, doi:10.2307/25790561.

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Historically, the Han and Uyghur have a long history of ethnic tension which persists today. Much of this tension comes from discrimination against the Uyghur's culture and beliefs, which distances this religious minority more than others from the generally nonreligious Han majority. Culturally, the Uyghur are viewed as barbaric and inferior, and therefore face bias in society as a whole, especially in the workplace.[13] On the other hand, many Han people believe that the Uyghur receive unjust preferential treatment due to the government's affirmative action policies—driving another wedge between these two groups.[14] Moreover, the Uyghur feel removed from both political and economic development in Xinjiang due to a lack of political participation and economic involvement.[15] Driven by a sense of unjust deprivation combined with a weak affiliation to local elite, many Uyghur have developed a strong tendency toward separatist nationalism, and therefore do not identify with China as a whole. Since the most important goal of the CCP is to "maintain stability," or 保持稳定, there is little if any distinction drawn between separatism and terrorism in China's policies toward the Uyghur.[16]

Lack of Uyghur integration into Chinese society has also led to the creation of multiple international Uyghur advocacy groups, the most prominent of which are the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), the World Uyghur Youth Congress (WUYC), and the Uyghur American Association (UAA). While these organizations are widely regarded as peaceful human rights groups outside of China, several more controversial groups also exist, including the East Turkestan Liberation Organization (ETLO) and the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM).[17]

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[13] Hao and Liu, "Xinjiang: Increasing Pain," 218.
[14] Sautman, "Paved with Good Intentions," 17.
[15] *Ibid*., 214.
[16] Elizabeth Van Wie Davis, "Uyghur Muslim Ethnic Separatism in Xinjiang, China," *Asian Affairs: An American Review* 35.1 (2008): 16-17, accessed October 15, 2015, doi: 10.3200/AAFS.35.1.15-30.
[17] Ibid., 208.

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The war on terror had significant consequences for these groups: since 9/11, China has insisted

that all are dangerous, and that some are even terrorist organizations.

However, leveraging the war on terror in its Uyghur framing accounts for only one

method employed by China to control and crackdown on this problematic region without

invoking international involvement or even excessive criticism. Scholars on the Uyghur issue

have extensively detailed how China attempts to deal with ethnic tension and separatism in the

region since there is perhaps no issue about which China is more sensitive than its control of

Xinjiang.[18]

Discrimination, religion, and politics

As previously discussed, the CCP's political legitimacy rests on its ability to maintain stability

nationwide—an ability that is threatened by ethnic tension in Xinjiang. Scholars identify several

ways in which China has sought to address this ethnic tension: through anti-discrimination laws,

preferential treatment policies, and decreasing the size of the Uyghur population through

dilution. In the scholarly community, it is widely accepted that the Uyghur in Xinjiang face

rampant discrimination in politics, the marketplace, and everyday life.[19] This discrimination

greatly contributes to ethnic tension between the Han and Uyghur, so the Chinese government

enacted anti-discrimination laws in Xinjiang in hopes of decreasing the economic and social

divide between these two groups.[20] However, these laws are not effective, as they lack sincere

enforcement.[21] Another way that the government attempts to increase stability and decrease the

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[18] Zang, Xiaowei, "Uyghur-Han Earning," 141.
[19] *Ibid*., 143.
[20] Ronald Brown, *Understanding Labor and Employment Law in China*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 83-86.
[21] Sautman,"Paved with Good Intentions," 15-16.

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Han-Uyghur divide in the region is through preferential treatment policies. Still, some scholars argue that Uyghur favoritism actually exacerbates ethnic tension, because many Han Chinese see Uyghur as undeserving of special treatment, and accuse the government of reverse discrimination.[22] Indeed, scholars Ma Rong, Wang Lixiong, and Wang Yinggou argue that the government should depoliticize ethnicity, because race-based policies potentially create barriers to integration.[23] China scholar Thomas Cliff notes: Chinese policy-makers assume there is a "positive correlation between a high Han population and socio–political stability in Xinjiang."[24] Indeed, other methods employed by the Chinese government include diluting the Uyghur ethnicity through a controversial policy of cash incentives for interracial marriage between the Uyghur and Han, and flooding the region with Han Chinese residents.[25] Nevertheless, the outnumbering of the Uyghur has in many ways strengthened the identity of this ethnic group, which, in the face of "the Han other," has grown more distinct and tightly-knit. Therefore, while there is now a higher population of Han Chinese now in Xinjiang, the 2009 Ürümqi riots show that ethnic tension still exists in Xinjiang, and China's efforts to increase stability in the region have been largely ineffective.

Uyghur ethnic identity is also made more distinct because the differing religious traditions of these two groups fuel tension and complicate Uyghur integration into Han China. Religious and cultural tension is exacerbated by the fact that the Uyghur, who are primarily Sunni Muslims, live in a society that officially guarantees "freedom of religious belief" in its constitution, but often discourages any belief system that can threaten the CCP's monopoly on

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[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] Cliff, "The Partnership," 83.
[25] Edward Wong, "To Temper Unrest in Western China, Officials Offer Money for Intermarriage," *New York Times,* September 2, 2014, accessed October 15, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/03/world/asia/to-temper-unrest-china-pushes-interethnic-marriage-between-han-and-minorities.html.

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power.[26] The CCP's seemingly insincere "religious freedom" policy not only confuses and

frustrates the Uyghur, but also acts as a barrier to political participation. For example, in 1991

the Organization Department of the CCP Central Committee issued "The Notice on Proper

Settlement of the Issue of Party Members' Religious Belief."[27] This policy disallowed members

of the Party from self-identifying as belonging to a particular religious sect, or participating in

any religious activities. However, since religion is at the heart of Uyghur ethnic identity, the

political opportunities of the Uyghur are limited by their core identity as a race founded upon a

religion. Therefore, since they are unable to exercise much influence in local government, the

Uyghur do not feel a part of the society which is dominated by largely secular Han politics.

Poverty is the root of terrorism

Scholars have also examined how China uses economic development policies to solidify its

control over Xinjiang and to diffuse ethnic tension. These scholars cite Uyghur-Han earning

differentials as a main cause of intergroup tensions and conflicts in Xinjiang, as well as a sense

of relative deprivation on the part of the Uyghur. Yufan Hao and Wenhua Liu argue that earning

differentials between the Uyghur and Han show that economic inequality is vast. Indeed many

Uyghur feel they are economically disadvantaged.[28] For example, there is an extremely high

proportion of Uyghur farmers, and a low proportion of professional technical workers with

relatively higher salaries—a disparity that is increasingly obvious to the Uyghur because of

urbanization, the Internet, and television.[29] The CCP approached this issue through the Invest in

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[26] Council on Foreign Relations, "Religion in China," accessed December 1, 2015,
http://www.cfr.org/china/religion-china/p16272.
[27] Zang, Xiaowei, "Uyghur-Han Earning," 144.
[28] Hao and Liu, "Xinjiang: Increasing Pain," 214.
[29] Zang, Xiaowei, "Uyghur-Han Earning," 143.

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the West or Open-Up the West Project, known in Chinese as 西部大开发, a policy that aims to more evenly distribute China's wealth and resources, which are primarily concentrated in the East.[30] Xinjiang is a major recipient of these policy funds. In fact, only a few years ago Premier of the PRC Li Keqiang announced that "the region's development and stability are at a critical moment" so Beijing would "invest another 7.26 billion yuan ($1.13 billion) in municipal infrastructure construction and other livelihood programs in Hotan in south Xinjiang."[31] However, the Han have been the main beneficiaries of this economic growth in Xinjiang due to discriminatory hiring practices, and what scholar Jessica Koch terms "non-engaging economic development." Basically, Koch argues that the main reason why economic growth cannot solve the Uyghur issue is that this development is "imposed" rather than "negotiated."[32] Indeed, Hao and Liu agree that although the "living standard for most Uyghurs has been improved, some still do not think they have benefited from the Reform and Open-up Policy or West Development Campaign, which they feel is just aimed at transferring the oil and gas from the Uyghur region to the Han region."[33] Therefore, campaigns for economic development in Xinjiang have had the adverse effect of worsening ethnic tension through a combination of social discrimination, economic inequality, and a sense of relative deprivation and even exploitation.

Closing the gap through education

Another prevalent area of scholarship has examined how the Chinese government uses education directives to gain a firmer hold on Xinjiang. For example, one education campaign seeks to

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[30] *Ibid.*

[31] Yuan, Yuan, "More Help, More Prosperity," *Beijing Review* 32 (2011): 1, accessed October 15, 2015, http://www.bjreview.com/Cover_Stories_Series_2011/2011-08/08/content_382091.htm.

[32] Jessica Koch, "Economic Development and Ethnic Separatism in Western China: A New Model of Peripheral Nationalism," (PhD diss., Asia Research Center at the University of Amsterdam, 2006): 6.

[33] Hao and Liu, "Xinjiang: Increasing Pain," 217.

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promote the Mandarin dialect of Chinese, or 普通话, as a way to close the gap between the Han

and Uyghur in the tense region. The reasoning behind this particular policy is that the Uyghur's

weaker command of Mandarin (their native tongue is a Turkic language known by the Han as 维

族话) is a driving force behind their inability to fully integrate into Han society, and also a

practical reason why they are less successful in the workplace. Indeed, Eric Schluessel argues

that "Uyghur identity, as understood and articulated by the secular elite, is fundamentally

linguistic,"[34] and Chien-peng Chung argues that "Many Uyghurs do not speak Mandarin

Chinese, which is usually a prerequisite for good paying jobs or government positions."[35]

Consequently, the government established Mandarin-focused "bilingual" schools throughout

Xinjiang. In theory they seek to promote Uyghur childrens' "bilingual" education, but in

practice, they force Mandarin over and above any other language, which further marginalizes the

Uyghur.[36]

Moreover, this plan to "raise the cultural quality of Xinjiang people" through education is

largely unworkable, as its implementation depends on educational resources that are simply not

available, such as a sufficient number of qualified instructors.[37] As a result, scholars note that

this language imposition actually fuels bitterness among the Uyghur, who are "resentful about

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[34] Eric T. Schluessel, "History, Identity, and Mother-tongue Education in Xinjiang," *Central Asian Survey* 28.4 (2009): 384, accessed September 25, 2015, doi: 10.1080/02634930903577144.

[35] Chung Chien-peng, "China's 'War on Terror': September 11 and Uighur Separatism," *Council on Foreign Relations,* July/August, 2002, accessed October 1, 2015, http://www.cfr.org/china/chinas-war-terror-september-11-uighur-separatism/p4765.

[36] Schluessel, "History, Identity, and Mother-Tongue," 394.

[37] *Ibid.,* 395-396.

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the marginalization of the Uyghur language and interpret the language policy as just another ploy

by the Chinese government to encroach on their cultural identity and dilute their heritage."[38]

The war on terror and diversionary strategy

More recently, scholars have moved on from examination of these ineffective methods employed

by the Chinese government to evaluation of how China leveraged the international hysteria

surrounding the 9/11 attacks in 2001 to consolidate power in Xinjiang. A major theme

dominating this scholarship is the diversionary theory of war put forth by Jaroslav Tir and

Michael Jasinski, and applied to China by more recent scholars. The diversionary theory of war

asserts that when confronted with public antagonism over domestic issues, government leaders

sometimes divert the populaces' attention from these problems, and thereby, survive

politically.[39] This method is extremely attractive to China, which, as a totalitarian regime without

free elections, greatly fears public discontent and uncontrolled nationalism. This is because these

outpourings of public feeling have historically threatened the regime's monopoly on power and

control.[40] For example, one of China's most significant challenges right now is controlling anti-

foreign nationalism (primarily against Japan and the U.S.), which, thanks to the creation of

online communities, is a rallying point for grassroots nationalists.[41] A nationalism that unites the

majority against the Uyghur minority displaces this uncontrolled, anti-foreign nationalism, and is

damaging for China's foreign relations, transferring public outrage from an external "other" to

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[38]Rosalyn Ching Mun Lim, "Religion, Ethnicity, and Economic Marginalization as Drivers of Conflict in Xinjiang," (PhD diss., Georgetown University, 2011): 77.

[39] Jaroslav Tir and Michael Jasinski, "Domestic-Level Diversionary Theory of War: Targeting Ethnic Minorities," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52.5 (2008): 641, accessed November 5, 2015, doi: 10.1177/0022002708318565.

[40] John Knight, "Economic Causes and Cures of Social Instability in China," *China & World Economy* 22.2 (2014), accessed December 12, 2015, doi: 10.1111/j.1749-124X.2014.12059.x.

[41] Shunji Cui, "Problems of Nationalism and Historical Memory in China's Relations with Japan," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 25.2 (2012): 203-210, accessed December 15, 2015, doi: 10.1111/j.1467-6443.2011.01419.x.

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an "internal one that is much easier for the Chinese government to monitor and control."[42]

Consistent with Tir and Jasinski's focus on the connection between nationalism and the use of

diversionary force, J. Snyder likewise argues that in China, controlled nationalism is employed to

divert the attention of the public away from problematic domestic issues. Furthermore, Kilic

Bugra Kanat uses Tir and Jasinski's diversionary theory to argue that the war on terror presented

the perfect opportunity for China to divert public attention from recurring domestic troubles

towards a "suspect community," and to create a new, controlled anti-Uyghur nationalism.[43]

Besides augmenting political stability in China, the war on terror also allowed China to

garner international legitimacy. Indeed, China has been severely criticized since Tiananmen, and

this criticism has only been intensified by the Senkaku/Diaoyu island disputes and the Taiwan

issue.[44] Thus, 2001 presented a favorable time for China to regain soft power in the West by

portraying itself as an ally of the U.S. in a fight against a common enemy: global terrorism.

Chien-peng Chung observes that the Uyghur were chosen as China's local terrorist threat: "The

September 11 attacks and the subsequent crisis offered an opportunity for the government to

reframe its battle with the Uyghur separatists as part of a larger international struggle against

terrorism."[45] In the subsequent months and years, China supported this hypothesis by actually

framing tightened security in Xinjiang and more limited cultural and religious freedom for the

Uyghur as their contribution to the war on terror. At first, this designation of the Uyghur as

China's domestic terrorists was not accepted by the international community; when China first

referenced the ETIM in an official state document in 2001 titled "Terrorist Activities Perpetrated

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[42] *Ibid.*

[43] Kilic Bugra Kanat, " 'War on Terror' as a Diversionary Strategy: Personifying Minorities as Terrorists in the People's Republic of China," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 32.4 (2012): 512-518, accessed October 2, 2015, doi:10.1080/13602004.2012.746179.

[44] Kanat, " 'War on Terror' ," 512.

[45] Chung, "China's 'War on Terror'," 10.

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by 'East Turkestan' Organizations and their Ties with Osama bin Laden and the Taliban", the

U.N. and U.S. both refused to accept the nexus between the ETIM and terrorism. Instead, both

the ETIM and ETLO were considered separatist organizations, and China was accused of

unjustifiably conflating separatism with terrorism.[46] However, less than a year later in 2002, both

the U.N. and U.S. reversed this policy view, and officially added the ETIM to a global list of

terrorist organizations, with promises to defund this organization.[47] Furthermore, in 2011,

WikiLeaks published a file about the Guantanamo Bay prison camp that revealed twenty-two

suspected Uyghur were held there since shortly after 9/11,[48] a fact affirmed by a U.S.

congressional record article later that year, which referred to the Uyghur detainees at

Guantanamo Bay as "trained terrorists."[49]

China's increasing crackdown on Xinjiang has been exhaustively documented and

analyzed by scholars on China. Kanat, Chung, and other China specialists like Matthew

Teague,[50] Teemu Naarajärvi[51], and Sean Roberts[52] all extensively analyzed trends in the CCP's

treatment of the Uyghur. For example, Kanat applies a qualitative analysis primarily to other

scholarly articles and Chinese reports. Naarajärvi, likewise, focuses on Chinese studies and

official statements. Sean Roberts, on the other hand, examines alleged Uyghur terrorists attacks

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[46] Sean Roberts, "Imaginary Terrorism? The Global War on Terror and the Narrative of the Uyghur Terrorist Threat," *Ponars Eurasia* (2012), accessed September 27, 2015, http://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/ponars/RobertsWP.pdf.
[47] U.S. Department of the Treasury, IIP Digital, *Treasury Dept. on Addition of ETIM to Terrorist List (*Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Treasury, 2002).
[48] "Prisoner List for China," The Guantanamo Files, accessed September 29, 2015, https://wikileaks.org/gitmo/country/CH.html.
[49]U.S. Congress, Congressional Record Online, *Additional Concerns Regarding Matthew Olsen's Nomination*: (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2011).
[50] Matthew Teague, "The Other Tibet," *National Geographic,* December, 2009, Accessed 5 November, 2015, http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx direct=true&db=aph&AN=45411654&site=ehost-live&scope=site.
[51]Teemui Naarajärv, "War on Terror with Chinese Characteristics?" *Per Urales ad Orientem : Iter polyphonicum multilingue* 264 (2012), accessed September 27, 2015, http://www.sgr.fi/sust/sust264/sust264_naarajarvi.pdf.
[52] Sean Roberts, "Imaginary Terrorism," 2.

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in China and corresponding Chinese statements about these attacks in an effort to frame the

designation of China's efforts in Xinjiang as part of the war on terror.

These scholars exclusively focus on how China appropriated the "war on terror" to justify

the harsh repression of the Uyghur. Though their research is important to understanding how the

international community responded to 9/11, it is equally important to examine how the U.S., as

the instigator of the official war on terror, in essence aided and abetted China's policy toward the

Uyghur. A detailed study of changes in the U.S. framing of the Uyghur pre- and post-9/11 can

offer valuable insight into the ways that the U.S. changed it rhetoric leading up to and following

major policy decisions that affect the Uyghur, such as its designation of the ETIM as a terrorist

organization. In particular, the official documents provide valuable insight into the framing of

this ethnic minority in U.S. public discourse. Indeed, this thesis argues that in addition to

historically framing the Uyghur as victims of human rights abuses, in response to China's

appropriation of the war on terror, the U.S. created and perpetuated three conflicting frames onto

the Uyghur: a frame that extends this victim narrative to include the victimization on the basis of

the war on terror; a markedly distinct frame that admits the possibility of Uyghur violence; and a

final frame that directly acknowledges and even condemns the Uyghur as terrorists.

Data and methodology

This paper compiles and analyzes official source documents from the U.S. in order to inform the

scholarly community about how the U.S. understanding of China's treatment of the Uyghur

changed and continues to change because of the war on terror, and the types of frames projected

onto this controversial ethnic group. I examine official U.S. documents and statements about the

Uyghur before and after the attacks on September 11, 2001. Given that the major news agencies

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in China like *Xinhua* or *The People's Daily* associated with statements about the "Uyghur

terrorism problem" are state-controlled, the U.S. counterpart of these statements consist of

documents from state-controlled sources of information. These U.S. statements, like the

documents from state-controlled news sources in China, are produced by the government and are

therefore accessible to the general public within and outside of the U.S. The overall category of

U.S. statements is divided into several subcategories based primarily on their source: the Library

of Congress, the Department of State, and the Congressional-Executive Commission on China

(CECC). In addition to organizing the data into subcategories, I also lay out the following

protocol for data recording: 1) date (pre-9/11 or post); 2) type of U.S. official document; 3)

specific number of mentions of Xinjiang,Uyghur/Uighur, separatist, terrorist, or extremist; 4)

outstanding quotes; 5) analysis of overall language use, broader values, norms, ideologies, and

other contextual factors embedded in a particular (set of) document(s) as well as the intended

audience/purpose; and 6) people to contact for follow-up interviews.

Examining how the Uyghur are differently framed over time due to the war on terror

requires a methodology suited to understanding the oftentimes ambiguous and even multiple or

changing meanings of public statements on this complex and evolving political issue.

Consequently, this paper utilizes the strengths of qualitative discourse analysis to interpret the

primary data and to place these interpretations into a coherent, useful analysis. Qualitative

discourse analysis is a valuable method of analysis for two main reasons. First, qualitative

discourse analysis seeks to "deal with the richness of complexities," and to search for underlying

meanings by using the context of broader values, norms, ideologies, and other contextual factors

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in a document.[53] Second, qualitative discourse analysis can be used to track shifts in state and

party ideologies and news coverage. Indeed, this method is well-suited to track changes in

discourse about the Uyghur in official U.S. documents because it incorporates the premise that

the formation of a discourse is a purposeful, active process.[54] I deploy qualitative discourse

analysis to interpret data from official documents with the ultimate purpose of identifying clear

trends in the U.S. over time with regard to how the Uyghur's are framed in state-sanctioned

discourse.

Though these two advantages make qualitative discourse analysis the most promising

method of research for the following data sets, this method is not without its limitations. Critics

argue that this type of analysis is overly subjective, so the interpretation of data can be skewed to

fit the researcher's hypothesis. Indeed, scholars sometimes reject research employing qualitative

discourse analysis on the grounds that the scholar's interpretation of data is incomplete and

potentially biased. Proponents of qualitative discourse analysis acknowledge the subjectivity of

interpretation, but argue that a principled and intellectual defensible deployment of this

subjectivity can help to produce a more critical and accurate interpretation than one achieved

through quantitative data. While it can be helpful to look at the lexical collates to the Uyghur, to

understand how the Uyghur are framed over the period of many years, even decades, scholars

need to deploy an interpretive method of analysis that allows for a deeper examination of the

ideational collates to the Uyghur. Though "official documents are intended to be read as

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[53]Jared J. Wesley, "The Qualitative Analysis of Documents," *From Text to Political Positions: Text Analysis Across Disciplines*, ed. Bertie Kaal et al. (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2014), 143.

[54] See, for example, Richardson's use of qualitative discourse analysis to record how the "ideational framing" of British Muslims in journalistic texts changed over the course of three elections by taking comprehensive samples of newspaper reports to analyze how discourse changed in these media texts over time.

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objective statements of fact," they are in reality "socially produced."[55] Official U.S. statements

always have an agenda, and sometimes those purposes may be ambiguous or not explicitly

stated, and the meaning drawn from those statements by government actors may even change as

U.S. interests and analyses of a situation shift. Ambiguous or concealed agenda can be

uncovered by elucidating how state actors engage in discursive practices in an effort to

(re)produce hegemonic understanding of the target object—in this case the Uyghur and their

relationship to China. Since discourse and language are understood as a *social practice*,

qualitative discourse analysis reinforces the idea that the formation of a discourse is itself an

active means of political and social change, which in turn allows for the interpretation of the

framing of the Uyghur in official, public discourse in the U.S. as an active social practice with an

ultimate purpose that can be discovered.

Obviously this research does not include classified U.S. documents on the Uyghur. No

doubt access to these materials would help scholars gain a fuller and more complete picture of

how the Uyghur issue affects relations between the U.S. and China. Nevertheless, unclassified

official government documents still offer valuable insight into how, and perhaps why, the U.S.

government frames the Uyghur issue as it does through its various branches of government and

other official political venue. This framing is in itself a decidedly worthwhile facet of

international relations, because changes in discourse have the potential to inform us about

changes in policies and, ultimately, political relationships. Discerning the rationale behind why

an official document refers to the Uyghur may aid our understanding of the timing and logic

supporting major policy changes, like the decision to designate the East Turkestan Independence

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[55] Toolkit, "Document Analysis, " n.d. http://www.drcath.net/toolkit/document.html.

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Movement as a terrorist organization in 2002, and the choice to imprison twenty-two suspected

Uyghur ETIM members in Guantanamo Bay.

Applying qualitative discourse analysis to U.S. official documents also allows one to

critically assess the hypothesis that China not only appropriated the war on terror, it also co-

opted the U.S. in its efforts to crack down on the Uyghur. Indeed, this research challenges said

hypothesis by demonstrating that U.S. responses to China's use of the war on terror rhetoric

actually fall on more of a spectrum.

Figure 2: Spectrum of U.S. Framing of the Uyghur

Victims　　　Separatists　　　Terrorists

Figure 2 portrays how the U.S. varied its responses to China's bold claims of Uyghur

terrorism. Some of these responses framed the Uyghur as victims of human rights abuses, while

others did not fully discount the possibility of Uyghur terrorism, but more carefully characterized

them as separatists. Lastly, some official documents fell on the far right of the spectrum because

they clearly framed the Uyghur as terrorists. In light of the enduring and pervasive impact

throughout the world of the U.S. war on terror, but especially in Muslim populations, scholars

must not only evaluate whether and how other countries appropriated this anti-terrorism

campaign, but also how the U.S. responded to external appropriation of official state language on

combating terror. The following four frames present four distinct ways the U.S. responded to

China's appropriation of the war on terror.

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Uyghur as victims

I argue that the U.S. changed its discursive practice of identifying the Uyghur as human rights

victims and instead moved to associate the Uyghur with violent resistance and terrorism. The

eventual political shift to the ETIM being designated as a terrorist organization was presaged by

the discursive movements manifested in official U.S. statements in multiple public arenas.

The first association evident throughout these official statements is made between the

Uyghur and the harsh treatment and oppression imposed on them by China. This history of

referring to the Uyghur as victims of a repressive regime constitutes a useful baseline for

tracking subsequent changes in association. Prior to 9/11, the Uyghur are referred to exclusively

as victims of rampant human rights abuses in XUAR. Many of these texts are linked in their

condemnation of the Chinese government's treatment of the Uyghur minority, and advocacy of

more religious freedom and cultural diversification. For example, a concurrent (i.e., non-binding)

resolution proposed in Congress in 2000 stated:

> The Chinese government has imprisoned a person from almost every Uyghur family in Ghulja City since
> 1996. At present, the Chinese government is still arresting hundreds of Uyghur and mercilessly torturing
> them in the prisons. The Chinese human rights violation of the Uyghur people is nowhere to be found in the
> world.[56]

This concurrent resolution's purpose was to urge the Chinese government to release Rebiya

Kadeer, the Uyghur human rights activist, so the statement that "a person from almost every

Uyghur family in Ghulia," a city in Northwestern Xinjiang, has been imprisoned and

"mercilessly tortur[ed]" works to advance this cause by emphasizing the extreme extent to which

the government's hand reached—that is, into almost every Uyghur household. Obviously, the

U.S. cannot impose their rule of law on China; even a joint resolution passed by Congress and

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[56] U.S. Congress, Congressional Record Online, *Congressional Resolution 81,* sp. Senator William V. Roth Jr., CR
S3269-3270 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2000).

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signed by the President would have no legal consequence. Because of this lack of enforceability,

some may argue that concurrent resolutions are not a useful means of analyzing U.S. politics.

Moreover, this particular concurrent resolution failed to pass, upon a Congressional vote of 170-

260. Yet the very lack of enforceability and overwhelming defeat of this concurrent resolution

begs us to question why members of Congress bothered to consider it at all. Sometimes joint

resolutions are proposed to satisfy a domestic constituency, but it is, *prima facie*, implausible to

suggest that a serious domestic constituency exists in the U.S. that has the political heft to

influence U.S. support of the Uyghur population. More plausible is that Congress sought to

engage in U.S.-China relations by discursively invoking the status and bodies of the Uyghur

minority as victims of Chinese human rights abuses. Change in discourse can produce a change

in politics, and even an unenforceable resolution can nonetheless impact Sino-U.S. relations.

Therefore, although this document was never presented to the Chinese government, it still shows

how, prior to 9/11, members of the U.S. government framed the Uyghur as human rights victims,

with the clear intent of presenting this frame to the Chinese government in public discourse.

This framing of the Chinese government as abusive and intrusive was not new in 2000,

nor strictly associated with human rights violations against the Uyghur. In May of 1999, a

congressional resolution on the tenth anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Massacre was

released. This resolution holds a particularly contemptuous tone towards governmental authority

in China:

> [P]erhaps any representative of the government could tell us that there are no persecuted Christians in
> China. Perhaps they could tell us there is no ethnic and religious persecution in Tibet or Xinjiang. Perhaps
> they could tell us there are no forced abortions or forced sterilization, no dying rooms for unwanted
> children, usually baby girls and usually handicapped children. They also perhaps could tell us there is no
> political suppression or dissent and no torture. Of course, we would know that is a lie, but it is about time
> we held them to account.[57]

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[57] U.S. Congress, Congressional Record Online, *Concerning Tenth Anniversary of Tiananmen Square Massacre,* sp.
Rep. Nancy Pelosi, H.Res. 178 (106th): (Washington, D.C., U.S. Library of Congress, 1999).

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Unsurprisingly, this simple resolution passed with an overwhelming majority: 418-0. After all,

how could any member of the House vote against a bill to "express sympathy for the families of

those killed" in the 1989 democratic protests, and condemn "egregious human rights abuses by

the Chinese government?"[58] Though the Uyghur are seldom mentioned in the news or pubic

school curriculums, the persecution of Christians, forced sterilizations, and the Tiananmen

Square Massacre are held up as examples of atrocities in China. Therefore, by grouping human

rights abuses against the Uyghur in Xinjiang with these more widely known abuses, the Uyghur

issue assumes the negativity surrounding these other controversial issues.

Prior to 9/11, in U.S. official documents, the Uyghur were mentioned exclusively in

reference to human rights issues, rather than associated with terrorism, or defended as nonviolent

activists. As a result, the U.S. did little more for the Uyghur than support Rebiya Kadeer and

issue concurrent resolutions protesting human rights abuses. Also, neither the Uyghur nor

Xinjiang appear anywhere on the Congressional Executive Commission on China's website prior

to 2002. Moreover, there is no mention of China, let alone the Uyghur, in the Department of

State's annual *Patterns of Global Terrorism Report* prior to 9/11. Although, this report notes that

"several nations in East Asia experienced violence in 2000," China is not listed among these

nations.[59] On the other hand, the Uyghur appear in the Department of State's *International*

Religious Freedom Report and *International Human Rights Report* prior to 9/11:

> In China . . . particularly serious human rights abuses persisted in minority areas, especially in Tibet and
> Xinjiang, where restrictions on religion and other fundamental freedoms intensified. Some minority groups,
> particularly Tibetan Buddhists and Muslim Uighurs, came under increasing pressure as the Government
> clamped down on dissent and "separatist" activities.[60]

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[58]*Ibid.*
[59] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *2000 Patterns of Global Terrorism*, n.a.: (Washington, D.C.,
U.S. Department of State, 2000).
[60]U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *1999 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, n.a.:
(Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of State,1999).

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At this point, Tibetan Buddhists and Muslim Uyghur were often referenced together as victims

of China's repressive, anti-religion policies. The Uyghur were not yet differentiated by either

China or the U.S. as more closely associated with any terrorism or tension with the Middle East.

Furthermore, "separatist" appears in quotation marks, suggesting that the State Department

questioned this designation. Similarly, the *International Religious Freedom Report* issued a few

months before 9/11 cites police crackdowns on centers of Muslim religious activity and worship

in Xinjiang because of accusations from the local police of Uyghur separatist activity.[61] In

addition, although several terrorist incidents are mentioned in this report, none are associated

with the Uyghur, either directly or indirectly. Instead, these events are attributed to "unknown

terrorists."[62] At this point, some may argue that the U.S.'s dismissal of accusations of Uyghur

violence before 9/11 is due to the fact that the Uyghur were nonviolent before 9/11 and China's

subsequent crackdown. However, this argument focuses on how, despite China's claims of

Uyghur violence well before 9/11, the U.S. continued to classify the Uyghur as "separatists" at

worst, and more commonly as victims of human rights abuses until after 9/11.

Victims of the war on terror

The U.S. framing of the Uyghur changed dramatically after 9/11. Indeed, following the

September 1, 2001 attacks, this narrative of the Uyghur as victims of China's repressive regime

was extended to a view of the Uyghur as victims of China's war on terror. Scholars documented

and analyzed how the Chinese government leveraged the war on terror to deflect public attention

away from domestic problems and create solidarity in the face of the perception of a terrorist

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[61] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *2001 Report on International Religious Freedom*, n.a.:
(Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of State, 2001).
[62] *Ibid*.

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threat.[63] The U.S. government, likewise, noted and criticized this ulterior motive in many of its

public statements. For example, in a Congressional article released about a month after 9/11, a

representative stated:

> Following the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, Chinese officials pledged to join the global effort against terrorism. But comments made by Chinese officials following the attacks indicate that they may try to exact policy concessions from the United States in exchange for support for anti-terrorism efforts. For example, according to a Reuters article on September 18, China's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Zhu Bangzao stated, "The United States has asked China to provide assistance in the fight against terrorism. China, by the same token, has reasons to ask the United States to give its support and understanding in the fight against terrorism and separatists."[64]

Here, the U.S. directly questions China's motives behind its alleged support for U.S.

antiterrorism efforts. Although the Uyghur are not mentioned specifically, the speaker points out

that China's assistance comes with the caveat of policy concessions exacted from the U.S.;

specifically, the policy concession that the U.S. allow China more freedom in its domestic fight

against "terrorism and separatists." Against the backdrop of frequent associations between

Tibetans and Uyghur with terrorism and separatism, the price of China's support for the U.S. war

on terror was allowing China a freer hand in its treatment of groups like the Uyghur. The Uyghur

were more directly referred to as victims of China's war on terror in subsequent government

documents:

> Meanwhile, in northwest China, the international war against terrorism is used to justify harsh repression in Xinjiang, home to China's mainly Muslim Uighur community. Several mosques have been closed, use of the Uighur language has been restricted and certain Uighur books and journals have been banned. The crackdown against suspected "separatists, terrorists and religious extremists" intensified following the start of a renewed security crack-down in October 2003. Arrests continue and hundreds of dissidents remain in prison.[65]

In this quote, found in another concurrent resolution released on the anniversary of the

Tiananmen Square Massacre, it is apparent that the Uyghur issue became closely connected with

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[63] See Kanat, Chung, and other China specialists like Teague, Naarajärvi, and Roberts who are cited in the literature review.

[64] U.S. Congress, Congressional Record Online, *Congressional Record 107th Congress 1st Session,* n.a., CR S11096-S11097 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2001).

[65] U.S. Congress, Congressional Record Online, *Condemning the Crackdown on Democracy Protestors in Tiananmen Square, Beijing in the People's Republic of China on the 15th Anniversary of that Tragic Massacre,* sp. Christopher Smith of New Jersey, H3684-H3689 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2004).

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this more well-known instance of human rights abuse in China. Even the title of the resolution

patently denounces China: "Condemning the Crackdown on Democracy Protestors in

Tiananmen Square, Beijing in the People's Republic of China on the 15th Anniversary of that

Tragic Massacre." However, in contrast to previous documents which clearly conflate human

rights abuses in Xinjiang with those in Tiananmen, this particular document goes further by

specifically identifying the war on terror as the very tool China employs to implement its

repressive religious and ethnic policies. Indeed, after introducing the idea that the war on terror is

used to "justify harsh repression in Xinjiang," this statement lists specific examples of the

application of this anti-terrorism campaign to the Uyghur, including shutting down mosques,

banning religious books, and imprisoning dissidents. Here in the U.S., one's religious freedom is

considered a constitutional right, so this statement paints Xinjiang as nothing short of a dystopia

controlled by the authoritarian regime that is the Chinese government.

This oppressor-oppressed narrative continues throughout this period and up to the

present in various official documents articulating U.S. policy. For example, in its most recent

human rights report, U.S. State Department states, "The government continued to repress

Uyghurs expressing peaceful political dissent and independent Muslim religious leaders."[66]

Another Congressional concurrent resolution urging the United Nations Commission on Human

Rights to call on the PRC's government to end human rights violations also included China's

leveraging of the war on terror against the Uyghur as a strong reason for U.N. action: "The

Chinese Government has used the international war on terror as a pretext for a harsh crackdown

on Uighurs in Xinjiang, including those expressing peaceful political dissent and independent

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[66] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *2014 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, n.a.: (Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of State, 2014).

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Muslim religious leaders."[67] These documents, which clearly fall among those depicting the

Uyghur as victims of the war on terror, also clearly discount the notion of a substantiated Uyghur

terrorist threat in China. Indeed, in its annual report in 2006, the U.S. Congress discredited

China's claims of increasing terrorist activity in Xinjiang by looking at the broader context of

China's history of repression in the region:

> The government uses counterterrorism policies as a pretext for severely repressing religion in the XUAR. The government describes security conditions in the XUAR in a manner that suggests terrorist attacks continue in the region, even as official sources indicate that no terrorist attacks have taken place in the XUAR since 1999. Authorities continue to detain and arrest XUAR residents engaged in religious activities deemed unauthorized and have charged them with a range of offenses, including state security crimes. The government targets "religious extremism," splittism, and terrorism in anti-crime campaigns, calling them the "three evil forces." The government began tightening control over religious practice in the region in the early 1990s, following unrest in the region, but intensified its crackdown after September 11, 2001. Official sources published in 2001 recorded an increase in the number of Uighurs sent to prison or reeducation through labor centers since the mid-1990s because of religious activity.[68]

Here a U.S. state entity again projects a discursive frame that directly conflicts with the

discursive frame put forth by the Chinese government, that is, the portrayal of the Uyghur as a

group harboring the "three evil forces" of extremism, separatism, and terrorism. Instead, this

document details the application of this anti-crime campaign with strong language and outright

dismissal. Indeed, this document states "*official sources* indicate that *no* terrorist attacks have

taken place in the XUAR since 1999." Based on this last claim, it becomes apparent that there is

a discrepancy between this denial of terrorism in Xinjiang and the U.S. decision to add the ETIM

to its list of terrorist organizations in 2002. And indeed, the aforementioned texts all support the

idea that the U.S. sees the Uyghur as nothing more than repressed victims of the Chinese

government.

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[67] U.S. Congress, Congressional Record Online, *H.Con.Res.83, sp. Representative Christopher Smith of New Jersey*, H.Con.Res.83 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2005).

[68] U.S. Congress, Congressional Record Online, *2006 Annual Report,* n.a.: (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2006).

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Qualified disapproval

 As Figure 2 shows, the United State's framing of the Uyghur cannot be categorized as one

which completely rejects Uyghur terrorism, nor one which blatantly describes the Uyghur as

terrorists. Instead, this framing can be arranged into a spectrum, which ranges from discourse

that frames the Uyghur as victims, to discourse that frames the Uyghur as terrorists. These next

documents can be categorized as a group of texts which propagate a discourse that neither

directly associates the Uyghur with terrorism, nor fully discounts the possibility of violent

Uyghur resistance. Taken at face value, these texts seem to perpetuate the aforementioned victim

narrative. However, a closer examination of the wording in these texts reveals small, but

significant, deviation from previously discussed official documents. While the CECC blatantly

dismisses Uyghur terrorism in a 2006 statement, other U.S. statements do not take such a clear

stand on either side of the issue. For example, the Congressional concurrent resolution from 2005

includes the statement that "the Chinese Government has used the international war on terror as

a pretext for a harsh crackdown on Uighurs in Xinjiang, including those expressing peaceful

political dissent and independent Muslim religious leaders."[69] Like previously analyzed

documents, this text spots how China uses the war on terror as a "pretext" for consolidating

power in the region. Unlike other statements, however, this document allows for the possibility

of Uyghur violence through the word "including." Indeed, this wording implies that among the

Uyghur, there are those who do not express "peaceful political dissent." After all, a Uyghur

group that *includes* peaceful dissenters leaves room for the possibility of militant members—a

possibility that was incompatible with previous victim narratives. A similar differentiation is

made in the State Department's "International Report on Religious Freedom" from 2004 and

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[69] U.S. Congress, Congressional Record Online, *H.Con.Res.83,* n.a.: (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2005).

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2014. Indeed, all these reports either repeat verbatim or paraphrase this claim: "[A]uthorities

often failed to distinguish between peaceful religious practice and criminal or terrorist

activities."[70] Again, the language employed in this text allows for the possibility of a range

between the peaceful activist and the "terrorist" which could include "criminal."

> Even a human rights report from 2003 seems unwilling to either completely dismiss or
call out Uyghur violence:

> > Because the Government authorities in Xinjiang regularly grouped together those involved in "ethnic separatism, illegal religious activities, and violent terrorism," it was often unclear whether particular raids, detentions, or judicial punishments targeted those peacefully seeking their goals or those engaged in violence. Many observers raised concerns that the Government's war on terror was a justification for cracking down harshly on Uighurs expressing peaceful political dissent and on independent Muslim religious leaders. On December 15, the Government published an "East Turkestan Terrorist List," which labeled organizations such as the World Uighur Youth Congress and the East Turkestan Information Center as terrorist entities. These groups openly advocate for East Turkestan independence, but have not been publicly linked to violent activity.[71]

Recall that U.S. official statements are socially produced rather than objective statements of

facts**,** and even the slightest deviation in wording can indicate a political decision on the part of

public officials. With this in mind, the decision to qualify a condemnation of the Chinese

government's crackdown with the phrase that it is "unclear whether particular raids, detentions,

or judicial punishments targeted those peacefully seeking their goals or those engaged in

violence" cannot be overlooked, but must be taken as a purposeful phrasing. This statement

exhibits a rather cautious attitude towards the Uyghur issue, and it signals the possibility of the

Uyghur as terrorists.

> Furthermore, rather than directly denouncing China for leveraging the war on terror, this

document attributes speculation of ulterior motives on China's part to third party observers:

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[70]U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *International Religious Freedom Report*, n.a.: (Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of State, 2004-2014).
[71] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *2003 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, n.a.: (Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of State, 2003).

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"[M]any observers raised concerns that the Government's war on terror was a justification for cracking down harshly on Uighurs." This tendency of the U.S. to pass the responsibility of implicating China in the exploration of the war on terror for political ends manifests in several other documents. Like the State Department, the CECC also attributes accusations of foul play on the part of China to nongovernmental actors in a commission analysis in 2005:

> In January 2004, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization opened a Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure in Tashkent to fight the "three evils of terrorism, splittism, and extremism" in Xinjiang and bordering member states. Amnesty International and other human rights groups accuse the Chinese government of using the post-September 11th global war on terrorism to repress peaceful Uighur demonstrations for autonomy. The US-based Center for Contemporary Conflict published a report in 2002 urging policymakers to recognize that Uighurs themselves are often divided over how best to promote their rights. The report concluded that only increased autonomy could prevent increases in violence.[72]

Rather than directly accuse China of co-opting the war on terror, accusations are assigned to "Amnesty International [and] other human rights groups," which are conveniently out of the control of the U.S. government. On the other hand, the proposal that the Uyghur are "divided over how to promote their rights" is attributed to the Center for Contemporary Conflict, a U.S.-based research group, not the CECC. In this way, the CECC simultaneously criticizes China's anti-terrorism efforts and differentiates between methods of protest among the Uyghur without actually laying claim to either statement. By passing this heavy burden of accusation onto the shoulders of non-state entities, the U.S. demonstrates an unwillingness to take a firm position on either side of the issue. Rather, the safest, most diplomatic choice appears to be one where human rights violations are reprimanded, and the issue of Uyghur terrorism is not directly addressed.

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[72]U.S. Congress, Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *Upgrade in Police Armament in Urumqi Signals Continued Tensions in Xinjiang*, n.a.: (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2005).

Jai

Uyghur as threats

A final trend that is identifiable throughout U.S. documents leading up to and following 9/11 is

the formation of a discourse that frames the Uyghur as a dangerous group of extremists, and even

as potential terrorists. Though the previous three frames seem to contradict U.S. policy decisions

to treat Uyghur as threats to international safety, this final frame helps to explain this behavior.

Indeed, in the following documents, the Uyghur are not described primarily as human rights

victims, and China is not as harshly criticized for cracking down on Xinjiang. Instead, the U.S.

and China seem to form a partnership in an effort to fight international terrorism. This discourse,

which falls more towards the far right of the framing spectrum (see Figure 2), is quite apparent in

the *2001 Patterns of Global Terrorism* report.

> China, and Thailand also suffered a number of bombings throughout the year, many believed by authorities
> to be the work of Islamic extremists in those countries; few arrests have been made, however . . . Chinese
> officials strongly condemned the September 11 attacks and announced China would strengthen cooperation
> with the international community in fighting terrorism on the basis of the UN Charter and international law
> . . . China and the United States began a counterterrorism dialogue in late-September . . . [that] undertook a
> number of measures to improve China's counterterrorism posture and domestic security. These included
> increasing its vigilance in Xinjiang, western China, where Uighur separatist groups have conducted violent
> attacks in recent years.[73]

This report is in stark contrast to the *2000 Patterns of Global Terrorism* report, which contained

no mention of the Uyghur, let alone Uyghur violence. In that report, China was not included

among the "Several nations in East Asia [that] experienced terrorist violence in 2000."[74] Here

China is directly and indisputably the victim of "bombings" that are "believed to be the work of

Islamic extremists." The word "suffered" emphasizes a victim narrative, previously unseen prior

to 9/11, where the Uyghur were assigned the roles of the victims, and China, the perpetrator.

Furthermore, the Uyghur are strongly associated with these bombings, as the end of this

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[73] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, *2001 Patterns of Global Terrorism*, n.a.: (Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of State, 2001).
[74] *2000 Patterns of Global Terrorism*.

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statement notes that anti-terrorism efforts in the region involve "increasing its vigilance in

Xinjiang, western China, where Uighur separatist groups have conducted violent attacks in

recent years." Though other official documents actively dismiss China's claims of Uyghur

violence in the region, this State Department publication does exactly the opposite by

recognizing Uyghur violence as an issue intimately connected with international terrorism, rather

than a product of China's political imagination or an excuse to crackdown on an independent-

minded ethnic minority. Moreover, this statement highlights U.S.-China cooperation in the war

on terror. Though other statements focus mainly on the policy concessions China aims to exact

for such cooperation, after noting China's promise to cooperate with international antiterrorism

efforts, this statement goes on to detail active bilateral cooperation at the end of 2001.

The Uyghur are further vilified in the official documents of other state entities. A 2009

Congressional record article on the subject of the twenty-two Uyghur prisoners held in

Guantanamo Bay includes several statements that directly frame the Uyghur people as

dangerous. For example, Republican congressman Frank R. Wolf of Virginia states, "[Uyghur]

detainees are trained terrorists who were caught in camps affiliated with Al Qaeda" and "There

have been published reports that these terrorists were members of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic

Movement, ETIM, a designated terrorist organization affiliated with Al Qaeda." Later, Wolf

even states, "Those who would use terror are terrorists no matter their intended target."[75] By the

end of this statement, it is clear that in moving the conversation from the concrete issue of

Uyghur terrorism, to an amorphous, ill-defined fear of terrorism in general, the Uyghur are

presumed to be terrorists.

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[75]U.S. Congress, Library of Congress, *Uyghur Terrorists*, Frank R. Wolf of Virginia: (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2009).

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Most references to Uyghur terrorism accompany statements about the ETIM. Indeed, this association between the Uyghur and ETIM works in a way similar to the association between the oppression of the Uyghur and the Tiananmen Square Massacre**.** In documents that uphold the Uyghur victim narrative, references to Tiananmen are employed to strengthen the connection between well-known human rights abuses in Tiananmen, and current, lesser-known offenses in Xinjiang. In this new narrative that presents the Uyghur as terrorists, associations between the Uyghur and the ETIM work similarly by creating the perception of Uyghur militancy. This is best demonstrated in the 2002 CECC report:

> The Chinese government supports the U.S.-led global war on terrorism, but critics argue that Beijing is using terrorism as an excuse to crack down on human rights and religious freedoms of the Uighur Muslim population in Xinjiang. However, while many Uighurs are unhappy with Beijing's controls, they manifest their discontent through different means, from deep personal immersion into Islamic traditions to advocating independence through violent methods . . . Uighur separatists have committed occasional acts of violence in recent years, and a few have been linked to terrorist groups . . . In August 2002, the U.S. government designated the East Turkestan Islamic Movement as a foreign organization that supports terrorism and placed this obscure Xinjiang separatist group under an executive order blocking its financial transactions and freezing its assets in the United States.[76]

This report, which was issued four months after the decision to designate the ETIM as a terrorist organization, works to reconcile this designation with the conflicting frame of the Uyghur as victims of the war on terror, and not actual terrorists. Here, "critics" are assigned the humanitarian voice of dissent. Nevertheless, the structural indicator "however" separates the opinions of critics from the view of this document, which more directly advocates a viewpoint in which some Uyghur do "manifest their discontent through different means," including "violent methods." Furthermore, this statement directly links Uyghur separatists to terrorists groups, before giving a specific example of a group linked to terrorism: the ETIM. This particular framing of the Uyghur as an oppressed group with terrorist tendencies, as evidenced by multiple

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[76] U.S. Congress, Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2002 Annual Report*, n.a.: (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Library of Congress, 2002).

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references to the ETIM, can be traced throughout the period following 9/11 and up to the present. Unlike the previous three frames, this association between the Uyghur and terrorism accounts for U.S. policy decisions to designate the ETIM as a terrorist organization and imprison Uyghur in Guantanamo Bay. This final narrative frame also directly contradicts official U.S. statements that dismiss China's accusations of Uyghur terrorism.

Conclusion and future prospects

The existence of these three competing frames is indicative of conflicting beliefs about the Uyghur within the U.S. government over time, and points to the critical importance of tracking the multiple discourses created and perpetuated after 9/11. Although many scholars, in their examination of the war on terror and repression of the Uyghur, either assign the U.S. the role of the willing partner in China's campaign to crackdown on Xinjiang, or the voice of dissent, it is clear from a thorough examination of these official statements that the U.S. narrative cannot be reduced into either binary view. First, prior to 9/11 the U.S. projected the "Uyghur as victim" frame, in which China was strongly criticized for human rights violations toward the Uyghur in Xinjiang. In the months following 9/11, this narrative did not change much, but instead was extended to include U.S. official condemnation of China's leveraging of the war on terror to justify the harsh repression of the Uyghur. The U.S. decision to not immediately adopt China's "Uyghur as terrorist" frame can be attributed to the fact that the U.S., prior to 9/11, consistently interpreted the Uyghur as human rights victims. Therefore our government did not suddenly and wholesale adopt a new frame that directly contradicted the prior narrative. However, as time progressed, a third and fourth frame appeared in U.S. official documents. These frames look less favorably upon the Uyghur, and are more supportive of China's actions in Xinjiang. Not only did

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time affect the language of political discourse about the Uyghur, but the existence of multiple

state entities also contributed to the projection of multiple frames. For example, the CECC, as a

committee tasked with monitoring "human rights and the development of the rule of law in

China," tends to publish documents that call for more rights for this minority group.[77] On the

other hand, global terrorism reports published by the State Department directly refer to Uyghur

terrorism. Therefore, though many agree that China leverages the war on terror to kill two birds

with one stone by improving its international legitimacy and consolidating power over a

historically problematic ethnic minority, a complete analysis of the Uyghur issue requires an

examination of the multiple frames the U.S. projected in response to China's own "war on

terror." Furthermore, an analysis of these four frames supports the idea that 9/11 changed the

discourse around not only the Uyghur, but also other Muslim communities around the world.

Although many criticize the harsh persecution of Muslim minorities, others frame these groups

as terrorists. It is clear that U.S. is not immune to this international trend, as evidenced by the

shifting discourse on the Uyghur in official statements. What is still unclear is the extent to

which the U.S. will cooperate in China's "war" against Uyghur terrorism, and any corresponding

and possibly new frames which both China and the U.S. have yet to project onto the Uyghur

issue in Xinjiang.

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II. Background

Located in the farthest northwest corner of China, Xinjiang was first formally incorporated into the Chinese empire in 1884. Bordered by eight central Asian countries, in many ways it remains a remote outpost of the People's Republic of China, lagging in many socio-economic indicators and sharing few cultural or historical ties with Beijing.

Xinjiang is the only Chinese province or "autonomous" region with a Muslim majority. Indeed, along with Tibet it is the only administrative region in China in which ethnic Chinese still constitute a minority.

The non-Chinese population of Xinjiang of approximately nine million is almost entirely Muslim. The overwhelming majority of this group, approximately eight million, are Uighurs.

Chinese domination of Xinjiang has never been fully accepted. This is particularly true among Uighurs. A major source of tension has been the large migration of ethnic Chinese to Xinjiang, which many non-Chinese believe has had disastrous effects on local culture, language, and traditions. Many non-Chinese say that as a result they fear being overrun culturally, economically, and politically by ethnic Chinese. Many assert that this is the aim of Chinese state policy.

To understand the way that China has attempted to equate independent Uighur culture and religion with separatism, and by extension with "terrorism," it is useful to understand the history of the region. The following summary includes a study of China's efforts to economically integrate the area, the role of Islam in Uighur identity, and instances of violent resistance to Chinese rule and government crackdowns.

The political identity of Xinjiang

The ancestors of the Uighur people were most likely nomadic tribes originating from Mongolia who settled in the oases of the Tarim basin (the southern half of Xinjiang) around the seventh century. They were gradually converted to Islam from the tenth to the seventeenth century. The region was formally annexed to the Manchu Qing Empire in 1759, but effective control was loose due to the numerous uprisings that regularly shook the region. From 1866 to 1876, Xinjiang was under the rule of the Kashgar-based warlord Yakub Beg, before being reconquered in 1877 by the Qing troops and integrated formally into the empire as their "New Dominion," *Xinjiang* [新疆], in 1884. The fall of the Qing Empire in 1911 opened an era of rule by competing local warlords.

In 1944, a Soviet-backed independent East Turkestan Republic (ETR) was set up in the three western districts of Yili, Tacheng, and Ashan, with Yining as the capital. In 1947, it joined in a formal government with the nationalist forces controlling the rest of Xinjiang.

As the outcome of the Chinese civil war turned to the advantage of the Chinese Communists, Stalin, who had little interest in supporting a Muslim nationalist regime in the backyard of his own Central Asian Soviet republics, pressed for negotiations between the East Turkestan Republic and the Chinese Communist Party for a peaceful takeover of Xinjiang. The plane carrying the East Turkestan representatives on their way to Beijing in August 1949 for the negotiations crashed, killing all the occupants in circumstances that have led to widespread suspicion. This removed the local nationalist leaders from the scene and made way for the incorporation of Xinjiang into the newly born People's Republic of China.

Beijing immediately started a policy of large-scale migration into the region, and the proportion of ethnic Chinese increased from 6 percent in 1949 to 41.5 percent by the time of Mao's death in 1976. The relative liberalization of the 1980s initiated by Deng Xiaoping's "Opening and Reform" allowed for greater autonomy for Xinjiang. This included respect for certain cultural and religious practices. Ancient mosques were restored and new ones built, cultural traditions that had gone underground resurfaced, and individual economic activities were tolerated again. The number of Chinese cadre and personnel stationed in Xinjiang began to decrease, and by the end of the 1980s, the share of the Chinese population had dropped to 37.5 percent. In the 1990s, however, through a combination of economic and land ownership incentives, Beijing engineered a rapid acceleration of the ethnic Chinese influx to Xinjiang. About 1.2 million people settled in Xinjiang during the decade, pushing the proportion of the ethnic Chinese population to 40 percent of the total of some 18.5 million people at present.[4]

Ethnic Chinese migrants have tended to benefit from the economic development of Xinjiang to a far greater degree than Uighurs, a source of much tension. Profound socio-economic disparities between Uighurs and Chinese are reflected in the fact that the former have on average about ten years less life expectancy than the Chinese settlers in the region.[5]

Uighur Islam

The Uighurs have long practiced a moderate, traditional form of Sunni Islam, strongly infused with the folklore and traditions of a rural, oasis-dwelling population. Today most Uighurs still live in rural communities, although large cities have emerged in the region. Their history as commercial and cultural brokers between the different people connected by the Silk Road (through which Buddhism was introduced to China from India two millennia ago) gave rise to a markedly tolerant and open version of Muslim faith and a rich intellectual tradition of literature, science, and music. Nineteenth-century travelers to Kashgar noted that women enjoyed many freedoms, such as the right to initiate divorce and run businesses on their own

Sufism, a deeply mystical tradition of Islam revolving around the cult of particular saints and transmitted from master to disciples, has also had a long historical presence in Xinjiang. In daily life, Islam represents a source of personal and social values, and provides a vocabulary for talking about aspirations and grievances. The *imam* is traditionally a mediator and a moderator of village life, and performs many social functions as well as religious ones.

As the borders of Xinjiang became more porous in the 1980s, a number of young Uighurs went clandestinely to Pakistan to receive the religious education they could not obtain under China's policies. Upon their return, they enjoyed great prestige due to their ventures abroad and their knowledge of Koranic theology, far beyond that typical among local imams. Small-scale, localized underground religious organizations started to emerge. A long history of tension and opposition to Chinese domination already existed (see below). In this period it began to take on an Islamic color.

There is no evidence that Salafism, the radical Islamic ideology connected to many *jihadist* movements around the world, has taken root to any significant extent in Xinjiang. Proponents of rebellion against Chinese rule have used the vocabulary of Islam and religious grievances against Beijing to justify their actions. These are not, however, mainstream views.

Recent reports suggest that Hizb ut-Tahrir (Party of Liberation), a movement which advocates the establishment of a pan-Central Asian caliphate and whose headquarters is located in London, has recently made inroads in Southern Xinjiang, but it has so far never advocated violence. Hizb ut-Tahrir is the object of rigorous repression in Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries. It remains illegal in China.

A history of restiveness

There has long been strong Uighur objection to Chinese rule in Xinjiang. In the middle of the twentieth century, as noted above, the western part of the region enjoyed independence as the Soviet-aligned East Turkestan Republic and effective control by China was not achieved until shortly after the establishment of the communist state in 1949. As a result, memories of a distinct political and administrative identity are strong in certain areas and among certain sections of the community.

A pan-Turkic ideology inspired the brief life of the modern independent state and, today, the political views of various Uighur groups based in Central Asia or farther afield in Turkey, Germany, and even the United States, remain mainly of pan-Turkic inspiration. These organizations in most cases have secular and democratic aspirations. They come from conventional political traditions and have not supported the use of violence for their objectives, whether for the achievement of "real autonomy" or "independence" for the country they still call East Turkestan. In Xinjiang itself, no unified movement has surfaced. In fact, for reasons of language, geography, and religion (Xinjiang's different Muslim ethnic groups of Kazakhs, Mongols, Tajiks, Chinese-speaking Hui, and Uighurs have distinct places of worship—Hui Mosques, Uighur Mosques, etc.), this is complicated and unlikely. Even if the groups themselves had the will to join forces, Chinese restrictions on freedom of assembly, the formation of independent organizations, and the publication or circulation of political and cultural materials would make it all but impossible for these groups to acquire a broad base of support or to take on any collective form. No opposition groups are allowed to exist in any public form.

However, a number of small opposition groups are known to exist secretly.[6] They tend to gravitate around two geographic poles: Yining and the Yili valley, in the western part of Xinjiang close to the border with Kazakhstan, and Kashgar and Hetian, in southern Xinjiang. The opposition groups that are present in the southern part of Xinjiang, notably in the Kashgar and Hetian areas, are thought to be more oriented towards the incorporation of religious ideals within their political programs. Some small groups have advocated the establishment of an Islamic state in Xinjiang and reject Chinese sovereignty.

The pro-independence groups in Xinjiang are overwhelmingly ethno-nationalist movements—that is, they are articulated along ethnic lines, not religious ones. This appears to be the case among both religious and secular groups.

The turning point—unrest in 1990, stricter controls from Beijing

In 1990 a major, Islamic-inspired insurrection in Baren county, northwest of Kashgar, led China to launch a long-term strategy to assert tighter control over Uighur society. Until then, Xinjiang had remained a distant indigenous periphery. But for Beijing this challenge to the state was the turning point in its policies towards the Uighurs and Xinjiang.

China's reaction was linked to major changes in regional and world politics: the loss of control by Moscow of its eastern European satellites and the imminent collapse of the Soviet Union and emergence of the new central Asian republics. China feared that Uighur ethno-nationalist aspirations in Xinjiang could be stirred up by the example of—and possible support from—the newly independent central Asian people across its borders.

Beijing then launched an ambitious plan to accelerate the integration of Xinjiang with China by stepping up ethnic Chinese migration to Xinjiang. At the same time, it committed major resources to economic growth in Xinjiang, chiefly through the exploitation of Xinjiang's natural resources, above all oil and gas. These policies coincided with impressive economic growth in China, which made it possible to commit the capital and labor to carry them out. This led to tremendous changes in Xinjiang, as new roads, industries, cities, and waves of new migration ensued. The political calculus in Beijing was straightforward: in the 1990s many Chinese policy makers took the view that economic development reduces local nationalism and aids national integration. The transfer of ethnic Chinese labor was and is still seen widely in Chinese policy making circles as aiding political integration and ultimately removing reasons for political unrest. These polices in fact may have exacerbated political tensions because of a predictable local reaction to mass migration and the fact that many of the economic gains were unevenly distributed and favored the Han segment of the population. Uighurs felt increasingly marginalized and left behind.

These tensions became evident in February 1997 when a number of residents of Yining, a town fifty kilometers from the Kazakh border, staged a demonstration to protest Chinese policies in Xinjiang, in particular, restrictions on religious and cultural activities, as well as the migration of Chinese settlers to the region. The protesters requested that the provisions of the legislative autonomy regulations that govern all ethnic minority regions in China be respected. These guarantee the right of minority nationality populations to set up "organs of self-government," as well as to retain some control over their local affairs and economic resources.[7]

The protest was peaceful. However, the security forces, composed of the Public Security Bureau and the People's Armed Police, brutally put down the protest and shot a number of unarmed demonstrators. Three days of rioting followed. This led to further harsh reactions by the authorities. Casualty figures for the Yining riots vary depending on the source, but a conservative estimate suggests that nine people died and hundreds were injured.

In subsequent weeks, the authorities responded with arrests of thousands of Uighurs. Suspected activists were rounded up and public sentencing rallies were held across the region. The government also instituted new, far-reaching policies focused on religion as a supposed source of opposition. Mosques and religious schools were closed down.

A month later, in March 1997, separatists detonated bombs simultaneously on three public buses in the provincial capital of Urumqi, killing nine and seriously wounding sixty-eight. This is the only known occasion in recent decades when Uighur activists are known to have attacked civilians indiscriminately. Subsequently, attacks were also carried out on police stations, military installations, and individual political leaders.

Among the actions attributed to separatist forces include the August 1998 wounding of a prison official in Kashgar by a booby trap package placed on his doorstep. Also in August 1998 two prisons in Yining prefecture were attacked by an armed group. Nine prison guards were killed; eighty prisoners managed to escape. Eighteen prisoners allegedly managed to flee to Kazakhstan according to the Hong Kong daily newspaper *Ming Pao*.[8] Despite the indisputably violent character of these incidents, government claims that the 1990s witnessed an escalation of violence are not accepted by all independent observers. For instance, the historian and Xinjiang expert James Millward writes that:

Although the relatively few large-scale incidents in the 1990s were better publicized than those of the 1980s, they were not necessarily bigger or more threatening to the state. There have been, moreover, few incidents of anti-state violence—none large-scale—since early 1998. And none of them since the 1997 Urumqi bus bombings, alleged to be the work of Uighur terrorists, have targeted civilians.[9]

Post 9/11: labeling Uighurs terrorists

Although the Xinjiang authorities began to publicly acknowledge anti-state violence in Xinjiang in the mid-1990s, they generally suggested that it was carried out only by "a handful of separatists" and stressed that the region was stable and prosperous. In early September 2001, the Xinjiang authorities had stressed that "by no means is Xinjiang a place where violence and terrorist accidents take place very often," and that the situation there was "better than ever in history." [10]

However, immediately after the September 11 attacks on the United States, the authorities reversed their stance. For the first time they asserted that opposition in Xinjiang was connected to international terrorism. They also asserted that in some cases the movement had connections to Osama bin Laden himself. China claimed that "Osama bin Laden and the Taliban in Afghanistan had provided the 'Eastern Turkestan' terrorist organizations with equipment and financial resources and trained their personnel," and that one particular organization, the "Eastern Turkestan Islamic Movement" (ETIM) was a "major component of the terrorist network headed by Osama bin Laden."[11]

By October the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman declared that, as "a victim of international terrorism," China hoped that "efforts to fight against East Turkestan terrorist forces should become a part of the international efforts and should also win support and understanding."[12]

On November 12, 2001, China told the U.N. Security Council that anti-state Uighur groups had links with the Taliban in Afghanistan and claimed that they were supported from abroad by radical Islamist organizations. Siding with the U.S. in the new "global war against terrorism," the Chinese government initiated an active diplomatic and propaganda campaign against "East

Turkestan terrorist forces." This label was henceforth to be applied indiscriminately to any Uighur suspected of separatist activities. There has been no sign of any attempt by the Chinese authorities to distinguish between peaceful political activists, peaceful separatists, and those advocating or using violence.

In its efforts to win support for its post-September 11 equation of Uighur separatism with international terrorism, China has released a number of documents describing in some detail the alleged activities of Uighur terrorists groups in China. The first of these was published by the Information Office of the PRC State Council in January 2002, under the title: "East Turkestan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity." [13] It offers the most comprehensive account to date of anti-state violence in Xinjiang and provides a catalog of violent acts allegedly committed by separatist groups in Xinjiang over the past decade. The document asserts that "East Turkestan terrorist forces" had conducted "a campaign of bombing and assassinations" consisting of more than 200 incidents resulting in 162 deaths and 440 people injured over the preceding decade. [14] This was the first time the Chinese authorities provided detailed specifics about violence in Xinjiang. The document also asserted that Uighur organizations responsible for the violence had received training and funding from Pakistan and Afghanistan, including direct financing from Osama bin Laden himself. [15]

The document has a highly charged ideological tone and contains numerous inconsistencies. It also lacks any independent intelligence to support its conclusions. [16] In particular, the central claim that all instances of anti-state violence, and all "separatist groups," originated from a single "East Turkestan terrorist organization" runs counter to known intelligence about the situation in Xinjiang. Even more problematic are the inconsistencies in the account of specific acts of violence within the document itself.

Human Rights Watch has no way of corroborating or disproving the incidents alleged in the January 2002 report. But as James Millward has written in his monograph, *Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment*:

[There] are problems in the document's treatment of events in the 1990s. While its preface claims that terrorist acts killed 162 (and injured 440) over the past decade, the document itself enumerates only 57 deaths. Most of these people died in small-scale incidents with only one or two victims. The selection criteria for including these incidents, as well as many that resulted in no deaths, while excluding acts that led to the remaining 105 deaths are unclear. But if we are safe in assuming that the document likely mentions all spectacular acts of separatist violence, including those involving high loss of life, then we are left to conclude that over a hundred deaths from "terrorism"—nearly two-thirds the claimed total—occurred in small-scale or even individual attacks. Though definitions of terrorism are notoriously arbitrary, it seems legitimate to question what makes the unlisted acts "terrorist" or "separatist" as opposed to simply criminal. [17]

In December 2003, the Chinese government released a second report designed to legitimize its policies in Xinjiang and to enlist the support of the international community. The document listing "East Turkestan terrorist groups and individuals" was issued by the Ministry of Public Security and gave the names of four "Eastern Turkestan" terrorist organizations and eleven individual members of these groups, and called for international support to stop their activities, including a request for Interpol to issue arrest warrants. [18] The document points to the presence of Chinese Uighurs in Pakistan and Afghanistan, including some among the Taliban forces. It suggests that all Uighur opposition to Chinese domination, including non-violent resistance, is connected to international radical-Islamic terrorism.

Literature becomes sabotage

Chinese authorities have not produced extensive evidence of specific activities carried out by what it has termed "terrorist forces" in Xinjiang over the past few years. Instead, Chinese authorities now argue that "separatist thought" is the new approach followed by dissident organizations that previously used violent tactics. This argument allows the authorities to accuse a dissenting writer or a non-violent group advocating minority rights of terrorist intentions and crimes.

The alleged link between terrorist organizations and the ideological content of publications surfaced immediately after September 11:

"Xinjiang independence elements have changed their combat tactics since the September 11 incident," stated a high-ranking Xinjiang official. "They have focused on attacking China on the ideological front instead of using their former frequent practice of engaging in violent terrorist operations." [19]

The official charged that those using "literary means" and "arts and literature" to "distort historical facts" were the same people responsible for "violent terrorist operations" in the

past. He accused them of "taking advantage of art and literature to tout the products of opposition to the people and to the masses and of advocating ethnic splittist thinking."

In February 2002, the Xinjiang Party Secretary instructed the local authorities to crack down on these "separatist techniques" and detailed the "forms of infiltration and sabotage carried out in the ideological sphere by ethnic separatist forces": [20]

1. using all sorts of news media to propagate separatist thought;

2. using periodicals, works of literature and art performances; presenting the subject in satires or allegories that give free reign to and disseminate dissatisfaction and propagate separatist thought;

3. illegally printing reactionary books and periodicals; distributing or posting reactionary leaflets, letters and posters; spreading rumors to confuse the people; instilling the public with separatist sentiment;

4. using audio and video recordings, such as audio tapes, CDs or VCDs, to incite religious fanaticism and promote "holy war";

5. forging alliances with outside separatist and enemy forces, making use of broadcasts, the Internet, and other means to intensify campaigns of reactionary propaganda and infiltration of ideas into public opinion;

6. using popular cultural activities to make the masses receptive to reactionary propaganda encouraging opposition."[21]

From the wording of the document, published in the Party's official newspaper, the *Xinjiang Daily*, it appears that Xinjiang authorities equate any expression of dissatisfaction (*buman qingxu* 不满情绪), even metaphorical or ironical, with separatist thought (*fenlie sixiang* 分裂思想). The term "spreading rumors" (*zaoyao* 造谣) used in the article is the same as that used in criminal law: "incitement to subvert the political power of the state and overthrow the socialist system by means of *spreading rumors*, slander or other means" (Article 105), an offense for which the punishment can be life imprisonment. The document asserts that the "expression of dissatisfaction" in works of art is a form of criminal activity and is liable to criminal punishment. Furthermore, the document uses the terms "sabotage" and "infiltration" to characterize such activities, thus reinforcing the idea that they are equivalent to violent action.

The fact that "popular cultural activities" (*minjian wenhua huodong* 民间文化活动) are denounced as forms of "separatist" activity appears to be aimed at deterring people from engaging in activities that promote their history, culture, or tradition. Ethnic minority individuals and Uighur organizations abroad had complained in the past about similar official attitudes toward legitimate cultural pursuits, but prior to this official pronouncement their allegations had only been supported by circumstantial evidence, not stated explicitly as high-level Party policy.[22]

Such comments indicate that the Chinese authorities are trying to erase the distinctions among cultural and minority rights activists, pro-independence activists, and those who use violence. This suggests an historical shift: while before September 11, 2001, not all minority rights or cultural rights activists or those on the "ideological front" (which presumably covers all critics of CCP policy) were considered to be terrorists, after September 11 they are, or should be, assumed to be terrorists.

In effect, China is claiming that terrorists have now become secret peaceful activists, presumably waiting for the right moment to revert to their former methods. This is a very dangerous set of assumptions that can be acted upon by the Chinese or Xinjiang security services at any time to justify arrests, heavy sentences, and the death penalty.

The case of Tursunjan Emet, a Uighur poet from Urumqi, illustrates this point. On January 1, 2002, Emet recited a poem in Uighur at the end of a concert at the Xinjiang People's Hall in the capital Urumqi. The Party committee ruled that the poem had an "anti-government" message and labeled the case as an "ethnic separatist crime in the area of the ideological front."[23] The Chairman of the Xinjiang provincial government immediately called for an investigation, vowing to purge all who "openly advocate separatism using the name of art," and urged cadres to use "politics" as the only standard in judging artistic and literary work. Emet went into hiding immediately after the incident. He was then detained, probably in late January 2002.[24] Official Chinese sources have since denied that he was ever detained. Unofficial sources indicate that he was released, some weeks, or possibly months, later.[25]

In a similar case, on February 2, 2005, the Kashgar Intermediate Court sentenced Uighur author Nurmemet Yasin to ten years imprisonment for publishing a story allegedly "inciting separatism." In late 2004, Yasin published "The Blue Pigeon" in the *Kashgar Literature Journal*.[26] A month later, he was arrested in Bachu County. His story told of a blue pigeon that traveled far from home. When it returned, different colored pigeons captured him and locked him in a birdcage. Although the other pigeons fed him, the blue pigeon opted to commit suicide rather than remain imprisoned in his hometown.

In part because pro-independence Uighurs use a blue flag, Chinese authorities read the story as referring to Uighur resentment of the government's policies in Xinjiang. The court tried Yasin in closed hearings; RFA sources claimed he was denied access to a lawyer.

It is therefore now official policy that criticism or minority expression in art and literature can be deemed a disguised form of secessionism, its author a criminal or even "terrorist."

The international response—acquiescence and quid pro quos

The new Chinese description of the nature and level of violence and separatism in Xinjiang led to a significant change in the international approach to Xinjiang. The U.S. government, keen after September 11 to enlist Chinese support in its efforts against Islamist terrorism, agreed to a Chinese request that it co-sponsor the inclusion of a little-known Uighur organization, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), on the U.N.'s list of terrorist organizations purportedly linked to al-Qaeda and subject to the freezing of assets. Although American officials declared that they had "independent evidence" of such a connection, the State

Department press release explaining this decision quoted verbatim a document issued by the Chinese government in 2002 that similarly outlawed ETIM. The U.S. statement even mistakenly attributed all the terrorist incidents described in that document solely to ETIM, a claim that even the Chinese authorities had not made.[27]

The "independent evidence" referred to by the State Department appears to have originated from the arrest a few weeks earlier in Kyrgyzstan of a group of Uighurs who were allegedly planning an attack on the U.S. embassy.[28] Kyrgyzstan deported to China two persons alleged to be ETIM members who had "plotted to attack the U.S. Embassy in Kyrgyzstan as well as other U.S. interests abroad."[29] In their rush to find corroborative evidence, U.S. officials seem never to have questioned the reports from Kyrgyz authorities, who have a record of trumping up terrorism charges against Uighurs. U.S. officials have privately indicated unease at the decision to list ETIM. In December 2003 the U.S. declined to support China's request to list another Uighur organization, the East Turkestan Liberation Organization.[30]

The U.S. has also publicly insisted that the ETIM listing and the international war on terror should not be used by China to justify internal repression against political opponents or minorities. President Bush stressed in October 2001 in Shanghai that, "The war on terrorism must never be an excuse to persecute minorities."[31] U.S. Ambassador Clark Randt similarly stated in January 2002 that "Being a valuable member of the coalition does not mean that China… can use terrorism as an excuse to persecute its ethnic minorities."[32] However, the U.S. has not withdrawn or formally qualified its condemnation of the ETIM from the U.N. list. In the process, it has handed China a major propaganda victory against its political opponents in Xinjiang.

China has also been very active in enrolling the support of its Central Asian neighbors in the crackdown against Uighur ethno-nationalist aspirations. It is the driving force behind the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a regional security body composed of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan set up in 1996 (Uzbekistan joined in 2001). The SCO was established in part to address Chinese concerns about a number of small Uighur political and opposition movements that, in the first years of independence for the former Soviet republics, set up organizations in the region, giving Uighur exiles a much closer base for their operations than the previous generation of activists, who had been based in Turkey and, later, Germany. Under pressure from Beijing, since 1996 these Central Asian countries have effectively silenced independent Uighur organizations on their soil and on several occasions have repatriated refugees in response to requests by China. Some of those repatriated refugees were executed upon their return.[33]

Since the co-option by China and other states of the notion of the "war against terror," international co-operation has been leveraged in the Central Asian region by means of mutual agreement about those regarded by these states as political opponents. These cases have not always involved activists involved in the use of violence. In October 2004, China and Russia made a joint call for international efforts to help in their respective fights against opponents, with the Russians seeking help against Chechen rebels and the Chinese seeking help against Uighur separatists. The statement referred to "terrorists" and "separatists" in Chechnya and Xinjiang, whom it said "are part of international terrorism" and "should be the targets of the international fight against terrorism."[34] The wording of the Chinese part of the statement referred both to terrorism and separatism, but implied that they were interchangeable:

China understands and firmly supports all measures taken by Russia to resume the constitutional order of the Republic of Chechnya and to fight against terrorism. Russia firmly supports all measures taken by China to fight against the terrorist and separatist forces in "East Turkestan" and to eliminate terrorist jeopardy.[35]

The Kazakh government acknowledged in November 2004 that it had extradited fourteen Uighurs to China and Kyrgyzstan since 1997.[36] Pakistan has boasted that it has eliminated Uighur "terrorists" in its northern areas.[37] Beijing has also pressured Pakistan and Nepal for the repatriation of refugees. In January 2002, Nepal forcibly repatriated three Uighurs who had been granted refugee status by the UNHCR and were awaiting relocation to a third country.[38] One of them, Shaheer Ali, was executed shortly thereafter after being convicted for separatism. He left a detailed account of torture inflicted on him in Chinese jails before his death.[39]

China has asked the United States to send to China the twenty-two or twenty-three Chinese Uighurs held at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.[40] The detainees had allegedly been fighting alongside Taliban forces in Afghanistan at the time of the U.S. invasion, and were arrested by Pakistani authorities when fleeing into Pakistan when the U.S. offensive against the Taliban started. Despite the fact that the Pentagon ascertained that these prisoners had "no intelligence value," a Chinese mission was reportedly permitted to interrogate the prisoners at the Guantanamo detention facility.[41] Following reports in December 2003 that the U.S. was about to release some of the Uighurs without charge, and was considering handing them over to China,[42] Human Rights Watch and others raised concerns over Chinese authorities' track record of swiftly executing repatriated "separatists."[43] The first reports that the U.S. government had ruled out return to China because of the risk that the Uighurs might be tortured or executed appeared in June 2004.[44] In August 2004, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell declared publicly that the U.S. would not return the Uighurs.[45] The Chinese embassy in Washington continues to press for their repatriation. It has declared that Beijing considers the Uighurs at Guantanamo to be "East Turkestan terrorists" who should be returned to China.[46]

While there are genuine security concerns in Xinjiang, they are manipulated by Chinese authorities for political and economic ends. When it is expedient, the authorities insist that only "an extremely small number of elements" are engaged in separatism and that the situation is "stable." In March 2005, the head of the Xinjiang government, Ismail Tiwaldi, confirmed that "there have been no terror attacks in Xinjiang in recent years," thus corroborating his statement of the previous year that "Xinjiang ha[d] not recorded a single violent incident, nor any assassination case [in 2004]," and that "there hadn't been even a small incident,"

throughout 2003.[47] When, however, the government desires international support for its crackdown on Uighur challenges to Chinese authority, including peaceful activities, it raises the specter of Islamic terrorism.

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[5] The 1990 national census showed that the mortality of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang was 3.6 times higher than for the Han population. Life expectancy was 61.62, against 71.4 for the Han population and 70 for China overall ("The quality and labor situation of the population from Xinjiang ethnic minorities," *Journal of Xinjiang University*, September 1999, vol. 7, no. 3 [新疆少数民族人口的素质与就业，*新疆大学学报*, 1999年9月第7卷第3期]).

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] For a detailed analysis of the problems of the January 2002 State Council Information Center report, see James Millward, *Violent Separatism in Xinjiang*.

[17] Millward, *Violent Separatism in Xinjiang*, pp. 12-13.

[18] "Combating terrorism, we have no choice," *People's Daily Online*, December 18, 2003. The identified "Eastern Turkestan" terrorist organizations were the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), the Eastern Turkestan Liberation Organization (ETLO), the World Uighur Youth Congress (WUYC), and the Eastern Turkestan Information Center (ETIC).

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[20] "For the first time Xinjiang reveals the six forms of sabotaging operations of the separatist forces in the ideological sphere," Xinjiang Information Network, February 1, 2002 ["新疆首次披露民族分裂势力在意识形态领域破坏活动的六种形式," 新疆新闻网, 2002-02-01].

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EDITOR'S CHOICE

From Assimilation to Autonomy: Realizing Ethnic Minority Rights in China's National Autonomous Regions 🆓

Xiaohui Wu

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Abstract

This article examines regional autonomy in China's ethnic minority areas and its implications for minority rights in China. It argues that China's regional autonomy regime is in need of improvement in quest for national unity, social harmony and equality among ethnic groups in China. In light of past State–minority relations, as well as changing conditions in China, and by reference to international experience, the article offers suggestions for China to improve and implement minority rights legislation and policies. It argues that, under the existing political system in view of the existing basic framework on minorities, the Chinese State should adopt a new approach which encompasses elements of rule of law, deliberative democracy and international human rights standards. The new approach should guarantee respect for minority identities and seek means of establishing their respective autonomies and realizing their special rights. It should focus as much on the process as on the decisions, on the voices as on the results and on the individuals as on the groups. In this way, China's national regional autonomy would be oriented towards a complete policy of

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commitment to pluralistic values within the Chinese polity and would be more likely to satisfy the minority aspirations and the State's need for national stability and unity.

I. Introduction

1. The issue of ethnic minority rights in China's national autonomous regions poses great challenges for China in terms of national unity, economic development, social stability and human rights protection. Historically, China is a multi-ethnic country formed through territorial expansion and a fusion of different peoples over the course of history. Its widely dispersed population is characterized by tremendous geographic, linguistic, cultural and religious diversity. The dominant ethnic group in China is known as the Han nationality, which has approximately 12.3 billion people. There are about 114 million people in China who are officially recognized as national minorities.[1]

2. Since antiquity, problems involving national minorities have been the source of intense feelings and conflict. They have also weighed constantly as an important issue for China's rulers. In the last three decades, ethnic relations between the Han nationality and minority nationalities have become more problematic as the long record of tension and conflict continues. Ethnic tensions and unrest in China have emerged as a subject of policy debate, academic research and global attention in the last three decades.[2] The Janus face of regional autonomy in today's China has often obfuscated our understanding of its historical roots, complex processes and empirically observable outcomes. An examination of China's experience with its ethnic minority regions is much in order if we are to understand the full complexity and dynamics of ethnic minority rights in China. The purpose of this article is to examine regional autonomy in China's ethnic minority areas and its implications for minority rights in China. It will focus on the indispensable role of regional autonomy in protecting and realizing minority rights in China, on the assumption that China's regional autonomy regime is in need of a thorough inquiry in quest of national unity, social harmony and full equality among ethnic groups in China.

3. This article will proceed as follows. Section II sets the stage by looking back at the geographic and historical background of China's ethnic majority–minority relations, as it is helpful to understand national/regional conditions and historical antecedents before laying the groundwork for an inquiry of minority rights in China. Section III conducts an investigation of the minority policy history of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP, or "the Party") in terms of its ideological, historical and political sources, from the early days of the

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CCP in the 1920s to the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. Section IV details the interplay between the Party's policy on national regional autonomy and State laws during the period of 1949 and 1978. Section V explains the remarkable revival of ethnic awareness and tension in the reform era and the return to pluralism on the part of the CCP and the Chinese government. It also examines the attempt of the Chinese leadership to establish a comprehensive legal system that warrants equal rights for all nationalities and regional autonomy for national minorities. In Section VI, on the basis of the result of comparative law studies, this article will discuss how international human rights law and jurisprudence may help in the improvement and creation of a better implementation system for national regional autonomy in China. Section VII concludes the article. The article does not purport to be in any way exhaustive, on the understanding that the exploration for any solution to existing problems, which are of a complex nature and which affect almost all spheres of the Chinese society, is a task for several branches of social sciences, with an essential yet by no means exclusive role reserved for law. Hence, the article will focus only on issues of importance to law and ethnic minority rights.

II. The geographic and historical legacy

4. There are, in all, 56 officially recognized ethic groups or "*minzu*" (nationalities) incorporated into the territory of the PRC.[3] According to the 2011 National Population Census, the largest ethnic group, the Han nationality, constitutes about 91.51 per cent of the Chinese population. Some 8.49 per cent of the population is officially identified as "minority nationalities". There is a great variation in the size of these minority groups. No one is especially large. The most populous group is the Zhuang nationality, with more than 17 million people. The least populous, the Lhoba nationality, numbered only 2965 in the 2000 census. More famous perhaps are the Tibetans (5.4 million), Mongols (5.8 million) and Uighurs (8.4 million).[4] National minorities are found in all parts of the country. The number of China's national minorities is small relative to its total population, but the areas they have traditionally inhabited account for almost 60 per cent of the territory of the country, mainly the border and remote areas which are of strategic importance and are extremely rich in natural resources.[5]

5. The languages spoken by China's national minorities range widely, belonging to four of the world's largest language families: Sino-Tibetan, Turkic-Altaic, Austro-Asiatic and Indo-European.[6] Some minorities such as the Tibetans, Mongols and Koreans have a very rich

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literature, while others lack written scripts. Also in terms of culture and religion, features of the Zhuangs, Manchus and Koreans are in many ways similar to features of the Han socio-cultural organization. At the other end of the spectrum there are minorities such as the

Tibetans, Uygurs, Kazakhs who have distinct, strong cultures, fine literature and arts and pervasive religions with clergies that used to exert powerful social and political influence. The religions with the most numerous adherents are Islam and Buddhism. There are also Catholics and Protestants, especially in the border areas of Southwest China. Many national minorities have maintained their own "tribal religions".[7] Considerable differences also exist among national minorities with respect to political systems, social relations and stages of economic development. Some national minorities, such as the Mongols, Manchus or Tibetans, once established States quite independent of the Chinese empire. Some of the minorities retained the slave or serf systems and the hunter-gatherer economy into the 1950s. Some even had no class structures formed when the PRC was established in 1949.[8]

6. Historically, people living within the regions of what we know today as China belonged to numerous ethnic groups.[9] Relations between the majority, the Han, and other minority groups have rarely been easy.[10] Peoples other than the Han were considered to be culturally and technologically inferior to the Han and were generally referred to as "the barbarians".[11] In 221 B.C., the Kingdom of Qin conquered all Han Chinese feudal States and expanded to incorporate many non-Han areas within its borders. Non-Han peoples were either expelled to ever more marginal lands or assimilated into the conquering Han Chinese. In the succeeding Han Dynasty, the Chinese court adopted a policy of reliance upon the attractions of Chinese culture and civilization. Chiefs of the neighbouring "barbarian" tribes were enticed or pressured to pay regular tributes as a token of their submission to the Chinese emperor. They were often rewarded for subjugation with imperial posts and titles as well as precious gifts such as gold, silks, tea and china. In many cases, the rewards given by the Han emperor were far in excess of the tributes that the barbarians had paid.[12] Even though the tributary system was sometimes expensive to the Chinese court, politically and culturally it did allow many of the neighbouring barbarians to fit into the Chinese imperial order by allowing them to exercise autonomous rule under varying degrees of Chinese imperial supervision and control.[13] Of course, the policy of appeasement and diplomacy was always backed by military force. Military campaigns were frequently taken against the barbarians beyond the range of the Chinese emperor's mandate to secure the border regions or expand the territory. By means of the "carrot and stick" policy, the Chinese empire managed to take control of enormous territories previously inhabited by the barbarians over the long course of history.

7. However, the more effective force behind Chinese imperial expansion was the influence of Chinese cultural and material civilization rather than military conquest or coercion. The traditional Chinese worldview saw China as the centre of the world and the hub of civilization. As far as the Chinese were concerned, it was a favour on their part to bestow the

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blessings of their own cultural and material civilization onto the "uncivilized barbarians". As Thierry describes, the Han Chinese used to think that:

> The basis of the difference between the Hans and the Barbarians was not originally of an ethnic nature, but rested on a relationship to Civilization, since for the Chinese there is Civilization … And the relevant criterion to establish this difference is sedentarization; the civilized one is the one who constructs towns and devotes himself to agriculture. … The nature of Barbarians is to wander like animals in zones unsuited to sedentary culture such as steppes and mountains …[14]

Han-Chinese were notoriously contemptuous of the non-Chinese peoples who did not share their language, values and moral principles, methods of agriculture, lifestyles or other cultural attributes.[15] They considered the barbarians to be uncivilized and without culture, yet assimilated them culturally and integrated them politically into the Han Chinese commonwealth. Confucian cultural consciousness tended to deny the very existence of minority cultures. In Confucianism, there was no concept of Chinese culture and other cultures, only Chinese culture or no culture at all.[16] Because the criterion that differentiated the Han Chinese and the barbarians was mainly of a cultural nature, barbarians could become members of the Chinese commonwealth by adopting the Han Chinese culture and moral principles. Time and again in Chinese history "barbarians" were made "Chinese" and even given high posts in the government.

8. Confucianism called for a policy of propagating Chinese culture and Confucian moral teachings to win over the barbarians. Believing in the universality of Chinese culture and kingship, Master Confucius favoured a benevolent attitude towards the barbarians. He argued that China would benefit if the barbarians would "come and be transformed" by the superior Chinese culture. He had remarked in the *Analects* that "if remoter people are not submissive, all the influences of civil culture and virtue are to be cultivated to attract them to be so; and when they have been so attracted, they must be made contented and tranquil".[17] However, this idealistic theory of cultural persuasion was seldom followed in practice. More often than not, the dominant concern of China's imperial politics was not to integrate culturally the peoples on the periphery of the Chinese empire, but rather to control them. The long tradition of Chinese imperial statecraft developed the use of both persuasion and coercion as inter-dependent strategies to maintain central control over the barbarians, with sufficient native support to ensure the need for minimal imperial government personnel and resources.[18] Minority peoples' political leaders were allowed to exercise autonomous rule because that allowed the Chinese empire to control the minority regions more effectively.

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Dreyer suggested that the goal of Chinese imperial policy toward ethnic minorities was "a pluralistic form of integration that aimed at little more than control. Abstention from aggression and a vague commitment of loyalty to the emperor and the Confucian values he embodied were sufficient to attain this level of integration. Barbarians' traditional customs, languages, and governing systems were not interfered with so long as they did not pose a threat to the Chinese state".[19]

9. The downfall of the Qing dynasty in 1911 marked the beginning of a post-imperial era for China. Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founder of the Republic of China (ROC), recognized the existence of four distinct minority groups in China, i.e., the Manchus, Mongolians, Tibetans and Huis (a term that included Muslims in China) and the equality of all ethnic groups.[20] However, he was also of the opinion that because of the absolute prominence of the Han and the insignificant numbers of minorities, the Chinese State was essentially composed of one nationality.[21]His ultimate goal was assimilationist, to "facilitate the dying out of all names of individual peoples inhabiting China," and to unify and fuse all the peoples into "a single cultural and political whole".[22] A few years later, under the influence of the Soviet Union and Comintern, Dr. Sun added the concepts of self-determination and autonomy for minorities to his policy platform. But these concepts were never properly implemented by Dr. Sun or his Nationalist followers.[23] Dr. Sun's successor, Chiang Kai-shek, adopted an even more explicitly assimilationist policy, claiming the common ancestry of all inhabitants of China. Chiang's assertion was: "That there are five peoples designated in China is not due to differences of race or blood but to religion and geographical environment. In short, the differentiation among China's five peoples is due to regional and religious factors, and not to race or blood."[24] The assimilationist policy of Chiang's Nationalist government had few practical consequences for ethnic minorities themselves, because many of the minority regions were under the control of semi-independent warlords or native ruling elites throughout the Nationalist period. Preoccupied with fighting sundry warlords, Japanese aggression and the Communists, the Nationalist government paid little attention to minority areas and, in any event, had limited resources to implement its minority policies.[25]

10. To sum up, the traditional relations of the Han Chinese with non-Han minority peoples generally were coloured by Chinese imperial domination and the assumption of Chinese cultural superiority. On the part of the Chinese State, there were two parallel tendencies, one toward assimilation and the other toward pluralism, as the most effective means for dealing with ethnic minorities. The two tendencies were often complementary—parts of a single policy to maintain Chinese imperial order and to secure a superior-inferior relation between the dominant Han majority and the non-Han minorities. Both had important implications for later PRC policy toward national minorities.

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III. The Chinese Communist Party and the national minorities to the founding of the PRC in 1949

11. The Chinese Communist Party was founded in 1921. From early on, the nationality doctrine of the CCP has closely followed the teachings of Karl Marx and V.I. Lenin and the theory and practice of the Soviet Union on the management of nationality problems.[26] In 1922, the Manifesto of the Second CCP Congress recognized the equality of the nationalities.[27] The manifesto proposed the establishment of a Chinese federal republic where Mongolia, Tibet and Eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang) were to be autonomous States, united with China proper on the basis of their free will.[28] When the short-lived Chinese Soviet Republic was established in the rural areas controlled by the CCP in 1931, the CCP adopted a Draft Constitution and a resolution on the nationality question in China, both explicitly recognizing the right to self-determination of national minorities.[29] Closely modelled on the 1924 Constitution of the Soviet Union, Article 14 of the Draft Constitution provided that:

> All Mongolians, Tibetans, Miao, Yao, Koreans and others living on the territory of China shall enjoy the full right to self-determination, i.e., they may either join the Union of Chinese Soviets or secede from it and form their own state as they may prefer. The Soviet regime of China will do its utmost to assist the national minorities in liberating themselves from the yoke of imperialists, the Nationalist militarists, *tusi* [native officials], the princes, lams and others, and in achieving complete freedom and autonomy. The Soviet regime must encourage the development of the national cultures and the national languages of these peoples.[30]

The question which puzzled many was how the Communists, with a strong sense of Chinese nationalism and national unity and deep roots in centuries-long Chinese imperial tradition, could promise with such apparent ease the right of ethnic minorities to self-determination, secession and independence. According to Dreyer, the CCP nationality policy during the pre-1935 period may have been formulated to garner the support of national minorities and alleviate their traditional fears of Han control and assimilation.[31] Another important factor may have been the heavy influence of the Comintern whose agents dominated the CCP policy-making during the pre-1935 period. This might explain why the Leninist nationality policy, including supporting the right of national minorities to secession and independence, Skip to Main Content was unquestioningly adopted by the CCP with little regard to the tradition and realities of the Chinese State.

12. This idealistic policy changed with the rise to power of Mao Zedong in 1935.[32] Mao was a strongly nationalistically minded politician and independent of the guidance of the Comintern. He was critical of the nationality policy prior to his coming to power and reversed the Party's stand on the right of national minorities to secession and independence. His vision of the Chinese State was that of a unified State with a population composed of many nationalities which were equal and had the right to self-government. National minorities should not be forced to be assimilated into the Han Chinese but were to be encouraged to preserve and develop their own cultures, languages and customs.[33]

13. Mao's ideas were later incorporated into official CCP policy on national minorities and put into practice in the CCP-controlled areas. From 1936 to 1949, several Huis (Chinese Muslim) and Mongol national autonomous governments were established by the CCP. The largest was the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region set up in 1947, two years before the establishment of the PRC, in an attempt to prevent Inner Mongolia from separating from China and uniting with the independent, Soviet-backed Mongolian People's Republic (Outer Mongolia).[34]

14. To sum up, the CCP minority policy prior to the coming into being of the PRC included the equality of nationalities, the right to self-government within a unified Chinese State, a united front with co-operative native ruling elite against the Nationalist government and "foreign imperialist encroachments" in the border areas and respect for minority cultures, customs and languages.

IV. Policies toward national minorities in the PRC: 1949–1978

15. After the PRC was founded in 1949, the CCP considered nationality policy to be of utmost importance and exerted great effort to establish a set of policies and measures to deal with its nationality problems. The reasons are not difficult to find. First and foremost, the CCP nationality policy is dominated here by nationalistic concerns and a perceived need to control remote border regions that might otherwise fall under the influence of hostile foreign or domestic forces. The ethnic minorities inhabit 50–60 per cent of China's territory, principally the strategic national border areas, which are as important for their rich deposits of raw materials as they are for defense. Also, the policy toward minorities is informed by an ideologically motivated desire to make of China "one big co-operative family"—that is, to obtain the collaboration of all the peoples living in China in building a new socialist State. In the early 1950s, the CCP and the Chinese government followed a policy based on the notion that the PRC was a "unitary multinational country".[35] This notion involved two principles balanced against each other: that minority regions were integral parts of China, any

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possibility of secession or independence being absolutely ruled out under any circumstances; and national minorities should be treated equally and were to enjoy national regional autonomy in areas where they were concentrated. A system of national regional autonomy was formally introduced into the Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference—the PRC's provisional constitution—to allow national minorities a limited degree of autonomy.[36] It was also laid down in Article 3 of the 1954 Constitution of the PRC, which provided that:

> The People's Republic of China is a unitary multinational state. All the nationalities are equal. Discrimination against or oppression of any nationality, and acts which undermine the unity of the nationalities, are prohibited.
>
> All the nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages, and to preserve or reform their own customs and ways.
>
> Regional autonomy applies in areas where a minority nationality lives in a compact community. All the national autonomous areas are inseparable parts of the People's Republic of China.[37]

16. The PRC government claimed the national regional autonomy system to be in line with the actual situation in China and in accordance with Marxist-Leninist doctrines on nationality relations. It argued that China had historically been a unified State with centralized power.[38] Over the course of history, nationalities grew closer because of regular cultural interchange and economic co-operation, and the unification of nationalities was a natural course. The areas populated by minority nationalities remained integral parts of China for hundreds of years. There was no need for them to separate from their great "motherland". Moreover, because the Han Chinese were more economically and culturally advanced, ran the argument, it was in the fundamental interest of national minorities to stay in the PRC so that they could flourish with the assistance of the Han.[39]

17. The national regional autonomy system was also justified on the ground of geographic distribution of the nationality population. China's national minority areas are often co-inhabited by two or more nationalities. None of China's minorities, it was claimed, was in exclusive possession of contiguous territories free of other minorities or Han Chinese. For example, Xinjiang is regarded as the place where Uygurs are concentrated, and yet there are thirteen other nationalities there.[40] The CCP claimed that this type of situation made an ethnically oriented federal system in China unworkable and impractical. Rather, the national regional autonomy system was deemed the most appropriate for China's minorities to enjoy

the right to national autonomy, because only under this system could all nationalities—those with large populations as well as those with small compact ones, those which live in big compact communities as well as those which live in small ones—set up their autonomous governments commensurate with their size.[41] Under the 1954 Constitution, autonomous governments might be established at the autonomous region (equivalent to a province), autonomous prefecture, autonomous county and autonomous township levels. With the level of autonomy being dependent on the population and the size of a given region, the national regional autonomy system was said to be the "only possibility" for all nationalities to exercise autonomy in their scattered areas of concentration.[42] For instance, while the majority of the population in Jinlin Province were Han, there was a large Korean community concentrated in the Yanbian area, which made up 74 per cent of the total population in 1952. Since the province and the national autonomous region were of equal administrative status under the PRC constitutions, Jinlin Province was not permitted to have a national autonomous region established within its boundaries. Instead, a Korean national autonomous prefecture (*zi-zhi-zhou*) was set up in 1952 as a sub-provincial administrative unit of Jinlin Province to let the Koreans in Yanbian practise self-government.[43] Although the administrative status of the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture was one level below the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, the substance of autonomous rights enjoyed by the Koreans in Yanbian was essentially no different from that of the Mongols in Inner Mongolia. Because the national regional autonomy system allowed autonomous entities to be organized at different administrative levels rather than at a single level (as would be the case under the standard federal system), the CCP claimed to have found a flexible and practical system of autonomous entities for all national minorities to enjoy special rights and benefits. The late premier of the PRC, ZHOU Enlai, called the policy of national regional autonomy the nucleus of CCP minority policy, claiming that the system was "a correct combination of national autonomy and regional autonomy, a correct combination of economic and political factors; this not only makes it possible for a nationality living in a compact community to enjoy the right to autonomy, but also enables nationalities which live together to enjoy the right of autonomy … Such a system is *a creation hitherto unknown in history*"[44] (emphasis added).

18. During the period from 1949 to 1957, the minority policy of the Chinese government can best be described as one of gradualism and pluralism.[45] The PRC government held a relatively tolerant and benign attitude toward minorities, and made considerable concessions and exemptions to accommodate local conditions. Traditionalist Han attitudes toward minorities, labelled "Great Hanism", were condemned by the Party propaganda. Han officials were required to respect local customs, cultures and religious traditions. Upper class

secular and religious minority leaders were invited to join the newly established national autonomous bodies and take up honorific positions. The Chinese government introduced a plan called "nationalization of the administrative bodies of regional autonomy", which was

designed to ensure a number of minority representatives on government bodies proportional to their percentage of the population in the autonomous regions. Enormous efforts were made to train and promote skilled, professional minority officials.[46] Open class struggle and mass political campaigns, so prevalent in other parts of the country at that time, were purposefully avoided to dispel minorities' fears of Han repression. The PRC government engaged in social engineering on a large scale, starting various types of relief work, introducing new technology, tackling illiteracy and disease and constructing energy, communication and transportation projects in minority areas. It is fair to say that nationalities questions were generally handled with sensitivity in the early 1950s. As a result, relations between the Han Chinese and minorities improved.

19. The policy of gradualism and pluralism came abruptly to an end in 1957 when the political winds in Beijing shifted to radical leftism.[47] Accordingly, the Party policy with respect to national minorities saw a rather drastic reversion towards assimilation of minorities. A series of radical leftist programs were brought into minorities areas to accelerate forced socialist transformation of minority societies. When Mao hastily launched the large-scale collectivization program in 1958, the rural areas inhabited by the Uygurs, Koreans, Mongols and Miaos were included, along with the Han areas. The Chinese government started encouraging minorities to abandon their old customs and traditions, learn the written and spoken Chinese language and wear Mao-style suits. Many of those who asserted their ethnic identity were purged in the Anti-Rightists Movement for the sin of "local nationalism".[48] During the Cultural Revolution (1967–1976), minorities experienced the most assimilative period in the history of the PRC. Although the policy of national autonomy and equality remained on the book, they were discarded in reality. Harsh class struggle, repeated political campaigns and mass social mobilization were pursued on daily basis to achieve complete socialist transformation.[49] The ruthless assimilative policy had dramatic effects on national minorities as well as their relations with the Chinese government and the Han Chinese. With little surprise, the policy of forced assimilation gave rise to ethnic conflicts, tensions and violence.[50]

V. Revival of ethnic awareness and return to pluralism: reality and policy in the Reform Era (1978 to present)

20. After Deng Xiaoping came to power in the late 1970s, virtually every former Party policy connected with radical leftism and the Cultural Revolution was reassessed. The extreme assimilationist policies that the radical leftists tried to implement in the Cultural Revolution were soon discontinued, while the Party formally admitted serious mistakes made in the past

handling of minorities. In the early 1980s, the priority of the Party's nationality policy was modified to centre on economic development and effective implementation of the national regional autonomy system.[51] As Dreyer has observed, the main change in policy toward minorities might be motivated by several reasons. Firstly, the post-Mao leadership had a strong interest in developing the minority areas and in utilizing their rich resources to fuel the modernization drive. The minority areas are among the poorest and least-developed regions in China. Minorities needed a greater say in matters concerning the development of local economy and the exploitation of natural resources that were to be used to benefit the local population.[52] Secondly, a special treatment of the minorities would help convince Taiwan to accept a similar status of autonomy within the PRC.[53] Thirdly, China's nationality policy was closely intertwined with its foreign policy. Many minority nationalities such as the Koreans, Mongols, Kazakhs, Uygurs, Miaos and Zhuangs have relatives outside China's borders. A favourable treatment of minorities would certainly help China maintain a friendly relationship with those relevant neighbouring countries and strengthen China's internal stability and defense capacity.[54]

21. The loosening of political and economic restrictions and the return to pluralistic policies led to a revival of nationalist consciousness in many parts of the minority areas. Contrary to the Chinese government's expectations that economic and social liberalization and improvement in living standards would alleviate minorities' dissatisfaction with the Chinese rule, in the late 1970s minorities began vehemently to assert their national identity and to demand that their rights to national autonomy be formally respected.[55] Minorities' discontent for the first time received public attention through the mass media at the third session of the National People's Congress in 1980 when minority deputies openly voiced sharp criticisms, claims and suggestions concerning the CCP's nationality policy.[56] They demanded an effective implementation and expansion of national autonomy in all dimensions. Following this event, there was an extensive discussion about the real meaning of the term "national autonomy" in Chinese governmental and academic circles as well as in minority regions. While substantial disagreements existed as to what national autonomy was all about and how far it could or should go in self-administration and policy-making, consent was reached on one point—that further legislation was needed to enhance legal guarantees of, and the rights to, self-government.[57]

22. The 1982 Constitution devotes a great amount of space to national minority issues. It reaffirms the equality of all nationalities, protects the lawful rights and interests of all national minorities, and prohibits the discrimination against and oppression of any nationality.[58] It provides detailed provisions for national autonomy similar to those in the 1954 Constitution but gives national minorities more rights than they ever had before. Under

the 1982 Constitution, the rights of national minorities to autonomy have mainly three components:

1. *Political Autonomy*: The Constitution guarantees certain autonomous political rights for national minorities. It stipulates that the chairmanship and vice-chairmanships of the standing committee to the people's congress of an autonomous unit shall include a citizen or citizens of the nationality or nationalities exercising regional autonomy in the area concerned; the administrative head of an autonomous area shall be a member of the nationality, or of one of the nationalities, exercising regional autonomy.[59] The autonomous authorities exercise the same powers as local organs of the State; at the same time, they exercise the right of autonomy within the limits of their authority as prescribed by the Constitution, the law of national regional autonomy and other laws.[60] More significantly, the people's congresses of national autonomous areas are empowered to enact autonomy regulations and specific regulations in light of the political, economic and cultural characteristics of the nationality or nationalities who practice autonomy.[61] These autonomous regulations become effective only after being approved by the standing committee of the higher-level people's congress.

2. *Economic Autonomy*: Autonomous organs are granted broad authority to administer local economy and finances. They have the power to run the local economy "under the guidance of state plans" and to manage and use all locally generated revenues on their own.[62] The State is to give "due consideration" to local circumstances when exploiting natural resources in autonomous areas. Moreover, the State is obliged to give financial, material and technical assistance to the minority nationalities to accelerate their economic development.[63]

3. *Language, Educational and Cultural Rights*: National minorities have the right to use and develop their own languages and freedom to preserve their own customs. For example, in national autonomous areas, court hearings should be conducted in the language(s) in common use in the locality; indictments, judgments, notices and other documents should be written in the relevant nationality language(s). Translation should be provided for any participants who do not know the relevant language in court hearings.[64]

Autonomous authorities are independently to administer educational, scientific, cultural and public health affairs in the locality, protect the cultural heritage of the national minorities and work towards the development and prosperity of their cultures. In performing their functions, autonomous authorities should use the spoken and written language or languages in common use in the locality.[65]

23. Based on the relevant articles of the 1982 Constitution, a new Law on National Regional Autonomy was passed by the National People's Congress in 1984 (amended in 2001) to provide further legal guarantees for autonomous rights. The law strengthens and, in some aspects, expands previously existing autonomous rights which are formulated in very general terms in the 1982 Constitution. For instance, the Constitution explicitly provides that autonomous authorities have the right not only to draw up local legislation with respect to regional autonomy and other regulations appropriate to the political, economic and cultural characteristics of the locality, but also to alter or cease to implement any laws or regulations issued by the central authorities if these laws and regulations do not suit the local conditions.[66] Over half of the autonomous units have passed autonomy laws and special statuary provisions dealing with a wide range of issues, such as management of natural resources, economic development, environmental protection, land utilization, foreign trade and investment, marriage and family law and so on.[67] The law also grants broader rights to autonomous authorities to manage the local economy, allowing autonomous governments to adopt special policies and flexible measures in accordance with local economic conditions and to promulgate its own economic policies and plans in light of the local economic conditions. As for relations between the autonomous unit and the State, the State is committed to providing financial and other support and assistance.[68]

24. The 1982 Constitution and the Law on National Regional Autonomy of 1984 have granted national minorities the most pluralistic rights in comparison with any of the previous legislation. Questions arise as to how genuine national regional autonomy is in the reform era. To answer the question, it is necessary to examine the achievements and the limitations, the legal form and the actual practice, of the national regional autonomy system. The present Chinese government and the CCP tend to point to the achievements of the revitalized national regional autonomy system. For example, many new autonomous units were set up in the 1980s and 1990s. By 1992, there were five autonomous regions, thirty autonomous prefectures, 124 autonomous counties and 1,200 autonomous townships; their combined area covered 64.5 per cent of the PRC's total territory.[69] National minorities were exempted from the "one child" policy, which was strictly implemented among the Han Chinese. Between 1982 and 1990 censuses, while the Han population grew by a total of 10 per cent, the minority increased by 35 per cent overall. One of the most striking cases was that of Manchus, the ethnic group that ruled the Chinese empire from 1644 to 1911 and was generally regarded to have gradually assimilated into the Han majority since the fall of Qing dynasty. Their population increased by 128 per cent during the 1982–1990 period, from 4.3 million to 9.8 million.[70] In the 1982 and 1990 national censuses, as many as 14 million people who had

previously identified themselves as Han came out and registered as minority nationalities.[71] It became even more popular among certain groups of people seeking to be officially recognized as national minorities, after the Chinese government initiated several affirmative

action programs in the 1980s. Under these programs, national minorities were granted such privileges as exemption from the "one-child" policy, tax reduction, preference for admission to institutions of higher education and more religious and cultural freedom from government interference.[72] There has been increased representation of national minorities in the National People's Congress, the government and the CCP. According to official data, "[i]n all NPCs, the proportions of deputies of ethnic minorities among the total number of deputies have been higher than the proportions of their populations in the nation's total population in the corresponding periods. Of the 161 members of the 11th NPC Standing Committee held in March 2009, 25 were from ethnic minorities, accounting for 15.53 percent of the total."[73] Special efforts have been made to train new Party cadres and government officials of minority background. As a result, cadres of minority background account for a fair proportion of cadres in the central and local State organs, including administrative, judicial and procuratorial organs.[74]

25. After three decades of policy vacillation between pluralism and forced assimilationism, the present Chinese government claims to have established a comprehensive legal system that affords equal rights for all nationalities and regional autonomy for national minorities. However, despite the liberalization of previously very repressive policies, ethnic issues have remained a source of dissatisfaction, conflict and even violence in recent years, mainly due to uneven implementation of the laws and central policies on national regional autonomy.[75]

26. To sum up, the PRC nationality policy from the 1980s has undoubtedly been an improvement over the policies of the previous periods. The new policy represents a return to a philosophy of pluralism, which acknowledges the distinctiveness of national minorities and shows a higher degree of tolerance for political, social and cultural diversity. The PRC Constitution guarantees that national minorities have the right to self-government and enjoy certain privileges over the Han majority. However, due to uneven implementation of national laws and central policies, genuine national autonomy has yet to be fully achieved in reality.

VI. Placing China's minority rights in international law perspectives: the way forward

27. Without a doubt, ethnic minority rights issues in China have begun to influence domestic decision-making and legislation and China's international image. Many contemporary

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studies and reports focus on the adverse disparities experienced by ethnic minorities, and have empirically proven that minorities disproportionately suffer adverse effects of China's rapid socio-economic transition, rich–poor polarization and political impasse. More efforts

are needed to compare China's minority rights to that of international human rights law. The purpose of this section is to place China's minority rights regime in international law perspectives so as to make a comparison of the legal status of ethnic minorities in China against universal human rights standards and to propose ways and means suitable for facilitating and developing equal protection of minority rights in China.

VI.A. Minority rights and international law

28. Internationally speaking, demands by minority groups to preserve their cultural, religious and ethnic differences emerged with the creation of nation States after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.[76] The first truly international system for the protection of minority rights began with the League of Nations through the adoption of a series of treaties addressing specific minority problems in Eastern and Central Europe and containing elements of anti-discriminatory, developmental and even affirmative group rights.[77] However, the League's minorities system ultimately failed.

29. The replacement of the League of Nations with the United Nations in 1945 ushered in a new, universal system of human rights, which gradually developed a number of norms, procedures and mechanisms concerned with minorities. The UN Charter makes the protection of human rights a fundamental purpose of the United Nations and obligates member States to promote universal respect for human rights and not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, language or religion in implementing human rights obligations.[78] Furthermore, Article 55 of the UN Charter notes that peaceful and friendly relations among nations should be based upon respect of the principle of equal rights and self-determination; while Article 56 provides that member States shall pledge themselves "to take joint and separate action in co-operation with the [United Nations] Organization" for the achievement of universal respect for and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction based on race, sex, language or religion.[79] Based on this broad mandate, the principles underlying this approach found their concrete expression in the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, on which much of the formative content of international human rights law draws.[80] Arguably, the UDHR can be regarded as an authoritative interpretation of the UN Charter's human rights principles and qualify as customary international law which binds all States in the international community.[81] It is important to note, however, that the UDHR was adopted upon the notion that a great deal of the horror of World War II was premised on viewing people as members of this or that group rather than as individuals. Major UN powers attempted to forge a new way of human rights protection from the ashes of the previous regime, that is, that the rights of all people are best assured when the rights of each person are effectively protected.[82] As a result, the UDHR does

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not deal directly with the problem of minorities generally, much less with specific issues raised by minority groups such as religion, language or culture. Until the end of the Cold War, the UN and other international organs were generally more interested in protecting individual rights than in developing a specific regime for the protection of minorities.

30. The world witnessed a rapid expansion of international human rights law in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 (ICCPR) codified classical human rights for the protection of individual fundamental rights and freedoms.[83] The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966 (ICESCR) provides for economic, social and cultural rights aimed at improving the economic, social and cultural conditions of the individual.[84] These two covenants are known as the International Bill of Rights and were drafted to transform the principles of basic human rights set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights into binding rules of law. Naturally, they are considered as the foundational instruments of international human rights law and provide much of the formative content of other human rights conventions. Article 27 of the ICCPR provides the most comprehensive legal provision regarding minority rights under international human rights law, which reads:

> In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language.[85]

This clause is historical. Firstly, it imposes specific obligations on the State parties. States parties are obliged to protect members of minorities against violations of their rights by public and private parties, to fulfil non-discrimination provisions and, most importantly, to take positive action to ensure the survival and continued development of the cultural, religious and social identity of minorities in community with the other members of their group. Secondly, Article 27 entails a right to recognition, survival and continued development of the cultural, religious and social identity of minorities, non-discrimination, and their participation in governance of State affairs.[86] Thirdly, Article 27 can provide a powerful tool to protect cultural, linguistic and religious diversity of minorities since it embodies justiciable rights, thus enabling States parties to be scrutinized over their compliance with their obligations before judicial or quasi-judicial bodies. Noteworthy here is the fact that the rights are granted to individuals belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, and do not explicitly attach to the groups themselves, which signifies a reluctance to recognize the minority groups in their collective identity.

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31. In 1992, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities.[87] The Declaration aims to further concretize the provisions of Article 27 of the ICCPR and clearly contemplates policies of recognition and accommodation as opposed to assimilation. This is clearly spelled out in Article 1 of the Declaration which provides that:

> 1. States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity of minorities within their respective territories and shall encourage conditions for the promotion of that identity.
>
> 2. States shall adopt appropriate legislative and other measures to achieve those ends.[88]

Although it is not a legally binding instrument, the Declaration is increasingly recognized as an important point of reference to define and guide the broad international effort to promote minority rights. It is formulated in positive terms to supplement but does not substitute for the general standards in global and regional human rights treaties.

32. More recently, the international community has attempted to take minority groups more seriously and advance group rights and rights of peoples, the so-called "third-generation rights".[89] These rights or standards of achievement are intended to enhance the political, economic, social and cultural self-determination and development of peoples. However, the concept of collective human rights has not been universally accepted and remains full of controversy in international human rights law discourse. Some powerful States, such as the USA, the UK, France, Japan and Australia, object to collective rights as conflicting with individual human rights, insisting that "characterizing a right as belonging to a community, or collective, rather than an individual, can be and often is construed to limit the exercise of that right (since only the group can invoke it), and thus may open the door to the denial of the right to the individual".[90]

33. The international divergence on collective rights vs. individual rights is unlikely to be resolved in the near future. But for the purpose of this article, one can divide the rights of ethnic minorities into two major categories under contemporary international law: rights of equal protection and rights of participation and/or self-governance. The first category relates to minorities' rights of equality and protection from discrimination, as well as rights aiming at the preservation of their culture and ethnic identity. In States where one or more groups constitute ethnic, religious or language communities, they have the right to existence and recognition of their identities, as well as the right to equality and to freedom from

political, economic and social discrimination under international law. The second category implies that minorities are to determine their own affairs, participate in decision makings of the State, exercise a certain level of internal autonomy and, in cases of colonialism and foreign oppression, be able to secede from the State and gain independence.[91]

34. Beyond the above-mentioned evolving normative framework, it should be pointed out that a considerable level of discretion is left to the States in deciding when such steps must be taken, and that the vagueness as to who decides which groups are entitled to special protection and upon what criteria undermines the framework's effectiveness. As Rehman rightly observes, "[m]embers of a minority group often feel that in the clash of cultures, religions or languages it is their will and aspirations which are marginalized, and in this respect the individualistic and universalistic tone of the international law of human rights is deficient. International laws which could be related to minorities are not only seen as being attenuated and indirect in nature but there is considerable evidence to suggest that they are largely ineffective in safeguarding whatever rights that are granted to minorities".[92] A sovereign State has the final right to domestic jurisdiction, and can only be regarded as subject to human rights treaties when it has so consented. Thus, a body of international human rights law has been formed to protect minorities from their governments and the dominant society, but often only to the extent that the governments will allow them to be protected. Besides, by virtue of becoming parties to these international agreements, sovereign States may also be bound to ensure and respect minorities' rights as a matter of customary international law. But, identifying which human rights constitute *jus cogens* norms remains controversial and uncertain, as current international legal arrangements provide few effective means by which international human rights obligations may be interpreted, implemented, and monitored. More importantly, despite significant progress in the identification, definition, and promulgation of international norms with regards to ethnic minorities' rights, international mechanisms for their enforcement remain underdeveloped. International monitoring bodies generally lack enforcement authority and rely substantially on shame as a tool for persuasion. As a result, enforcement of international human rights obligations has been achieved primarily through various domestic incorporations processes by which States incorporate international law into their domestic legal orders.[93]

35. In summary, it has become clear from the preceding analysis that considerable aspects of international law relating to minority rights still need vigorous development, in order to define and promote full protection of minorities' equal rights.

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VI.B. International standards and China's minority rights: the way forward

36. The preceding analysis outlines existing international standards for treatment of minorities and their deficiencies. It offers a menu to concretize and itemize national human rights legislation and autonomy options based on international models. Through the lens of international standards and practices, the present Section looks more closely at China's minority laws and policies and proposes ways and means suitable for facilitating and developing equal protection of minority rights in China.

37. Since 1980, the Chinese government has signed, ratified and participated in several core international human rights conventions, namely the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crimes of Apartheid, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees and the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.[94] The Chinese government has submitted reports to UN committees responsible for monitoring the implementation of some of these treaties. Significantly, the PRC has signed both the ICCPR on 5 October 1998 and the ICESCR on 27 October 1997. The National People's Congress Standing Committee ratified the ICESCR on 28 February 2001.[95] China has yet to ratify the ICCPR.

38. Although the PRC joined a number of UN human rights conventions, the Chinese government made reservations to the implementation mechanisms set out in some of these conventions that could possibly influence its national jurisdiction over human rights issues. China does not recognize the competence of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to settle disputes relating to human rights, nor does it allow the individual complaint procedure that is provided for in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. In the UN human rights mechanism, China had been elected a member of the UN Commission on Human Rights since 1982, and was Vice-Chair in the year of 1989. Chinese delegates have also joined its Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities as well as the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the Working Group on Communications affiliated with the Sub-Commission.

39. Historically speaking, the Chinese government has come a long way in accepting the legitimacy of international human rights standards since the founding of the PRC in 1949. Its membership in the United Nations and its adherence to many of the UN's human rights treaties have compelled it to accept the legitimacy of internationally established norms and to adopt the rhetoric of human rights set forth in the UN Charter and the UDHR. By becoming a State party to key international treaties on human rights, it has to justify its actions in the field of human rights by reference to international standards, and its choice of justifications has had great influence on its freedom of action. The PRC is obliged to report on, and receive

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criticism of, its treatment of individuals to international committees set up under various human rights treaties to which the PRC is a State party. In the reports submitted to international human rights bodies, the Chinese have generally sought to justify all their actions in the field of human rights and rhetorically denied allegations of human rights violations.[96] In its official human rights discourse, the Chinese government has reiterated its commitment to abide by the principles and purposes of the UN Charter and key international human rights treaties relating to respect and protection of human rights for all its 1.34 billion people.[97] This is also the case when it comes to specific issues relating to the rights of ethnic minorities.

40. Within this international normative context, I now turn to the legal regime of ethnic minority rights in China and discuss existing problems and possible solutions. As noted before, China's constitution and the 1984 Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law guarantee a full range of rights to minorities, including self-government within designated autonomous areas,[98] proportional representation in the government, freedom to develop their own languages, religions and cultures, greater control over local economic development than allowed in non-autonomous areas and the power to adapt central directives to local conditions. It is therefore fair to say that China's current legal regime on ethnic minorities' rights is generally in line with international standards.[99] It recognizes the importance of both negative (non-discrimination) and positive (special assistance or status) measures for effective protection. From an international perspective, existing Chinese laws on minority rights offer three levels of protection. Firstly, individual members of minorities are accorded with all the core human rights (civil, political, economic, social and cultural) in the same way as the Han majority and all other ethnic groups, without discrimination. For this to happen, non-discrimination measures are clearly in the State constitution, as discussed above.[100] Secondly, minorities are allowed to preserve their dignity as members of a particular community based on religion, language or culture. Special measures are introduced in the State constitution and laws.[101] Thirdly, China's State constitution and laws provide minority communities with special protection of the material bases of their cultures and lifestyles.[102] Clearly, Chinese minority law tries to differentiate itself from the current individualist international human rights conventions by striking a balance between collective rights and individual rights so that the former would not reduce the scope and effectiveness of the latter.

41. In addition, China's recent official rhetoric reaffirmed the pluralistic policy of the Chinese government on ethnic minorities' equal status and special rights. In 2009, the Chinese government published a white paper entitled "China's Ethnic Policy and Common Prosperity and Development of All Ethnic Groups" ("the White Paper"), which was written mainly with an international audience in mind.[103] The majority of the White Paper was devoted to

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detailing the enjoyment of the rights set forth in the Chinese constitution and laws. It claimed that "[e]quality among ethnic groups is a cornerstone of China's ethnic policy" and "a constitutional principle of China".[104] It emphasized that "[r]egional ethnic autonomy is a basic policy China adopts to handle problems among its ethnic groups and a fundamental political system for this country", while, in the meantime, it made it clear that "[e]very ethnic autonomous area is an inseparable part of the country. Organs of self-government in ethnic autonomous areas must follow the leadership of the central government".[105]

42. Although the laws and policies themselves contain measures ensuring autonomy and equal rights of all ethnic groups, much of the discontent among minorities stems from uneven and incomplete implementation of the laws and policies rather than flaws in the normative framework itself. Critics frequently point out that the implementation of the laws on ethnic minorities' rights has varied greatly across China and under various circumstances. To suggest how Chinese law on minority rights may be improved to address minority claims on the ground, it is useful first to expose its flaws. The following section does not attempt to be exhaustive, and examines a couple of particular problems as illustration. Take the language rights of minorities, for example. Both the 1982 Constitution and the 1984 Law on National Regional Autonomy provide for equal status for languages of 55 minority groups. However, the Chinese government in practice has employed a system that allocates a functional and sub-legal status to a minority language on the basis of ideology, regional power politics (mainly the strategic importance of the minority to national unity and security) and the level of assimilation of the minority into the Han Chinese culture, etc. According to ZHOU, the three-tier system which categorizes minorities' writing systems into official, experimental, and unofficial status is based on "a Hobbesian principle of language equality".[106] This deferential treatment of minority languages is determined by higher levels of governments based on the relative strategic importance of minority groups to national security, rather than a set of clearly articulated criteria and participatory and transparent legal processes. It calls into question the equality of legal status for minority languages in practice.

43. Another important issue relates to the right of minority people to access to government services in their own languages, a right guaranteed by the 1982 Constitution and the 1984 Law on National Regional Autonomy. Article 21 of the Law mandates that "[w]hile performing its functions, the autonomous agencies of an ethnic autonomous area, in accordance with the regulations on the exercise of autonomy of the area, use the language or languages commonly used in the locality; where several commonly used languages are used for the performance of such functions, the language of the nationality exercising regional autonomy may be used as the main language".[107] However, a high proportion of government officials in autonomous government agencies are Han Chinese who do not speak or

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understand minority languages. In the late 1990s, they ranged from 40 per cent to 80 per cent in autonomous government agencies at various levels.[108] The high proportion of non-minority-language-speaking Han officials has limited autonomous governments' capacity to provide quality services to minority people. To address this deficiency, the law on regional autonomy goes further to encourage government officials to learn and use minority languages and to reward those who can use two or more commonly used local languages. But this provision imposes no mandatory requirement on autonomous governments and officials and is subject to local discretion and availability of resources for training.[109]

44. Another example is the economic development in ethnic minority areas and the livelihoods of minority people. The White Paper proclaims that "[a]dhering to common prosperity and development of all ethnic groups is the fundamental stance of China's ethnic policy." It notes that "[t]he ethnic minorities led a life full of misery" before the establishment of the People's Republic.[110] "When New China was established, the Chinese government made it a basic task to rid all ethnic groups of poverty and enable them to lead a better life. Since the adoption of the reform and opening-up policies in the late 1970s, the State has focused on economic construction, given top priority to development, made increasing efforts and carried out several significant measures to quicken the advance of the ethnic minorities and minority areas."[111] It goes on to list an array of preferential economic and social programs and infrastructure projects in minority territories supported by the central government and various provincial sister governments of the Han areas. As a result, it notes that great achievements in social and economic development have been made in the minority areas, that people's living standards there have markedly improved and that the disparity in living standards has decreased in recent years between minority territories and territories in Eastern China.[112] However, the White Paper fails to note that the government calculates few socioeconomic statistics based on ethnicity, but rather only on place of residence. Some foreign critics of China's ethnic policies and practices point out that many of these benefits generated from economic development and explorations of natural resources in China's minority areas are accrued mainly by Han migrants, especially for higher paying technical and senior positions, and do not proportionally benefit local minority communities.[113] According to critics, minorities, especially those who live in interior and rural areas, have little impact on these policies and projects. The Chinese government has categorically dismissed such allegations as unfounded.[114]

45. One of the pillars of the central government's approach to raising ethnic tensions and conflicts during the reform era has been the dual emphasis on economic development and Skip to Main Content national unity. The White Paper has explained the underlining thinking of the approach clearly: "The state is convinced that quickening the economic and social development of minority communities and minority areas is the *fundamental solution* to China's ethnic issues.

Overcoming the difficulties and solving the problems in the minority areas hinges on development."[115] However, the effectiveness of the government's new approach that is preoccupied by economic growth and higher living standards has yet to be proven over a long period of time. As the living standards and education levels of minorities improve, the minorities may aspire to greater autonomy and accountability in public life, better preservation of their culture, languages, a spiritual life free from interference and more control over the use of natural resources in their autonomous regions.

46. It is beyond the scope of this article to engage in a detailed analysis of what accounts for ethnic tensions and discontent in China. The following section will offer some suggestions on how to improve China's minority rights legislation and policies, by reference to international experience. Given the political reality in China, my focus will be more on building the legitimacy for China's minority rights regime than on fundamentally reforming constitutional arrangements for national regional autonomy and State−minority relationship and thus lending greater practicality to existing laws and policies for minority rights. As mentioned in the previous sections, the past three decades have seen substantial governmental efforts to replace assimilation policies with pluralistic laws and policies for ethnic minority areas and individuals. Although various affirmative actions have been adopted as the main tool to narrow the economic and social gap between Han and minority people and head off minority discontent and even ethnic conflicts, the long−term effectiveness of these measures remains to be seen. In light of State−minority practices elsewhere as well as changing conditions in China, it is essential for China to develop policies and measures that protect the identity rights of minority people while simultaneously allowing for the integration and full participation of all groups and individuals in public life. These objectives will not be easy to realize in practice, as the problems affecting State− minority relationship are determined as much by the policies of the State as by the claims and demands of minorities.

47. In the process of developing effective approaches and choosing between (or finding the right mix of) policies that emphasize accommodation or support integration, China may take measures to improve its laws and policies for minority rights. Firstly, China should fully implement existing laws and policies on minority rights and make national regional autonomy real. As previously discussed, laws and policies on minority rights are currently in transition. The 1982 Constitution and the 1984 Law on National Regional Autonomy give minorities a greater framework for autonomy than ever before that would help preserve the unique identity of national minorities, as well as ensure that the members of those groups could receive special treatment in society. By (re)adopting a pluralistic approach to minorities, and by actively addressing minorities' cultural and economic concerns, China has been better served to further its goal of peace and stability in minority regions. International

experience has shown that reliance on a formal notion of equality may not effectively address entrenched, systemic discrimination and disparities.[116] This will also be true in the case of China where monumental economic, social and even, in some ways, political transformations are taking place at a fast pace. The developments in China in the last three and a half decades have generally been conducive to individual and collective well-being of minorities. Recent developmental policies and projects targeted at minority areas indicate a conscious effort on the part of Chinese leadership to equalize the benefits of growth. Even if only out of pragmatism, the Chinese government can pay closer attention to the manner in which its national autonomous laws and policies are implemented and the ways they may aggravate the marginalization of certain minority persons. Moreover, the issues of regional autonomy and minority rights are often included in a larger set of questions which involves not minorities alone but rather all of the Chinese people. China has a legal system in which courts do not have judicial review power. The national regional autonomy system is inherently difficult to fulfil because the language in the Chinese laws concerning minority rights is often vague and general.[117] Local courts are often unable to offer effective judicial remedy to minorities when their rights are violated or not realized, because courts in minority regions have limited power, resources and are subject to local Party control.

48. This takes us to the second aspect of China's approach to minority rights that is in need of improvement: to establish effective avenues of expression for minorities to voice their cultural, economic and political concerns and enable them participate in the policy/decision-making processes regarding positive measures by the State to ensure the preservation of special minority culture, religion, language and identity within a larger Chinese identity. In this light, legislation and policy initiatives shall maintain pluralistic respect for the rights of minority people to participate democratically in the deliberative process of governance. At present, in the management of Chinese central–regional relationship, the concept of deliberative governance is in an embryonic stage only.[118] As key decisions on autonomous arrangements, resource allocations, investment approvals, central subsidies and personnel appointment of senior officials are made by a small central leading group in the central government, critics say that autonomous areas are actually subject only to the wills of authorities of the central government dominated by the Han.[119] Moreover, due to the lack of deliberative participation of minorities in governance and the national unity imperatives of minority policy, current efforts by the central authorities to win minority loyalty may serve to entrench policy choices and approaches that have the potential to further marginalize minority nationalities and galvanize minority demands for real autonomy.[120]

49. Therefore, it is suggested that the central government consider introducing elements of deliberative democracy into decision/policy-making processes. In addition to affirmative actions by the State, in the form of preferential treatment in minorities' favour, it is useful to

undertake an extensive outreach effort by the central and local governments to include minority stakeholders in decision-makings. It should extensively document dissent, grounds for dissent, and future predictions of consequences of actions. In return, minorities could consider deliberative procedure as the source of legitimacy and structure their autonomy such that deliberation is the deciding factor in the creation of the institutions and the institutions allow deliberation to continue.

49. The third area where China can make an improvement relates to the challenges of how China brings its minority policy and practice into closer conformity with international human rights law and how China can draw on international experience in dealing with claims by ethnic minorities ranging from the right to existence, equality, non-discrimination to group cultural identity, autonomy and power-sharing arrangements and self-determination. China is now the second largest economy in the world and is poised to become the largest, overtaking the United States, by the end of 2016 according to the prediction by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).[121] China's role as an engine of the global economy and a "leader State" in the world community has become increasingly established.[122] Nowadays, China is one of the world's top exporters and is attracting record amounts of foreign investment. In turn, it is investing billions of dollars abroad. As a member of the World Trade Organization, China is bound by the rule-based world trading system and has greatly benefited from access to foreign markets.[123] Meanwhile, as previously discussed, China is a party to many international human rights treaties and is bound by those international standards relating to minority rights. In 2012, President Xi Jinping reassured that "China [would be] following a path of peaceful development" and would continue to open up to the world.[124] Xi said that China remains a developing country facing a series of grim challenges and problems in spite of great progress that has been achieved. He pledged that "[t]he Chinese people … are ready to learn from the achievements of all other cultures to make up for our own deficiencies."[125] This may suggest a degree of parallelism with the expanded application of international law to China's relations with minorities, which is aimed more at building the legitimacy for central government policies than at reforming existing State–minority systems. In that spirit, China could develop a coherent political and legal approach to ethnic conflict and claims of its minority groups, drawing on international human rights standards and different ways and means effectively applied by international actors and States. While the main international legal instruments do not prescribe any particular model dealing with claims of ethnic groups, China can benefit from existing international experience that protects the identity rights of minority communities while simultaneously allowing for the integration and full participation of all groups and individuals in public life. In an effort to balance conflicting rights and interests relating to minorities, many plural societies have attempted to devise various laws, policies and measures, which often result in pragmatic approaches of mixing law and politics that have

successfully solved their particular problems at hand. China could learn and benefit from these experiences. At the same time, the application of human rights standards can better protect the rights of minorities, prevent assimilation of minorities against their will, and help determine where a given policy falls along an accommodation-assimilation spectrum. By adopting and fulfilling minority rights, including opportunities for ethnic minorities to participate in decision-making processes and extensive protection guarantees, the Chinese State and society can become more stable and less prone to discontent and conflict, to the benefit of both the State and minority groups and individuals.

VII. Conclusion

50. Ethnic tensions and unrest in China have emerged as a subject of policy debate, academic research and attention in the last three decades. To understand in full the complexity and dynamics of ethnic minority rights in China, this article has examined regional autonomy in China's ethnic minority areas and its implications for minority rights in China. It has noted that, after three decades of policy vacillation between pluralism and forced assimilationism, the present Chinese government claims to have established a comprehensive legal system that warrants equal rights for all nationalities and regional autonomy for national minorities. The 1982 Constitution and the Law on National Regional Autonomy of 1984 have granted national minorities the most pluralistic rights in comparison with any of the previous legislation. The loosening of political and economic restrictions and the return to pluralistic policies leads to a revival of nationalist consciousness in many parts of the minority areas. Ethnic issues have increasingly become a source of dissatisfaction, conflict and even violence in recent years.

51. The PRC nationality policy since the 1980s has undoubtedly been an improvement over those of the previous periods. The new policy represents a return to a philosophy of pluralism, which acknowledges the distinctiveness of national minorities and shows a higher degree of tolerance for political, social and cultural diversity. The 1984 Constitution and laws guarantee that national minorities have the right to self-government and enjoy certain preferential rights over the Han majority. However, due to uneven implementation of laws and central policies, minorities' legal rights have yet to be fully achieved in reality.

52. At present, the Chinese government mainly uses preferential rights and policies as the main tool in narrowing the economic and social gaps between Han and minority people, hoping to convince minority people that they will benefit more from integration and co-operation within the multi-ethnic Chinese nation. When increasing disparities and relative under-development have sparked discontent, protest and unrest, it is the State's own

interest in security and stability that underpins preferential policies and projects. The sporadic unrest characterizing some minority regions in the past three decades indicate that, even if economic benefits of preferential policies do trickle down into minority communities, bitterness towards Han dominance may still emerge if the fruits of economic development accrue asymmetrically in favour of the Han. Moreover, if basic decisions on central fiscal allowance, special subsidies, resource allocations, project approvals and regulatory arrangements are made by the central government and its subordinate local branches, minority may still feel that they themselves have little representation, let alone control, over the resulting economic projects and activities.

53. The contradiction inherent in the current set of policies and laws that promotes both integration and autonomy was a dilemma. No new model for solving all of the minority issues is likely to emerge, given the complexity of the various stakeholders and societal elements involved. China's national regional autonomy system will remain in the foreseeable future, however laden with new functions that will have to change its top-down and rough-edged fashion. For the State, it will be expected to maintain preferential treatment for minority individuals in education, career training and family planning, respect cultural and religious diversities, and improve the quality of life of minority communities by way of providing central subsidies and investing in local economies.[126] It will continue to promise equality to minorities, but only to be equally Chinese within the unified Chinese multi-national State.

54. In light of past State–minority relations as well as changing conditions in China and by reference to international experience, this article offers some suggestions for China to improve minority rights legislation and policies. It argues for a new set of measures which encompasses three aspects: (1) fully implement existing laws and policies on minority rights and make national regional autonomy real; (2) introduce elements of deliberative democracy into decision/policy-making processes and undertake an extensive outreach effort to include minority stakeholders in decisions; (3) bring its minority policy and practice into closer conformity with international human rights law and draw on international experience in dealing with claims by ethnic minorities. It is hoped that these measures could enhance respect for minority identities and provide the means of establishing their respective autonomies and realizing their special rights through a deliberative process. The measures should focus as much on the process as on the decisions, on the voices as on the results and on the individuals as on the groups. In this way, China's national regional autonomy is oriented towards a complete policy of commitment to pluralistic values within the Chinese polity, which is more likely to satisfy the minority aspirations and the State's need for national stability and unity.

1　Key Data of the Sixth National Census (2011, in Chinese)

(http://www.stats.gov.cn/ztjc/zdtjgz/zgrkpc/dlcrkpc/dcrkpcyw/201104/t20110428_69407.htm).
See also Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, China's
Ethnic Policy and Common Prosperity and Development of All Ethnic Groups, 9 Chinese JIL
(2010), 221 (hereinafter "the White Paper").

2   See generally Barry Sautman, Scaling Back Minority Rights?: The Debate About China's Ethnic
Policies, 46 Stanford JIL (2010), 51; Randall Peerenboom, China Stands Up: 100 Years of
Humiliation, Sovereignty Concerns, and Resistance to Foreign Pressure on PRC Courts, 24
Emory Int'l L. Rev. (2010), 657; Susan K. McCarthy, A New Era of Development?: The State,
Minorities, and Dilemmas of Development in Contemporary China, 26 Fletcher F. World Aff.
(2002), 104; Pitman B. Potter, Governance of China's Periphery: Balancing Local Autonomy and
National Unity, 19 Colum. J. Asian L. (2005), 294; Michael C. Davis, Establishing a Workable
Autonomy in Tibet, 30 Human Rights Q. (2008), 227.

3   The White Paper, above n.1, 222.

4   Ibid. See also Data of the Fifth National Census (2000)
(http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/renkoupucha/2000pucha/pucha.htm).

5   See Joseph C.F. Wang, Contemporary Chinese Politics: An Introduction (5th edn. 1995), 163.

6   See Dru C. Gladney, Ethnic Identity in China: The New Politics of Difference, in: William A.
Joseph (ed.), China Briefing 1994 (1994), 171, 174.

7   See H. Seivwert, On the Religions of National Minorities in the Context of China's Religious
History, in: Thomas Heberer (ed.), Ethnic Minorities in China: Tradition and Transform (1987),
41.

8   See Thomas Heberer, China and Its National Minorities: Autonomy or Assimilation? (1989), 17.

9   More than eight thousand separate groups were documented in Chinese historical records
over a period of almost three thousand years. See June T. Dreyer, China's Forty Millions (1976),
7.

10   Ibid.,17–18.

11   Ibid., 18.

12   See Ying-Shih Yu, Trade and Expansion in Han China (1967), 396.

13   See generally Mark Mancall, The Ch'ing Tribute System: An Interpretive Essay, in: John K.
Fairbank (ed.), The Chinese World Order: Traditional China's Foreign Relations (1968), 63; Hae
Jong Chun, Sino-Korean Tributary Relations in the Ch'ing Period, in Fairbank, in: John K.

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Fairbank (ed.), The Chinese World Order, 90; Truong Buu Lam, Intervention Versus Tribute in Sino-Vietnamese Relations, 1788-1790, in: John K. Fairbank (ed.), The Chinese World Order, 165; Chusei Suzuki, China's Relations with Inner Asia: The Hsiung-Nu, Tibet, in: John K. Fairbank, The Chinese World Order, 180.

14   François Thierry, Empire and Minority in China, in: Gerard Chaliand (ed.), Minority Peoples in the Age of Nation-States (1989), 76, 78.

15   For instance, the Han Chinese even in ancient time seemed to have indulged in comparing barbarians with all kinds of animals.

16   The Han Chinese are by no means one-way carriers of a superior culture. There are numerous historical examples of mutual cultural enrichment between the Han and non-Han Chinese. Mackerras disputes that "while it is true that China contributed a good deal more in terms of culture to the minorities than the other way around, the influences were by no means all in one direction." Colin Mackerras, China's Minorities: Integration and Modernization in the Twentieth Century (1994), 24.

17   George Anastaplo, But Not Philosophy: Seven Introductions to Non-Western Thought (2002) Chapter Four: Confucian Thought: The Analects, 99, 116.

18   See June T. Dreyer, above n.9, 9–10.

19   Ibid., 12–13.

20   Ibid., 16.

21   In his "Race and Population", Dr. Sun said that:

> Although there are a little over ten millions of non-Chinese in China, including Mongols, Manchus, Tibetans, and Tartars [Turks], their number is small compared with the purely Chinese population, four hundred million in number, which has a common racial heredity, common religion, and common tradition and customs. It is one nationality.

Sun Yat-sen, Race and Population, in: Leonard Shihlien Hsu, Sun Yat-sen: His Political and Social Ideals (1933), 168.

22   Sun Yat-sen, Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary (1953), 180 (cited in June T. Dreyer, above n.9, 16).

23   Dreyer noted that Dr. Sun, "more orator than logician, never bothered to reconcile these two sets of views," namely his early assiminationist views on China's ethnic composition and the concepts of self-determination and autonomy. June T. Dreyer, above n.9, 17.

24   Chiang Kai-shek, China's Destiny, trans. Wang Chung-hui (1947), 12–13. See also June T.

Dreyer, above n.9, 17.

25   For an extensive analysis of the Nationalist government record with respect to the treatment of minorities, see June T. Dreyer, above n.9, 18–41. See also Colin Mackerras, above n.16, 49–72.

26   See June T. Dreyer, above n.9, 63.

27   See Manifesto of the Second Party Congress (July 1922), in: Tony Saich, The Rise to Power of the Chinese Communist Party (1996), 40, 40.

28   Ibid., 42.

29   See June T. Dreyer, above n.9, 63–64; Colin Mackerras, above n.16, 72–73.

30   Conrad Brandt, Benjamin Isadore Schwartz and John King Fairbank, A Documentary History of Chinese Communism (1952), 219.

31   See June T. Dreyer, above n.9, 64.

32   At the Zunyi Conference of 1935, Mao Zedong defeated his political rivals and came to power as the new chairman of the Politburo. He was challenged but never ousted from the Party leadership from then on. See Franz Michael, China through the Ages: History of a Civilization (1986), 210–211.

33   See June T. Dreyer, above n.9, 67.

34   See Colin Mackerras, above n.16, 103–104; June T. Dreyer, above n.9, 79–82.

35   The Constitution of the People's Republic of China (1954), art. 1 (hereinafter "the 1954 Constitution").

36   The Common Program provided that:

     Article 9: All nationalities within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China shall have equal rights and duties.

     Article 50: All nationalities within the boundaries of the People's Republic of China are equal. They shall establish unity and mutual aid among themselves, and shall oppose imperialism and their own public enemies, so that the People's Republic of China will become a big fraternal and cooperative family composed of all its nationalities. Nationalism and chauvinism shall be opposed. Acts involving discrimination, oppression, and disrupting the unity of the various nationalities shall be prohibited.

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Article 51: Regional autonomy shall be exercised in areas where national minorities are concentrated, and various kinds of autonomous organizations for the different nationalities shall be set up according to the size of the respective peoples and regions. In places where different nationalities live together and in the autonomous areas of the national minorities, the different nationalities shall each have an appropriate number of representatives in the local organs of state power.

Article 53: All national minorities shall have freedom to develop their spoken and written languages, to preserve or reform their traditions, customs, and religious beliefs. The people's government shall assist the masses of all national minorities in their political, economic, cultural, and educational development.

Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, 29 September 1949, in: T.H.C. Chen (ed.), The Chinese Communist Regime: Documents and Commentary (1967), 34. For a general account of China's national regional autonomy, see Barry Sautman, above n.2, 58–63.

37　The 1954 Constitution, above n.35, 9.

38　Jiancheng He, China's Policy on Nationalities, in: Dae-Sook Suh and Edward Shultz (eds.), Koreans in China (1990), 6.

39　Ibid., 7.

40　Ibid.

41　See ZHOU Enlai, Some Questions on Policy Towards Nationalities, Beijing Review (3 March 1980), 22.

42　See Jiancheng He, above n.38, 7.

43　See Chae-jun Lee, The Political Participation of Koreans in China, in: Dae-Sook Suh and Edward Shultz, above n.38, 93; Colin Meckerras, above n.16, 147.

44　ZHOU Enlai, above n.41, 22.

45　See Joseph C.F. Wang, above n.5, 163–164.

46　See Colin Mackerras, above n.16, 146–148.

47　Ibid., 150–153.

48　Ibid.

49　Ibid.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid., 153–155.

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Historical Narratives and Uyghur Marginalization in China's Development of Xinjiang

by tuftshemispheres on January 15, 2014

In the aftermath of the 2009 ethnic riots in Urumqi, the capital of the far western Chinese province of Xinjiang, journalist John Pomfret made a striking comment on National Public Radio's *Diane Rehm Show*, "In the early years of this century they [China] launched a program called the Great Western Development Scheme, and in justifying a need for such a program which involved the massive influx of investment into Xinjiang and other provinces in the west, they've used direct quotes from Manifest Destiny texts from the 19th century in the United States." The implication here is that the central government's effort to develop Xinjiang is not only a part of its economic growth policy, but also a nation-building process that draws upon the American model. Applying this logic, the exclusion of the Uyghur people native to Xinjiang in modern development is treated as a naturally occurring symptom of progress rather than a barrier to it.

The idea that ethnic marginalization plays a role in consolidating the nation state is well grounded in history. Influenced by Social Darwinian thought that promulgated race-specific characteristics, nationalist intellectuals in the late 19th and early 20th centuries equated Chinese identity to Han ethnicity as a way to counter the weakness of the ruling Manchu elite in face of Western encroachment. This was reflected in the progressive movements of early Republican China that bundled racial purity with national strength. For example, a poster (see page 89) distributed in 1928 by the National Anti-Opium Association depicted, young, strong Han citizens wielding patriotic slogans and beating a "white" morphine demon and a "black" opium demon.

During the same era, "Uyghur" was constructed as a distinct ethnicity and was granted official recognition in the 1930s. Previously, Uyghurs identified themselves according to their locality rather than any overarching racial or cultural category. The assertion of a unified Uyghur ethnicity was necessary for achieving Xinjiang's political autonomy in the nationalist context.

Today, Xinjiang's autonomy is in name only. Although the appointment of Uyghurs to top provincial government positions is enforced, Hans are still given positions within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that grant the most decision making power regarding Beijing's interests for the province as a whole. This has allowed the government to carry out a major development program in Xinjiang with little say from the Uyghurs affected by it.

China's investment in Xinjiang over the last twenty years has created the most dramatic transformation for the province in its entire 250 year history of being under Chinese rule. The movement of people and capital has been heavily subsidized in order to tap into Xinjiang's abundance of oil, natural gas and cotton. Xinjiang also serves as a strategically important buffer zone to Central Asia and the Indian Subcontinent. The CCP does not want to weaken its position in the region by loosening political control, making the economic

between Han immigrants and Uyghur locals. The majority of the benefits from emerging industries in Xinjiang have gone to Han consumers in eastern China. Because traditional farming activities have become less lucrative, there is increased pressure on Uyghurs to find work in Xinjiang's rapidly developing cities, where hiring is discriminatory because of the education and language barriers faced by Uyghurs. As a result, the Uyghur population has experienced significant underemployment.

The bleak outlook for Uyghurs hoping to succeed in this Han dominated system has led to increased tension drawn upon ethnic lines. Protests against the Han influx became increasingly violent during the 1990s in response to the CCP's tightening grip on Xinjiang's administration. Although protests decreased in the early 2000s, the riots of 2009 were a bloody wake-up call to the worsening state of Uyghur-Han relations. The Chinese government, however, blamed these acts of violence not on state policy but on the encouragement of international agitators such as Rabiya Qadir, the leader of the World Uyghur Congress. The government labels all Uyghur violence as "terrorist acts" as a way to associate Uyghur separatism with global Islamic extremism and point the blame to causes external to Xinjiang's domestic situation.

Violent incidents have continued since 2009. Widespread media coverage was given to the car crash in Tiananmen Square this October that killed five, allegedly carried out by Uyghur separatists. More recently, 16 people died in a clash on the western edge of Xinjiang.

Given the government's unwillingness to acknowledge its own role in creating ethnic tensions, incidents like these are expected to continue. A spokesperson for the Chinese embassy in Washington D.C. appeared on the *Diane Rehm Show* and referred to Uyghur "grievances" with a quote and unquote. This is telling of the impact of an antiquated nationalist narrative on China's approach to development. When China sees itself as having a "civilizing mission", as indicated by the comparison of investment in Xinjiang to the Manifest Destiny, it disregards the full legitimacy of ethnic identities counter to the Han construction of Chinese nationality. As long as China's western policy is informed by this historical analogy, Uyghur exclusion will remain a systemic part of Xinjiang's development.

Further Reading: Bovingdon, Gardener. "Xinjiang." *Politics in China*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010): 336-355.

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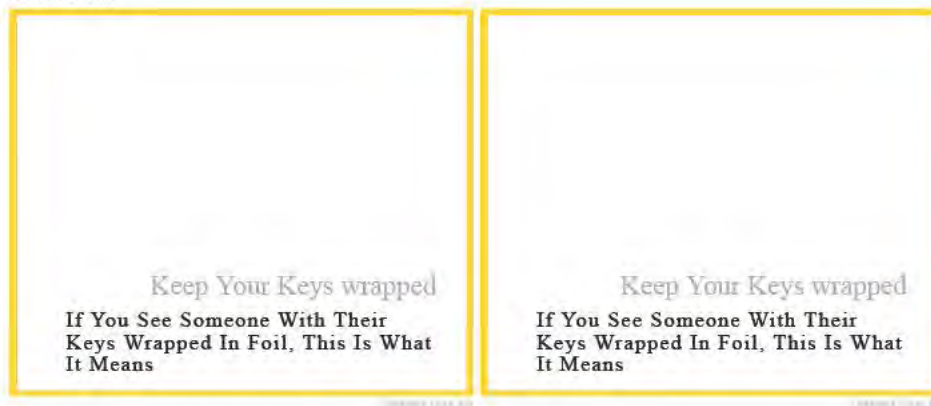
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China

Ilham Tohti, Uighur imprisoned for life by China, wins major human rights prize

The man known as 'China's Mandela' announced as the winner of the annual Martin Ennals award for human rights defenders

Tom Phillips *in Beijing*

Tue 11 Oct 2016 05.27 EDT

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A moderate Uighur intellectual, who was jailed for life after opposing China's draconian policies in its violence-stricken west, has been named the winner of a prestigious award known as the "human rights Nobel" in a move likely to infuriate Beijing.

Ilham Tohti, who has been called China's Mandela, was announced as the winner of the annual Martin Ennals award for human rights defenders on Tuesday.

Ilham Tohti should get the Nobel peace prize, not life in prison | Teng Biao

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The honour comes two years after the 46-year-old scholar was convicted of separatism and condemned to a life behind bars by a court in Xinjiang, a vast region of western China where there have been repeated outbreaks of ethnic unrest and violence.

In a statement, the Martin Ennals foundation said Ilham Tohti had spent two decades trying "to foster dialogue and understanding" between China's Han majority and members of Xinjiang's largely Muslim Uighur ethnic minority, of which he is a member.

"He has rejected separatism and violence, and sought reconciliation based on a respect for Uighur culture, which has been subject to religious, cultural and political repression," it added.

Beijing has painted Ilham Tohti – whom western governments and rights groups universally view as a voice of moderation – as a dangerous separatist and "scholar-turned-criminal" who preached "hatred and killing".

"His case has nothing to do with human rights," Geng Shuang, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson, told reporters on Tuesday, accusing the scholar of promoting and taking part in separatist activities.

But Dick Oosting, the chair of the Martin Ennals foundation, rejected that depiction and accused Beijing of silencing a peaceful advocate of Uighur rights.

"The real shame of this situation is that by eliminating the moderate voice of Ilham Tohti the Chinese government is in fact laying the groundwork for the very extremism it says it wants to prevent."

Teng Biao, an exiled human rights lawyer and friend of the jailed scholar, welcomed the award.

"It is definitely good news," he said. "It won't necessarily lead to an early release or have direct consequences but at least this kind of prize will make the international community more aware of Ilham Tohti. Every award is helpful to Chinese political prisoners and human rights defenders."

Nicholas Bequelin, Amnesty International's east Asia director, said: "The prize is a much needed recognition of the admirable work that Ilham Tohti has made to the cause of addressing ethnic tensions in Xinjiang, a topic that he knew well would one day lead the government to jail him."

Also shortlisted for the high-profile award – which is named after the British activist who was one of Amnesty International's first secretary generals – were Razan Zaitouneh, a Syrian campaigner who went missing in Damascus in 2013, and a group of Ethiopian activists known as the Zone 9 bloggers.

Ilham Tohti was born in Artush, a city in Xinjiang near China's borders with Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Pakistan, in October 1969.

Aged 16 he made the 2,700-mile journey to Beijing to continue his studies, eventually becoming an economics professor at the Minzu University of China, a institution geared towards the country's ethnic minorities.

As an academic he began writing about the political and ethnic tensions that continued to blight Xinjiang in the mid-1990s and in 2006 launched a bilingual website called uyghurbiz.net to debate such issues.

Scrutiny of his work intensified following deadly 2009 ethnic riots in Xinjiang's capital and again after Beijing declared a "people's war on terror" in 2014 after a spate of attacks linked to the region.

Teng said his friend had attempted to address the causes of the bloodshed by serving as a "bridge to connect Uighurs and Han Chinese".

"He was never a radical. He never resorted to violence or extreme ideas."

Even so, the lawyer said his friend's criticisms of Beijing's ethnic policies saw him "severely monitored by the secret police". In early 2014 the scholar was detained at his home in Beijing and taken to Xinjiang, where western diplomats were barred from attending his two-day trial, in September that year.

Teng said Ilham Tohti's "very inhumane" life sentence – harsh, even by Chinese standards – showed how fearful the Communist party had become of his influence. "That's the reason the Chinese government ... hated him so much."

Teng said the wife and children of the academic – whose financial assets were also confiscated following his trial – were now "facing difficult times". Relatives were only permitted to see the jailed scholar for 20 minutes every three months, with discussion of political issues and prison conditions forbidden.

Bequelin said: "By sentencing to life-imprisonment such a moderate and constructive critic who had never advocated either violence or separatism, Beijing betrayed its fear that discussions of any kind about the situation of Uighurs in China would inevitably bring attention to the extraordinarily repressive policies under which Uighurs live.

"These policies have produced disastrous results including increasing ethnic polarisation and a spike in violence in recent years – the very peril that Ilham Tohti was trying to address. It is time for Beijing to recognise that Ilham Tohti should never have been jailed in the first place and release him immediately."

The decision to honour Ilham Tohti is likely to spark an angry response from Beijing. The Swiss government and donors of the Martin Ennals foundation reportedly faced pressure from Chinese officials after the activist Cao Shunli was shortlisted for the same award just days before she died in custody in 2014.

Teng, who fled China two years ago fearing he too would be imprisoned, said he hoped such awards meant the international community would not "gradually forget" human rights defenders such as Ilham Tohti.

But the severity of the crackdown that has rolled out under President Xi Jinping meant keeping track of all its victims was increasingly difficult.

"The Chinese government has arrested a lot of human rights activists and scholars and lawyers," Teng said. "It is very hard to remember all these people."

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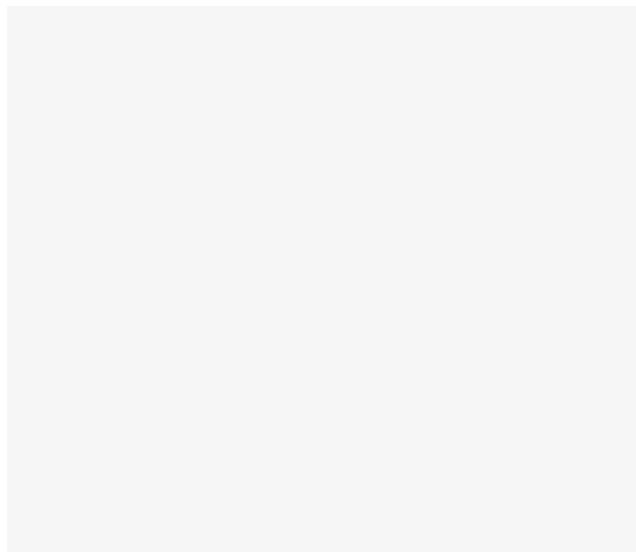
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Is China Making Its Own Terrorism Problem Worse?

Beijing says radicalized members of its Uighur minority are terrorists with ties to the Islamic State and al Qaeda, but its repressive policies may be helping to fuel the violence.

BY JUSTINE DRENNAN | FEBRUARY 9, 2015, 6:30 AM

When an SUV crashed through a crowd at Beijing's Tiananmen Square in late 2013, killing two bystanders and injuring 40, it didn't take Chinese officials long to name culprits. The attackers, they said, had been members of China's Uighur Muslim minority, with "links to many international extremist terrorist groups." Police said they found a flag bearing jihadi emblems in the crashed vehicle and blamed the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, or ETIM, a group named after the independent state China says some Uighurs want to establish in the far-western region of Xinjiang. After the attack, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying called ETIM "China's most direct and realistic security threat."

Beijing has long characterized cases of Uighur violence as organized acts of terrorism and accused individual attackers of having ties to international jihadi groups. Back in 2001, China released a document claiming that "Eastern Turkistan" terrorists had received training from Osama bin Laden and the Taliban and then "fought in combats in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Uzbekistan, or returned to Xinjiang for terrorist and violent activities." Since then, China has frequently blamed ETIM for violence in Xinjiang and elsewhere.

But scholars, human rights groups, and Uighur advocates argue that China is systematically exaggerating the threat Uighurs pose to justify its repressive policies in Xinjiang. The region's onetime-majority Uighur population of roughly 10 million, which is ethnically Turkic, has been marginalized for decades by ethnic Han Chinese migrants that Beijing has encouraged to move there in the hope that they'd help integrate the restive region into China.

The repression has been getting worse. Since the region's bloody ethnic clashes in 2009, the government has increased regulations on Muslim practices, restricting veils and beards and strictly enforcing rules that prohibit many from fasting during Ramadan or

visiting mosques. Heightened security operations have led in some cases to imprisonment, executions, and suspected torture. Government materials about how to spot extremists (hint: they tend to look like Uighurs) elide religiosity with terrorism.

Now, with the rise of the Islamic State, China has again ramped up its claims about Uighurs waging international jihad. Chinese government-run *Global Times* asserted in December that about 300 Chinese "extremists" were fighting alongside ISIS in Iraq and Syria, and in January that another 300 had traveled to Malaysia en route to joining the group. The reports suggested that many were "terrorists from the East Turkestan Islamic Movement." On Thursday, *Global Times* said ISIS had executed one of these Uighur recruits in September and two in December when they tried to flee its control, attributing the information to an anonymous Kurdish official.

Now, with the rise of the Islamic State, China has again ramped up its claims about Uighurs waging international jihad.

Many experts dismiss *Global Times*'s numbers. "I assume there are Uighurs joining ISIS, but I also assume the numbers are quite small in comparison to other groups throughout the world," said Sean Roberts, a George Washington University professor who studies the minority group. "We're probably talking about 20 to 30 people max." Nicholas Bequelin, a Hong-Kong-based senior researcher with Human Rights Watch, called Chinese media's figure of 300 "implausibly high."

It's likely that the rise of the Islamic State has given a few disenfranchised young Uighurs a cause to fight and potentially die for. Still, experts say any increase in Uighur extremism is largely due to the fact that the very policies China says are meant to combat terrorism have actually made the threat worse.

Chinese reports about hundreds of Uighurs fighting with the Islamic State are likely "intended to make the Uighurs look as if they're a threat, an Islamist terrorist organization," said Dru Gladney, an anthropologist who studies ethnic identities in China. Several international media outlets have repeated the numbers from Chinese media. But China's inflated claims are ultimately counterproductive, Gladney said. "They create more fear and marginalization, which exacerbates the problem."

China isn't wholly inventing the threat. Propaganda material from a group China links to ETIM that calls itself the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP) suggests there are at least 30 to

40 Uighur jihadis in Syria and Iraq, according to Washington Institute for Near East Policy fellow Aaron Zelin, who runs the website Jihadology.net. TIP has an increasingly active online presence that includes footage of young children firing guns in mountain valleys. In recent years, it has also claimed responsibility for attacks like the Tiananmen Square SUV incident via videos in which its purported leader, Abdullah Mansour, has called for more attacks.

But many researchers doubt TIP's claims, as its accounts of attacks often contradict facts on the ground that don't seem to indicate the sophistication of internationally organized terrorist operations. The general consensus, according to Georgetown professor James Millward, is that radicalized Uighur expats, who mostly seem to be based in Pakistan rather than Iraq and Syria, haven't provided any operational support for recent violence in China, but rather just propaganda. And any who are fighting with Middle Eastern jihadi groups don't seem to be rising very high in their ranks, said Raffaello Pantucci, an analyst at London's Royal United Services Institute.

China, however, has been quick to label moderate Uighurs who speak out as radicals. Last year a Xinjiang court sentenced Uighur professor Ilham Tohti to life in prison on charges of "separatism," for running a website that discussed Uighur experiences in the region. The United States condemned Tohti's sentence, with Secretary of State John Kerry warning that silencing moderate voices "can only make tensions worse."

Indeed, acts of apparent Uighur terrorism within China have risen sharply over the past couple years. An attack last March by eight knife-wielding men and women at a train station in Yunnan province's city of Kunming left 29 dead and at least 130 wounded. In April, people armed with knives and explosives killed three and injured 79 at the railway station in Xinjiang's capital, Urumqi. The next month, attackers crashed two cars into shoppers at an Urumqi market and set off explosives, killing 31 and injuring more than 90.

The Munich-based World Uyghur Congress, the leading advocacy organization for the minority (which uses an alternate spelling of the group's name), condemns violence but says China uses the threat of terrorism to stifle peaceful dissent as well. Alim Seytoff, the Washington spokesman for the group, told Foreign Policy by email that he didn't know whether any Uighurs had joined ISIS, but if they had, "they by no means represent the vast majority of peace-loving Uyghur people, just as those who joined ISIS from the U.S., the U.K., Australia and Europe by no means represent the freedom-loving peoples of America, Great Britain, Australia and Europe." In order to deflect criticism of its Xinjiang policies, China is "conflating the Uyghur people's legitimate demands for

human rights, religious freedom, and democracy with international Islamic terrorism," he said.

Gladney, the anthropologist, said any Uighurs with ties to ISIS were more likely driven by resentment of China than by aims of global jihad. They may want militant training to fight China and even to establish a Uighur state, he said, but they're less interested in creating a global caliphate. Analysts also note that those who do desire a global caliphate seem to have little more than a passing interest in Uighurs' relatively parochial aspirations, despite some token gestures, such as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi's reference to Chinese violations of Muslim rights last July, and exaggerated claims about such abuses made last fall by an al Qaeda-run magazine.

They may want militant training to fight China and even to establish a Uighur state, he said, but they're less interested in creating a global caliphate.

Meanwhile, it's unclear if the group Beijing singles out as the greatest threat, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, comprises a distinct, self-identified terrorist entity or a looser grouping of individuals. The Chinese government first mentioned ETIM in a vaguely sourced document in 2001, shortly after then-U.S. President George W. Bush announced his "global war on terror." In it, China called the group "a major component of the terrorist network headed by Osama bin Laden."

United States seemed to agree that ETIM posed a real threat, listing the group as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist group in 2002 and detaining 22 Uighurs captured in Afghanistan and Pakistan at Guantánamo Bay. Some were held for more than a decade, though the United States later acknowledged that it didn't have adequate evidence against them. Just over a year ago it sent the last three to Slovakia — one of a handful of small countries that agreed to host them.

But George Washington University's Roberts concluded in a 2012 paper titled "Imaginary Terrorism?" that Washington also may have inflated the Uighur threat. The Uighur detainees at Guantánamo who said they'd received jihadi training described a training camp in Afghanistan that amounted to a small, run-down shack. The highlight, in Roberts's words: "A one-time opportunity to fire a few bullets with the only Kalashnikov rifle that was available at the camp." Although detainees expressed anger

about Chinese rule, they all denied belonging to ETIM, and many said they'd never heard of the group.

Roberts has argued that the United States may have backed China's claims about ETIM in order to cement China's support for the occupation of Afghanistan and, later, Iraq. Nevertheless, various international terrorism analysts continued to perpetuate the allegations about ETIM in work that cited government statements as their primary sources. According to Georgetown's Millward, China uses this echo chamber of supposed evidence about ETIM to keep alive the idea of an international Uighur threat, conflating ETIM with the newer, propaganda-producing Turkistan Islamic Party.

A U.S. State Department official told Foreign Policy that the United States designated ETIM a terrorist group "after careful study," having concluded that its members were responsible for terrorism in China and were planning attacks on U.S. interests abroad, but declined to specify the sources of this information. The official added that the government still maintains this listing. Officials at Washington's Chinese Embassy and China's State Council didn't return repeated calls and emails seeking comment.

What worries Human Rights Watch's Bequelin, as several countries including the United States move to scale up counterterrorism cooperation with China, isn't so much that other countries believe China's inflated claims. It's more that the need to cooperate on security and other goals may mean de facto acceptance of, or even practical assistance for, China's repressive policies.

The State Department official said the United States hopes to discuss how to enhance counterterrorism cooperation with China at an upcoming White House summit on countering violent extremism in February, and appreciates China's aid to Iraq and support for U.N. resolutions aimed at stopping foreign fighters from joining extremist groups. "At the same time we continue to urge China to take measures to reduce tension and reform counterproductive policies in Xinjiang that restrict Uighurs' ethnic and religious identity," the official said.

But for now, there aren't too many promising signs from Xinjiang. And China isn't the only place taking a hard line. Over the past year, governments from the U.K. to Kosovo to Jordan have been accused of clamping down on civil liberties or political opponents in the name of counterterrorism, some basing their actions to seize passports and detain suspects on the U.S.-backed U.N. foreign fighters resolution. Several Xinjiang experts draw parallels between radicalized Uighurs and young men from other countries drawn to extremism in part due to Islamophobia or alienation at home.

So far, the one Chinese national known to have been captured while fighting for ISIS appeared to be Han Chinese — despite initial Chinese allegations that he was Uighur. But some Uighurs still face particular suspicion about their aims. In March, Thailand detained more than 200 Uighurs within its borders, and although the group comprised families with several young children, Thai police asserted that they were headed to fight in Syria.

So far, the one Chinese national known to have been captured while fighting for ISIS appeared to be Han Chinese — despite initial Chinese allegations that he was Uighur.

The families were among growing numbers of Uighurs seeking to flee Chinese repression via Southeast Asia. Their ultimate destination is usually Turkey, where many sympathize with Uighurs because they are also a Turkic people. In recent years, Uighur emigrants skirting tightened border regimes in Central Asia and Pakistan have turned up in Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Indonesia, as well as Thailand. The Kunming train station attackers may have been provoked to violence in part because Chinese officials thwarted their attempt to cross into Laos.

It's possible that reasons other than Chinese influence caused Thai authorities to conclude that the apprehended migrants, who claimed to be Turkish, were headed to Syria, said Pantucci of London's RUSI. "The problem now is that Turkey is the staging point for Syria, so the perception is if they're trying to go to Turkey, they must be trying to go to Syria."

Although some escaped from custody, many of the families detained in Thailand are still in limbo. China demands their repatriation and rejects Turkey's offer to take them in; human rights advocates warn that China is likely to mistreat them — the same reason the United States didn't send the Gitmo detainees back to China.

As for Xinjiang, Gladney said, there are "growing concerns at all levels of Chinese society" — even among some government wonks — that China's policies aren't working. Many believe the "western development" strategy meant to lift minorities out of poverty and integrate them into Chinese society, as well as the "strike hard" campaign of the past several years, have only stoked further resentment and violence, spread alarm through the population, and drawn more international attention to Uighurs'

plight. As scholars long predicted, China's actions against a perceived Uighur threat seem to have actually made that threat more real. "Twenty years ago people thought I was crazy talking about Uighurs," Gladney said. "Now there's lots of interest."

Despite increased attention at home and abroad, Gladney didn't see China making significant changes to its Xinjiang policy any time soon. "But they may tweak it," he said, "and that will be the thing to watch."

Kevin Frayer/Getty Images

Justine Drennan was a fellow at Foreign Policy. She previously reported from Cambodia for the Associated Press and other outlets. @jkdrennan

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Hanafi School of Law

Islamic school of legal thought (madhhab) whose origins are attributed to Abu Hanifah in Kufa, Iraq, in the eighth century. Most widespread school in Islamic law, followed by roughly one-third of the world's Muslims. Dominant in the Abbasid caliphate and the Ottoman Empire. Remains the dominant legal authority in successor states for personal status and religious observances. Uses reason, logic, opinion (ray), analogy (qiyas), and preference (istihsan) in the formulation of laws. Legal doctrines are relatively liberal, particularly with respect to personal freedom and women's rights in contracting marriages. First school to formulate contract rules for business transactions involving resale for profit and payment for goods for future delivery.

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Media Advisory: Concern over the use of the inaccurate term "Chinese Muslim" to refer to Uyghurs

Published 📅 *Tue, 03/02/2010 - 11:00*

For immediate release
March 2, 2010, 6:00 pm EST
Contact: Uyghur American Association +1 (202) 349 1496

Although the use of the term "Chinese Muslim" to describe Uyghurs has decreased somewhat in recent months as the international community has gained a better understanding of Uyghurs' identity and the oppression they face, the Uyghur American Association (UAA) remains concerned about the still frequent use of the term in the international media. Uyghurs are not, in fact, "Chinese Muslims", and this term is inaccurate and misleading. UAA encourages the media and other organizations to refrain from using the term "Chinese Muslims", and instead simply use the term "Uyghurs".

The Uyghur people, who are indigenous to East Turkestan (also known as Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in the People's Republic of China (PRC))[i] speak a Turkic language and possess a rich and distinctive culture that is closely related to that of their Central Asian brethren, in particular the Uzbeks. The more than 10 million Uyghurs who live within the PRC are ethnically and culturally distinct from the dominant ethnic group in China, known widely as the Han Chinese. Uyghurs are also ethnically and culturally distinct from the approximately 10 million Hui Muslims who live in northwest China and other areas of the PRC. Hui Muslims are generally considered to be ethnically Chinese, and they speak the Chinese language.

Referring to Uyghurs as Chinese Muslims, then, is akin to referring to Tibetans as "Chinese Buddhists". The Tibetan people, whose own struggle for human rights and the preservation of their unique culture has many parallels to that of the Uyghur people, are culturally and ethnically distinct from the Han Chinese. To refer to Tibetans as "Chinese Buddhists" would confuse them with the many ethnic Chinese Buddhists living in China and elsewhere around the world, and as the international community has long been familiar with the identity of the Tibetan people and their plight, this inaccurate terminology is never used.

Perhaps most importantly, Uyghurs do not refer to themselves as "Chinese Muslims", regardless of whether or not they are Chinese citizens or whether they are living inside the borders of the People's Republic of China or in other countries around the globe. UAA believes it is of fundamental importance to respect the terminology that an ethnic group or population uses to refer to itself, and give Uyghurs a voice in shaping their own identity. Furthermore, even the Chinese government, which has sought to dilute Uyghurs' culture and assimilate Uyghurs into Han society, refers to Uyghurs by using the Chinese word for "Uyghur" and not by the Chinese word for "Chinese Muslim".

Uyghurs choose to use "East Turkestan" to refer to their homeland, and not the official designation of the region by Chinese authorities in 1955 as "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region". Similarly, Tibetans choose to refer to their homeland as "Tibet", and not "Xizang Autonomous Region", the name officially imposed on the region by the Chinese Communist government in 1964.

Use of the term 'East Turkestan' does not define a 'pro-independence' position. Instead, it is used by Uyghurs wishing to assert their cultural distinctiveness from China proper. 'Xinjiang', meaning 'new boundary' or 'new realm', was adopted by the Manchus in the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) and reflects the perspective of those who gave it this name. East Turkestan is the historic name of the region, which was invaded and occupied by the Manchus in 1884.

Uyghurs have struggled to preserve their identity in the face of an onslaught of government campaigns to Sinicize them and demonize their belief in Islam. Uyghurs' assertions of their distinct ethnic identity are branded as "unpatriotic". Uyghurs' religious practices are tightly controlled by the state, and Chinese officials have suggested that even their language makes them vulnerable to terrorist influences.[ii] Uyghurs have not been given a choice in authorities' removal of Uyghur as a language of instruction at all levels of education in East Turkestan.[iii] Residents of Kashgar, a predominantly Uyghur city in southern East Turkestan that is viewed as the cradle of Uyghur culture and civilization, were not consulted before officials launched the demolition of Kashgar's Old City and began destroying traditional patterns of Uyghur life.[iv] Moreover, Uyghurs are not consulted in development projects designed by government authorities to raise the standard of living in East Turkestan, and they therefore reap few of the benefits engendered by such development.

An additional factor to consider when examining the merits of the term "Chinese Muslim" with respect to Uyghurs is the fact that a significant number of Uyghurs believe in Christianity. Christian Uyghurs also face harsh persecution at the hands of Chinese government authorities, as can be seen most prominently in the cases of Alimjan Yimit and Osman Imin, two Uyghurs who were recently imprisoned for preaching Christianity.[v]

Outside of East Turkestan, there are significant populations of Uyghurs located in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Turkey, Australia, Germany and other European countries, Canada and the United States.

[i] The Uyghur people who live in East Turkestan are the descendants of the nomadic herders and oasis-based people who have lived in the region for thousands of years. Before the 20th century, there was no sizeable Han Chinese population in East Turkestan. See: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the Uyghurs of East Turkestan (also known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region or XUAR, People's Republic of China), Uyghur Human Rights Project, available at: http://docs.uyghuramerican.org/UNDRIP10-2-09.pdf

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Nitaqat rules for Palestinians and Turkistanis eased

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Saudi Arabia's Haramain High-Speed Railway opens to public

Updated 25 March 2013

JEDDAH: ARAB NEWS

The Labor Ministry said yesterday it would consider employment of four

Palestinians and Turkistanis equal to one foreign worker in the Nitaqat system.

"The employment of foreigners exempted from deportation will be considered 0.25 points in the Nitaqat system and this group of workers includes Palestinians and Turkistanis in addition to Burmese," said Hattab Al-Anazi, spokesman of the ministry.

Two days ago the ministry said it would consider employment of four Burmese workers equal to one expat under the Nitaqat system.

The move was widely applauded by the country's 350,000-strong Burmese community.

"The move not only applies to the Burmese but also

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Tim Berners-Lee invented the web —

other nationals exempt from deportation including Palestinians and Turkistanis," said Al-Anazi, adding that the move would help private sector make use of these workers available in the Kingdom, instead of recruiting foreigners.

However, he pointed out that such group of workers should not exceed 50 percent of total workers in a company. "If they exceed the limit, then each such worker would be considered one expat worker," he explained.

According to one report, there are 291,495 Palestinians in the Kingdom. The number of Turkistanis is estimated at 50,000.

Saudi Arabia's Haramain High-Speed Railway opens to public (/node/1386191)

Updated 16 min 39 sec ago

ARAB NEWS

- During Hajj, the road journey

between the two holy cities can take as long as 10 hours.

- The SR60 billion ($16 billion) mega project is the biggest railway in the Middle East and will transport 60 million passengers a year.

JEDDAH: Saudi Arabia's new Haramain High-Speed Railway opened to the public on Thursday, whisking Muslim pilgrims and other travelers between Makkah and Madinah.

The SR60 billion ($16 billion) mega project is the biggest railway in the Middle East and will transport 60 million passengers a year.

The train also has stops at Jeddah, King Abdul Aziz

International Airport, and King Abdullah Economic City (KAEC).

DISTANCE TO BE COVERED
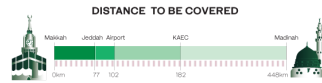
Rumaih Al-Rumaih, chairman of the Public Transport Authority (PTA), said the opening to passengers "marks a historical national shifting point in the Kingdom's modern transportation industry."

He said that the train will operate four days a week, from Thursday to Sunday. The daily trips will gradually increase to cover all days, while the time of trips will be gradually shortened to two hours for direct trips between Makkah and Madinah and two hours 20 minutes for trips between if it includes stops at the other stations.

During Hajj, the road journey between the two

holy cities can take as long as 10 hours.

> من غرفة قيادة **"**
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> قطار —
> الحرمين
> السريع
> (@haramainrailway)
> [October
> 11,
> 2018](https://twitter.com/haramainrailway/status/1050254229548531712?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw)

Al-Rumaih extended thanks to King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for their unlimited support and for launching.

He also thanked
Makkah Governor
Prince Khaled bin
Faisal who played a
great role in
supporting the
project and
overcoming
obstacles during the
implementation
phase.

The railway has a
fleet of 35 trains,
each one consisting
of 417 seats.

With a speed of 300
km per hour, the
train covers a
distance of 450
kilometer.

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Uighur people (C) walk near police as they form a line across a street on July 8, 2009 in Urumqi, China. (Guang Niu/Getty Images)

Repression in China and Its Consequences in Xinjiang

Kilic Kanat

A series of violent incidents in China involving Uyghurs has focused increasing attention on the Turkic Muslim minority group and on the religious and political situation in their homeland, China's vast northwestern province known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR or East Turkistan). The incidents have included an increasing number of ethnic clashes between Uyghurs and Han Chinese, explosions and Chinese military operations in XUAR, and a number of high-profile incidents involving Uyghurs. The attacks include a car attack at Tiananmen Square in 2013 as well as a violent knife attack in 2014 on passersby at the train station in Kunming that left 29 dead and 100 injured. A number of observers have seen in these attacks evidence of growing radicalization among Uyghurs.

There is no dispute that the Uyghurs as a people have grown increasingly disgruntled and shown their anger and resentment toward the People's Republic of China's (PRC) and its policies. Some marginal groups even started to resort to violence in the region. The question is why. For many years, PRC authorities painted Uyghur political activism and the growing unrest in the XUAR as the work of radicalized groups. However, such claims have historically rested on dubious evidence. Moreover, there has always been a compelling cas

that it is Beijing's repressive policies—not the transnational jihadist movement or the extremist ideology that drives it—that is the primary cause of the tensions and conflict in Xinjiang today.

Since coming to power, President Xi Jinping has deepened the PRC's crackdown on Uyghurs in a variety of ways. For years, the PRC's "Western Development" projects have marginalized the indigenous Uyghur populations of East Turkestan by inviting large-scale Han Chinese migration, forcing the Uyghurs' cultural assimilation, and placing restrictions on religious and political freedoms. Meanwhile, PRC authorities have prosecuted Uyghur dissent and activism as manifestations of extremism, separatism, or terrorism. Even the moderate dissenter Ilham Tohti, a professor of economics and a winner of the PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award, was jailed by the PRC on charges of inciting separatism, mostly because of his work and public statements that focused attention on the social and economic dimensions of the conflict in XUAR.[1] The Chinese government, moreover, has systematically curtailed freedom of the press and basic liberties for Uyghurs. It has tightly controlled the information that comes out of the XUAR, especially about the violent incidents that have racked the region. Without an opportunity for political dissent, Uyghurs have come to feel more disenfranchised and pessimistic about their future in China. The absence of any political space or platform to express their legitimate grievances combined with the deterioration of economic and political conditions in XUAR are marginalizing increasing numbers of Uyghur youth and, in some instances, motivating their radicalization.

Chinese paramilitary police stand guard
Bazaar in the ethnic Uigur area of Urumc
(PETER PARKS/AFP/Getty Images)

The purpose of this study is to show that the deteriorating situation in Xinjiang and rising rates of violence involving Uyghurs have been primarily the result of Chinese policies. In particular, the PRC's policies have stamped out religious freedom and weakened indigenous and moderate religious practices among the Uyghurs. This, in turn, has been radicalizing conservative Muslims in the XUAR and leaving others who would like to leave but cannot vulnerable to exploitation by radical groups. The aggressive responses of the Chinese government to religious movements and growing grievances in the region have further fueled the conflict. Nor has the Chinese government shown any intention to take a different approach to resolving the problem. As a result, Beijing's repressive policies combined with its intransigence and refusal to address the religious, economic, and cultural causes of the unrest in XUAR are likely to contribute to greater radicalization among Uyghurs. This will, among other things, continue to create opportunities for radical groups to penetrate and take root in the region and this could make the PRC's fears over radicalization among Uyghurs in XUAR a self-fulfilling prophesy.

The Urumqi Riots and Their Impact

Although the conflict between Uyghurs and Han Chinese has persisted for decades, international attention to the problem has been scant. The last time the XUAR, the home of more than 10 million Uyghur Muslims, captured international headlines was during the July 2009 clashes that broke out in Urumqi, the regional capital. The clashes started as a protest about authorities' indifference to the Han lynching of Uyghur factory workers in Shaoguan.[2] The incidents quickly became a violent confrontation when security forces used excessive force against Uyghurs with the help of Han Chinese civilians. The official number of fatalitie from the incident varies from 192 to several hundred, and we may never know for certain how many people died. However, the sheer number of documented Uyghur roundups and forced disappearances[3] after the incident demonstrates that the PRC's flagrant abuse of power is ongoing. Furthermore, the degree of top-down discrimination against Uyghurs in their own homeland was made clear by the fact that most Uyghurs allegedly involved in the ethnic clashes were given criminal sentences without due process while few Han Chinese received the same treatment in the aftermath of the events.[4]

During and after the clashes, the government closed off the region to international observers for months. Officials expelled foreign journalists, disrupted Internet access and cellphone reception, and limited news from the region to the PRC's state-run media.[5] The Chinese government spokespeople blamed events on the so-called "three evil forces" (separatism, terrorism, and religious extremism) and they said "radicals and separatists" were responsible for causing the clashes.[6] Instead of investigating the local sources of the conflict, the media coverage inside the PRC blamed the clashes on the insidious involvement of the external separatist forces. In fact, in the post-9/11 world, the PRC has repeatedly blamed the growing unrest in XUAR on radical groups—a stance that in the post 9/11 climate, other governments have not sought to challenge.

But the social media and YouTube footage of the 2009 clashes that spread across the world shattered the PRC's claims that jihadism was the source of the conflict. The media provided instead evidence of large-scale police brutality, discrimination and lynching by Han Chinese population and revealed the social and economic roots of the conflict. For starters, there was no sign of religiously-driven radicalism during the demonstrations. The incidents took place in the northern, provincial capital of Urumqi—not in the countryside or the Southern provinces of Xinjiang where religiosity and conservatism are more prevalent. Uyghur Muslims constitute only 10 percent of Urumqi's population, which is largely secular. Nor was there a religious symbol or slogan that revealed a connection between the demonstrations and any external organization or network. Subsequent interviews of those involved in the clashes found that most of the participants were not members or sympathizers of radical groups and organizations with direct links to external networks, as China claimed, but primarily educated, young people of the most Westernized city of Xinjiang.[7] Finally, the Beijing government has provided no evidence to support its earlier claims that the protests were motivated by radical groups. Instead, interviews in the XUAR proved that the demonstrations were mostly local expressions of political and economic grievances. Protesters cited the high unemployment rate, the destruction of historic cities, such as Kashgar, increasing Han urban migration to XUAR, and the

cultural assimilation policies of the Chinese government, besides relative indifference of the security forces for the attack of Han Chinese mobs to the Uyghurs in Shaoguan as the causes of their discontent.

Attentive observers of the conflict reject the oversimplification of the government's narrative, instead putting forth a complex mélange of causes that stem from social and economic discrimination, forced assimilation, and religious repression at the hands of the government.[8] Their analysis, however, has not led to any revision of Chinese polices. The Chinese regional and central governments continue to regard the issue primarily as an "Islamic threat", and they maintain their heavy-handed policies to address the problem. Moreover, because the government tends to see religion and religiosity as the only variable that explains the problem in the XUAR and terrorism as the only tactic used for redress, the religious freedom of conservative Muslims has become the primary target of repressive Chinese policies.

The

A large group of Han Chinese walk up a street carrying sticks and shovels in Urumqi in China's far west Xinjiang province on J
PARKS/AFP/Getty Images)

Repression of Religious Freedom

East Turkestan has never been religiously free under modern Chinese rule. Since the establishment of PRC rule in the region in 1949, Beijing has followed a policy of religious repression that has aimed to encourage the full assimilation of Uyghurs with the Han Chinese migrants. A major report produced by Human Rights Watch and Human Rights in China documents the Chinese policies:

> Documents obtained and interviews conducted by Human Rights Watch reveal a multi-tiered system of surveillance, control, and suppression of religious activity aimed at Xinjiang's Uyghurs. At its most extreme, peaceful activists who practice their religion in a manner deemed unacceptable by state authorities or Chinese Communist Party (CCP)

officials are arrested, tortured, and at times executed. The harshest punishments are meted out to those accused of involvement in separatist activity, which is increasingly equated by officials with "terrorism." Because of fears in Beijing of the power of separatist messages, independent religious activity or dissent is at times arbitrarily equated with a breach of state security, a serious crime in China and one that is frequently prosecuted.

At a more mundane and routine level, many Uyghurs experience harassment in their daily lives. Celebrating religious holidays, studying religious texts, or showing one's religion through personal appearance are strictly forbidden at state schools. The Chinese government has instituted controls over who can be a cleric, what version of the Koran may be used, where religious gatherings may be held, and what may be said on religious occasions.[9]

The report further revealed the problems with China's broad legal definitions of "religious crimes" and the harsh, indiscriminate punishments for those convicted of "illegal religious activity" in the region. With the implementation of a 2005 Religious Affairs Regulation, the PRC took religious repression to a new level. The Uyghur Human Rights Project outlined the practical ramifications of this directive in a report and argued that of the 56 officially recognized ethnic groups in China, the Uyghur people face the most severe restrictions. According to this report:

Religious leaders, such as imams, are required to attend political education classes to ensure compliance with Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regulations and policies; only state-approved versions of the Koran and sermons are permitted with all unapproved religious texts treated as "illegal" publications liable to confiscation and criminal charges against whoever was found in possession of them; any outward expression of faith in government workplaces, hospitals and some private businesses, such as men wearing beards or women wearing headscarves, is forbidden; no state employees and no one under the age of 18 can enter a mosque, a measure not in force in the rest of China; organized private religious education is proscribed and facilitators of private classes in Islam are frequently charged with conducting "illegal" religious activities; and students, teachers and government workers are prohibited from fasting during Ramadan. In addition, Uyghurs are not permitted to undertake Hajj, unless it is with an expensive official tour, in which state officials carefully vet applicants. [10]

The government has adopted these policies mostly out of its belief that the way to generate "social harmony" in XUAR is to stop the practice of religious freedom. Islam and its rituals—especially dietary restrictions— have drawn important divides between Uyghurs and Han Chinese, just as they have helped protect and reinforce the Uyghurs' sense of themselves as a separate nation within China. Most significant, the religious revivals that have periodically emerged in the region have adopted a more culturalistic character. They have attempted to preserve, promote, and protect Muslim Uyghur identity from the impact of globalization and the PRC's state-led campaigns to Sinicize them. Most of these movements had local Islamic roots and native-born religious leaders who were educated and trained in East Turkestan. In the past, the leaders of these revival movements had been careful to remain unassociated with external groups and not to get involved in political matters in order to be able to continue their activities.

Most of the Uyghur revivals in East Turkestan—for example, the Meshrep movement, a cultural gathering o Uyghur youth—began not as political movements but as moral reform movements that aimed to improve th ethics of the society, encourage the revitalization of Uyghur social codes and traditions and protect and promote Muslim Uyghur identity. Historically, another significant goal of Uyghur Islamic movements has been to provide basic religious education to Uyghur youth in the absence of any formal religious institutions These efforts to promote religious education became popular among Uyghurs starting in the mid-1980s and ultimately turned into a target for the Chinese government in the 1990s. The PRC's subsequent attacks on and repression of local religious leaders, their institutions, and their students contributed to the increasing politicization of religious movements.

During the PRC's campaign against religious education in the 1990s, Islamic scholarship started to go underground in East Turkestan. The crackdown on Uyghur religious leaders and institutions in particular created a vacuum of religious authority in the region. The persecution of local leaders sparked small-scale protests and clashes that Chinese authorities then blamed on "radical groups". The central government reacted to these incidents by further limiting religious freedoms. In response, demands for religious freedom increased even among the secular segments of Uyghur society.

While religious repression of Uyghurs intensified, Chinese policies in the region exacerbated other grievances. For example, the relentless Han migration to the XUAR combined with the preferential treatment that these newcomers received from local PRC administrators magnified a growing rift between Uyghurs and Han Chinese. In the late 1980s, this added a new dimension to the conflict that generated a new wave of Uyghur opposition to Chinese rule. Instead of trying to understand the local sources of the conflict, however, the Chinese government stifled all forms of opposition. It feared that it was losing control of strategically vital territory to a rising tide of Uyghur irredentism. The PRC's fears only worsened when the Central Asian Republics became independent from Russia in 1991 and, after this, ethnic conflict erupted in the Balkans. Fearing the "Balkanization" of its own territory, the PRC took measures to prevent the proliferation of any religious and political activity in the XUAR that might challenge its rule.

Fears of ethnic irredentism and disintegration led the Chinese government to perceive Uyghur demonstrations as an existential threat to China's territorial integrity. Xinjiang thus came to occupy a central role in the PRC's national security agenda. Anti-terror and anti-separatist operations became the backbone of handling the Uyghur question, and this only incited ethnic hatreds and made it easier for Beijing to ignore more sensible calls for social and economic reform. The government's actions only further radicalized Uyghur dissent groups, which then began to question the effectiveness of peaceful strategies such as non-violent protest or formal communication with the Chinese government.

Beginning in the mid-1990s, religious repression in Xinjiang caused many Uyghur youth to leave the region and seek religious education from external sources. Initially, there were only a few destinations outside the
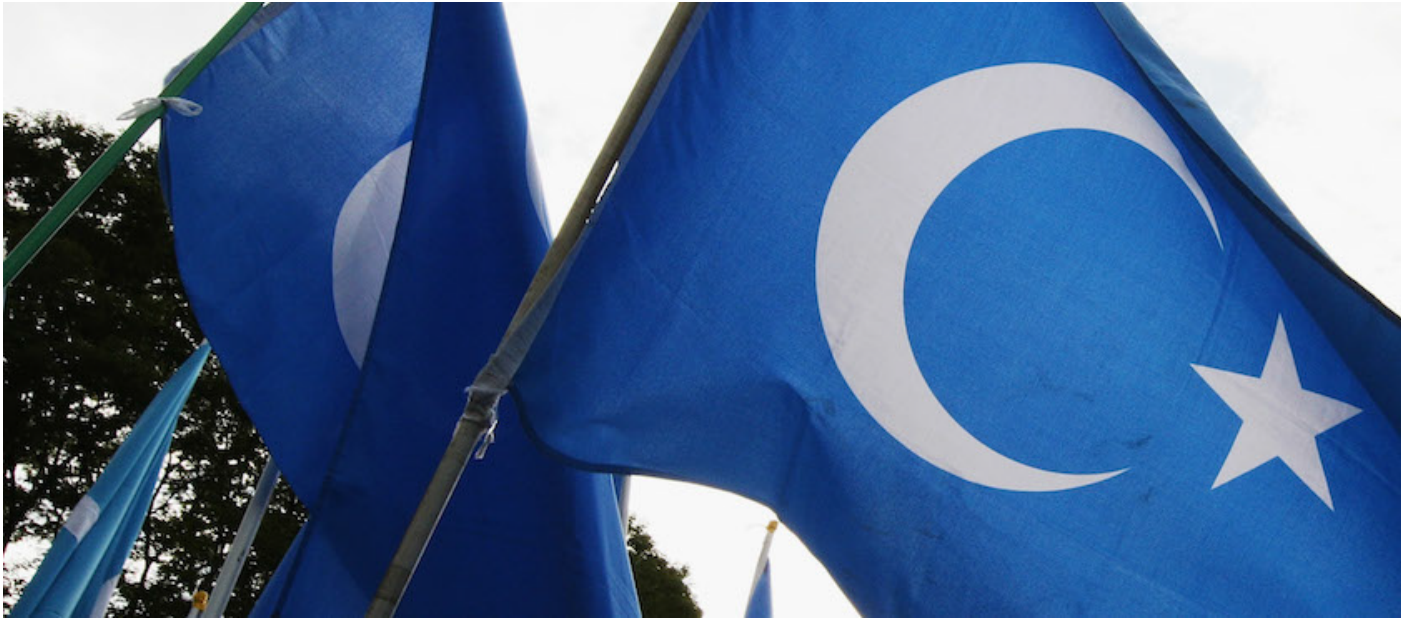
People protest against the Chinese government's treatment on recent ethical clashes in Urumqi, at Miyashita Park on July 12, 2 Kimura/Getty Images)

XUAR for those who wished to receive religious education. As there was no religious educational infrastructure in post-Soviet Central Asia, the Uyghurs' only real viable options were Turkey and Pakistan. Some of the Uyghurs who went to study in these countries came back to East Turkestan with a different set of attitudes toward the nexus of state, society, and religion. Many of these new Uyghur approaches reflected the outlooks of the foreign countries in which their advocates studied. In the 1990s, the Chinese government increasingly came to fear Uyghurs who pursued study in Turkey, a country where there is both an active network of Uyghur nationalist diaspora organizations and a tradition of reconciling Islam with secular-civic democracy. Simultaneously, many of the Uyghurs who left for Pakistan returned to Xinjiang more radicalized. Their influence, however, was minimal in Xinjiang because they lacked support among ordinar Uyghurs. But the radical agenda of these returnees made an impact on a segment of the society that was increasingly pessimistic the PRC regime would pursue a more just and equitable policy in the XUAR.

These new dynamics began to create new rifts among the Islamic scholars in East Turkestan. For instance, disputes began to emerge between different Uyghur groups in regard to religious practices, such as nezir, which is a "feast organized to commemorate the dead and regular attendance at the cemetery to pray on behalf of the deceased."[11] The disputes that emerged over these practices reflected the deepening theologica divisions between the adherents of indigenous Uyghur Islam, which is a version of Sunni Islam heavily influenced by Sufi brotherhoods and local traditions,[12] and the increasingly Salafist-influenced versions of Islam that came from outside East Turkestan. Importantly, the repressive policies of the Chinese government have aimed to uproot the traditional Islamic infrastructure and movements, and this has done more than anything to weaken the capacity of indigenous Islam to resist penetration from abroad.

Furthermore, despite the emergence of important religious and political differences among the Xinjiang Muslim population, the PRC's response to the "Uyghur Question" has been uniform and systematic; it has moved to suppress all expressions of Uyghur religiosity as one in the same. In fact, the Chinese government has continued to target all groups working on religious education in the region, regardless of their overall societal or political goals.

The PRC's aggressive policy of restricting religious freedom has in turn generated a large-scale reaction within Uyghur society. In the 1990s, the amalgamation of ethnic, cultural, economic, and religious grievances within Uyghur society created the foundations for widespread unrest in the XUAR. In reality, the rapid spread of unrest across different regions and city centers of the XUAR was the result of many factors and localized struggles; they did not stem from any single centrally-organized movement, whether nationalist or religious. As a whole, however, Uyghurs from all segments of society and walks of life came to express in the 1990s their political frustrations with Chinese rule much more vocally than previous generations did.

Notwithstanding the number of violent clashes in the XUAR in the 1990s, radicalization remained a largely marginal phenomenon in Uyghur society. It certainly paled in comparison with the radicalizing trends that took root in nearby countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan. Generally speaking, mainstream Uyghur groups were peaceful and avoided any form of violent confrontation with Chinese authorities. In fact, many of the incidents that the Beijing government portrayed as examples of religiously-inspired violence were instead driven by police brutality. For instance, in two major incidents—the 1991 protests led by Zeynidin Yusuf in Baren Township of Akto County, and the 1995 demonstrations in Hotan—Uyghurs assembled to demand greater religious freedom, but PRC security forces responded with cruelty. When the international media learned of the incidents, the PRC blamed the clashes on "religious zealots who wanted to establish an Islamic state inside Chinese territory." But a little more digging would have uncovered that the major cause of these riots was local dynamics, including increasing government repression of religious freedoms.[13]

The Ghulja Incident

Ethnic tensions in East Turkestan took a further turn for the worse in February 1997, when Chinese security forces raided the mosques and houses of the city of Ghulja on the holiest day of the Muslim year and detained dozens of Uyghur women. The following day, the Meshrep, or traditional gathering of Uyghur youth, organized a protest in the city center against the detentions. The demonstrations turned violent when Chinese authorities once again used excessive force and arrested protesters. Many protesters were systematically tortured and executed in detention without due process of law.[14] When the international media picked up the news of the violent crackdown, Chinese authorities tried once again to portray the events as a fundamentalist uprising against the PRC itself. After the fact, the PRC has officially described

the Ghulja events as a terrorist action perpetrated by "Eastern Turkistani Terrorist Forces."[15] The subsequent crackdown in the area and witch-hunts led to the death and flight of many Uyghur youth. Major human rights organizations such as Amnesty International released reports that documented the gross human rights violations that had essentially turned the city into an open-air prison. According to Amnesty International:

> Since 1996, the government has launched an extensive campaign against "ethnic separatists," imposing new restrictions on religious and cultural rights and resorting increasingly to executions, show trials and arbitrary detention to silence real and suspected opponents.
>
> The official reports about "separatists and terrorists" obscure a more complex reality in which many people who are not involved in violence have become the victims of human rights violations. Over the years, attempts by Uyghurs to air their views or grievances and peacefully exercise their most fundamental human rights have been met with repression. The denial of legitimate channels for expressing grievances and discontent has led to outbursts of violence, including by people who are not involved in political opposition activities.[16]

According to this report, thousands of Uyghurs were rounded up after Ghulja incident, and those detained were:

> tortured, some with particularly cruel methods which, to Amnesty International's knowledge, are not being used elsewhere in the People's Republic of China. Political prisoners held in prisons or labour camps are reported to be frequently subjected to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment. Some have reportedly died of ill-treatment or neglect in detention.[17]

The PRC's crackdown in Ghulja spread to other cities and towns of Xinjiang in the final years of the 1990s. Fearing government retribution, many Uyghur youth tried to flee the country, but they had few options for asylum abroad. A few hundred of these Uyghurs were able to cross the border to the newly independent Central Asian states. The influx of political refugees from China impacted the development of Uyghur nationalism in these countries. In Kazakhstan, for example, there is a sizable Uyghur population, and the arrival of Uyghurs from Xinjiang spurred a cultural and ethnic revival among Uyghur minorities.

The growing Uyghur nationalist movement in Central Asia also began making connections with the Uyghur diaspora groups in Western countries and in Turkey during this period. Despite their best efforts, the movement initially failed to develop a strong presence in Western countries—in part because of the small size of the diaspora in the West, but also because of the limited communication between the Uyghurs of Central Asia and Western Europe. During the mid-1990s, however, some activists in Germany launched a new organization, the Eastern Turkistan European Union, which provided a good bridge between Uyghur organizations and human rights groups in the West and began to act as a major hub for Uyghur refugees seeking asylum. The German Uyghur group provided more prompt and accurate information to human

A Muslim ethnic Uighur woman in Urumqi, the capital of China's Xinjiang region on July 3, 2010. (PETER PARKS/AFP/Getty

rights organizations and the international media. As a result of these increasing connections between Uyghurs based in Europe and Central Asia, Central Asia also became a major center for information about Xinjiang.

At the same time, a second group of Uyghurs from East Turkestan found their way to Turkey, where there was an existing Uyghur diaspora of around five thousand Uyghurs. Uyghurs who fled to Turkey from Xinjiang became exposed to a pan-Turkic form of nationalism. Although the Uyghur connection to Turkey was weaker than and not as well-organized as the one formed with Europe, the Chinese government came to perceive it as a unique threat. Indeed, PRC officials had not forgotten that the founders of the Eastern Turkestan Republic of 1944 were mostly Uyghurs who had been educated in Turkey and who had brought their vision of pan-Turkism back to East Turkestan. The PRC's fears were compounded by the widespread public support that the Uyghur struggle enjoyed in Turkey. It is important to remember, however, that these pro-Uyghur groups were politically moderate; their aim was to improve the lives of Uyghurs in East Turkestan through the reform of PRC—not through separation from it. Moreover, these Turks strongly opposed the use of violence to achieve these political ends.

Nevertheless, the PRC's growing fears of the "Uyghur Threat" led Beijing to seek to export its repressive policies to its Central Asian neighbors. After the fall of the Soviet Union, China's increasing economic and political power in the region provided it with an opportunity to project its power deeper onto the Eurasian landmass. Through bilateral agreements and, later, through the multilateral framework provided by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (the "Shanghai Five"), the Chinese government secured the cooperation of Central Asian governments in a bid to suppress Uyghur nationalism. Authorities from

Bishkek to Astana cooperated with the PRC in forcibly limiting the activities of Uyghur groups and, under certain circumstances, they allowed for the extradition of refugees back to China. As a result, most Uyghur organizations in these countries were forced to close, and their members fled to evade persecution by regional authoritarian regimes. Thus, through political pressure and economic incentives, China succeeded in cracking down on Uyghur movements in Central Asia.

In the aftermath of the Ghulja incident, when pressure on Uyghurs in Central Asia was high and migration to Turkey was cumbersome because of the geographical distance, some Xinjiang Uyghurs chose to move to Afghanistan and Pakistan. The harsh terrain that these countries share with the western reaches of China made passage to them difficult for asylum seekers, but it also meant the refugees were protected from the Chinese security forces that pursued them. Those who escaped to Afghanistan found themselves under the rule of the Taliban, which in general allowed Uyghur groups to stay in Afghanistan as long as they abided by the rules of the regime. In due course, some Uyghurs from East Turkestan became more exposed to the radical ideology of the numerous criminal and terrorist organizations that had taken up residence in Afghanistan. The most prominent of these groups was the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), which was headed by the Hasan Mahsum and sought to overthrow Chinese rule in Xinjiang and establish and an independent Eastern Turkestan.

Discord Between Al-Qaeda and Uyghur Groups

Authorities in the PRC make the claim that ETIM and connected Uyghur groups who oppose Chinese rule in East Turkestan share deep ideological and organizational linkages to Al-Qaeda and similar terrorist networks. As a result, Beijing has appealed to the international community to help thwart the activities of these Uyghur organizations. However, contrary to the claims of the PRC regime, there is evidence to suggest that Uyghurs actually had no affiliation with Al-Qaeda before the September 11 attacks.[18] Indeed, the Uyghurs who fled to Afghanistan from China were considered outsiders by the radical groups there. In addition, most Uyghurs did not receive the same Salafist religious education that others in Afghanistan received. Those Uyghurs who were indoctrinated were relative newcomers to radical Salafist ideology, and they never advanced to leadership positions in the movement. In a 2003 interview, deputy chairman of ETIM Ablajan Kariaji revealed the sharp disagreement that emerged between Uyghurs and Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda:

> In 1999, Mr. Kariaji says he and a half-dozen others went to Kandahar for an audience with Mr. bin Laden. In a lengthy speech, the Saudi militant spoke about oppression of Muslims in Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Chechnya. He didn't mention Xinjiang, Mr. Kariaji recalls. Mr. Kariaji says he went away disappointed. "We had deep differences with the Arab fighters," he says.[19]

The Uyghurs' focus on the liberation of East Turkestan made them an almost unwanted presence in the camps of Afghanistan. Moreover, the Uyghur groups that were in Afghanistan did not participate in a single attack—not even one for their own nationalistic cause—from the late 1990s until the fall of the Taliban regime.[20] Indeed, the Public Security Department of the PRC has never accused ETIM or any Afghanistan-trained fighters of any attacks during this period.[21]

After September 11, the Uyghur-Al-Qaeda split became more pronounced when Uyghur groups, especially ETIM, denounced the event as an unjustified attack on innocent civilians. In a rare interview, ETIM leader Hasan Mahsum responded to questions by condemning the 9/11 attacks. Hasan Mahsum furthermore denied any form of relations with the Taliban. He said, "The East Turkestan Islamic Party hasn't received any financial assistance from Osama Bin Laden or his Al-Qaeda organization. We don't have any kind of organizational links with Al-Qaeda or the Taliban."[22] Mahsum distinguished his organization from the other groups operating in Afghanistan by arguing that ETIM's goal was to end tyranny and repression in the Uyghur region of China. In the interview, Mahsum claimed that the real terrorists are those who oppress and kill their own citizens, and he explicitly accused the Chinese state of this crime, citing the Tiananmen Square crackdown of 1989 and the PRC's systematic attacks against Uyghurs.[23]

Mahsum's statements were reiterated by other ETIM leaders and together these represented a clear effort to distinguish ETIM from other radical and jihadist groups operating in Central Asia. However, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, these differences were largely ignored by international media and by foreign governments. In fact, the PRC was quick to declare ETIM a terrorist organization, and the U.S. and the UN followed suit in return for Beijing's support for the Global War on Terror. The PRC initially saw this decision by the West as a green light to ramp-up not only its efforts to crush Uyghur nationalism, but also to silence prominent Uyghur activists both at home and abroad.[24] In reports prepared by the Chinese government, a number of human rights organizations based in Western countries were added to the official terrorist list.[25] For instance, the PRC report called "Eastern Turkistani Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity," included such mainstream human rights organizations as the World Uyghur Youth Congress, headquartered in Germany, and some prominent Uyghur human rights activists, such as Dolkun Isa and Omer Kanat.[26] Later on, the Bush administration emended its approach and tried to clarify the distinction between terrorism and peaceful protesters in Xinjiang, but this had little effect on PRC or its policy.

Before 9/11, in 1996 the Chinese government had launched a "strike hard" campaign against the so-called "three evil forces" of separatism, fundamentalism, and terrorism.[27] The definitions of these three evils, however, were kept so broad that they allowed Beijing to persecute any Uyghurs who dared to call for more rights or who refused the forced assimilationist policies propagated by Beijing. The international environment and paranoia over jihadism in the aftermath of 9/11 helped the PRC to frame the conflict and unrest in the XUAR as a struggle against religious radicalism instead of a conflict created by PRC's own repressive policies. In one of the PRC Propaganda Department's better-known efforts to sway international

public opinion, it released an English-language video called "The Sinful Faces of East Turkistani Terrorist Forces." In the video, detained ETIM members admit to seeing Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan. However, the video fails to provide any evidence of the ETIM's connections with al-Qaeda.[28]

Chinese police investigators inspect the scene of an attack at the railway station in Kunming, southwest China's Yunnan provi (STR/AFP/Getty Images)

Since 9/11, the PRC's definition of "religious extremism" has in practice come to be broadened in XUAR to include almost all forms of religious activity. For instance, a new law in 2014 prohibits Uyghur men from having beards, and another law bars Uyghur women from wearing headscarves in public.[29] Yet another law encourages citizens to inform on their neighbors to the authorities. As the prominent expert on the region Nicholas Becquelin has stated, the Chinese government's audacity to maintain these policies publicly demonstrates its resolve to restrict basic freedoms and liberties.[30]

In a recent report, the Norwegian Peacebuilding Research Center mentioned some of these restrictions and their effect on ethnic relations in China. According to this report, the PRC-imposed restrictions include:

> increased surveillance of Muslims during Ramadan (especially of students and those who work in state institutions, wh are prohibited from fasting or attending mosques) and the banning or heavy policing of cultural events with a religious component (such as the festivals that occur at the shrines of local saints). There are also arrests of imams, closures of mosques, and, recently, prosecutions for spreading material promoting 'religious extremism' on the Internet.[31]

As the PRC has tightened its grip across Xinjiang, it has simultaneously deepened its efforts to suppress Uyghur activism in other countries, most prominently by strengthening its ties to Central Asia and Pakistan Those who have found asylum in neighboring countries through official channels have often been captured

and detained. As a result, Uyghur refugees who have already fled have tried to avoid extradition by depending on shadowy organizations. This has created a population of thousands who wish to flee but have nowhere to run. Most of these Uyghurs are stuck in authoritarian countries between XUAR and the more democratic countries that they are striving to reach. With few options to choose from, many Uyghurs have paid exorbitant fees to be smuggled out of these countries while others have been recruited by radical organizations. Likewise, those who were smuggled out of China to other Asian countries, such as Cambodia and Vietnam, were often sent back by local authorities for fear of Chinese reprisals.[32] Those Uyghurs who have been unable to escape the PRC's crackdown now face a dire and worsening situation. In addition to political and religious restrictions, the deteriorating social and economic conditions in the XUAR have led many Uyghurs to abandon hope that they will find a political solution with Beijing to their plight.[33]

Conclusion

Violent clashes between Chinese government forces and Uyghur activists in the XUAR and elsewhere have increased dramatically over the last year. Three incidents in particular have become the subject of some international attention, although to this day the Chinese government has failed to make public what it knows about them. The incidents included the 2013 attack in Tiananmen Square in Beijing perpetrated by a Uyghur family (husband, wife, and mother of husband; the family's motivations have never been clarified); a Uyghur-led attack on the train station in Kunming for which we have only the account of the Chinese security forces and which left 29 innocent dead and more than 100 injured; and a recent bomb attack in Urumqi market, which killed 31 and wounded more than 90 people, the biggest of such incidents in the XUAR itself.

The Chinese government does not deny the growing trend of violence. But it has consistently conflated these attacks and the growing instances of demonstrations against state-sponsored repression with transnational terrorist activities. Indeed, the PRC has tried to link each of these attacks to international networks of terrorism and ETIM.[34] But evidence for such claims is presently lacking. Rather than being spurred by radical ideology, it appears the main motivation for these attacks is the anger that many ordinary Uyghurs experience living in China and the growing despair they feel in knowing that the PRC will not reform its policies.[35] At the same time, the lack of any hard evidence proving these attacks were premeditated and inspired by transnational terrorism raises questions about the truthfulness of Chinese officials' claims.

Since the Chinese government has suppressed and tightly controlled information about these incidents, it has been difficult for independent researchers to discern the real motivations behind these attacks. What is clear is that the PRC's repressive policies have alienated and marginalized more conservative religious segments of Uyghur society, all while Beijing's discriminatory economic and cultural practices further aggrieve secular Uyghurs. Because of their international isolation, and with little recourse to secular politics

based on nationalism or human rights, larger numbers of Uyghur youth have become more susceptible to radicalization emanating from abroad. Nevertheless, though some radicalization of Uyghur society has evidently occurred, the Chinese government has actively inflated this threat to justify suppression of Uyghur national identity and politics.

The PRC's repressive measures tightened once again during the month of Ramadan in 2014, as Chinese authorities told Uyghurs to ignore religious customs and demanded that all party members, civil servants, students, and teachers not observe Ramadan. Officials also forced Muslim restaurant owners to remain open, and reminded state-run media that observing Ramadan was a violation of Communist Party discipline.[36] Once Ramadan began, several Uyghur students told the BBC that they were forced to eat meals with their professors to demonstrate they were not observing Islamic dietary restrictions.[37] This situation has only further increased the tension in the region.

Because of the dearth of reliable information, it is difficult to assess the degree to which radicalism could come to transform the conflict between Uyghurs and the Chinese government in the future. However, the lack of external Western support for Uyghur rights and the absence of any meaningful pressure on the Chinese government has meant the Uyghurs are increasingly isolated and alone.[38] Moreover, the failures of the Western democracies to speak against the injustice in the XUAR is emboldening the PRC to continue its "strike hard" policies and also contributing to the growing disillusionment within Uyghur society. With no options for making a better future for themselves in their homeland, a new generation of Uyghurs will increasingly find themselves squeezed between a repressive Chinese government and the temptations of radicalism.

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problem is with the Chinese government, which violates the human rights of the Uyghur people…We have not been and will not be
involved in any kind of terrorist action inside or outside China…We have been trying to solve the East Turkestan problem through
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Current Trends in Islamist Ideology

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ROZI: Dusty relics of Yalta

By - The Washington Times - Wednesday, November 26, 2008

ANALYSIS/OPINION:

COMMENTARY:

Oppressed Uighurs in East Turkestan (China's Xinjiang Province) are neglected relics of the "big power" politics that informed the 1945 Yalta Conference's cynical division of Europe and Asia. As President George W. Bush declared in Riga, Latvia on May 6, 2005, "[T]he Yalta Conference was a huge mistake in history."

While history has largely redeemed the assignments of Central and Eastern Europe to the Soviet sphere of dictatorial influence, Uighur subjugation under Chinese Communist (PRC) tyranny has intensified. The largely unknown tale of the Uighur betrayal at Yalta deserves telling. Partial amends by the United States remain feasible for 17 Uighurs unjustly detained at Guantanamo Bay despite President Bush's concession that none are "enemy combatants."

The Uighur people occupy a corner of Central Asia called "Xinjiang or the New Territory" by China. In the 19th century, they were a pawn of the Russian and British Empires. Sporadic uprisings against their oppressors eventuated in the short-lived establishment of an independent Uighur republic in 1944.

But Soviet dictator Josef Stalin quickly exerted control over the new republic through KGB infiltration of the Uighur leadership. As a derivative of the Yalta Conference, Stalin signed the Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty on Aug. 14, 1945, which sold out the independent East Turkestan to China. The United States acquiesced because it wished to strengthen the hand of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-sheik in his civil war with Communist Mao Tse-tung. Further, the United States then thought that the Soviet Union would be a cooperative partner in advancing its policies in the Far East.

The 1945 Pact was followed by the Sino-Soviet Treaty inked by Stalin and Mao in Moscow on Feb. 14, 1950, which extinguished any idea of an independent Uighur republic for the duration of the Cold War. Chairman Mao is said to have clucked, "Xinjiang is a colony, a Chinese colony."

Then the Berlin Wall fell in 1989. Central and Eastern Europe escaped from Soviet clutches. In 1991, the Soviet Union disintegrated. Former Soviet republics recaptured their sovereignty - for example, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Georgia, Ukraine, and Armenia. Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz and Turkmens also declared independence.

Uighurs believed their hour was at hand. In April 1990, they organized the Barin Uprising, followed by a large scale nonviolent demonstration in the Hotan region in 1995. In Feb. 5-7, 1997, Uighurs in Ili region demonstrated peacefully for freedom from Chinese rule. The PRC crushed the demonstration with military force slaying 407 unarmed civilians. Many Uighurs were arrested and sentenced to execution within seven days. The Tiananmen Massacre was a tea party in comparison.

With the witting or unwitting assistance of the United States, Uighur persecution has climbed since the 1997 atrocities. After Sept. 11, 2001, and to elicit the PRC's non-opposition to invading Iraq, the United States designated the East Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIM), a phantom organization, as a foreign terrorist organization in August 2002.

The PRC exulted at the counter-terrorist pretext available to destroy Uighurs and their non-Han Chinese culture. Uighur activists were falsely accused of terrorism and executed. The Uighur language was purged from the classroom and cultural events. At a meeting of the National People's Congress on Jan. 18, 2008, Mr. Rozi Ismail, head of the Justice Department in Xinjiang, reported more than 1,000 political cases during the previous five years. More than 15,000 Uighurs had been arrested and sentenced to prison for a term of years, for life, or executed.

Since 2002, the PRC has forcibly relocated young Uighur women. In 2007, the number of relocations surpassed 1.5 million, and approximately 130,000 had been directly relocated to Han Chinese regions, such as Tianjin, Shandong, Jiansu, etc. Of that number, more than 80 percent were Uighur women. During the last three years, relocations reached 3.3 million, and more than 90,000 were moved directly as cheap labor to factories in Chinese villages and hamlets. At the same time, the PRC dispatched large numbers of Han Chinese in the opposite direction to achieve demographic ethnic cleansing. The United States has remained largely mum to avoid friction with the PRC and jeopardize its financing of staggering United States debt.

Uighurs do not expect the United States to employ military force or threats to vindicate their self-determination, as it did for Kosovar Albanians persecuted by Serbia's Slobodan Milosevic. Serbia was not an international power like the PRC, and commanded no permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. But there is a much smaller gesture the United States could make to demonstrate its sympathy for Uighur freedom over PRC tyranny.

At present, 17 Uighurs wrongfully detained for seven years at Guantanamo Bay remain imprisoned. After the United States conceded the wrongfulness in habeas corpus proceedings ordered by the United States Supreme Court, U.S. District Judge Richard Urbina directed that the detainees be released into the United States. They cannot be returned to the PRC under United States law because of the certainty of torture.

Judge Urbina's ruling has been blocked pending an appeal in the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

But the Uighur ordeal should end now. President-elect Barack Obama through his parole authority or Congress by statute should legalize the presence of the 17 innocent Uighurs in the United States. What better way to honor the Statue of Liberty than to welcome all those yearning to be free?

Sidik Haji Rozi is a prominent Uighur scholar and dissident living in the United States.

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Special Report: Who are the Uyghurs and why do they scare China?

by Global Risk Insights   October 3, 2016

Beijing has turned the Uyghurs into the boogeyman of Central Asia, and the focus of its Central Asian security framework, creating the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in the process. A special report by GRI Senior Analyst Jeremy Luedi.

Xinjiang and the Uyghur people have emerged as one of the greatest domestic and international security concerns for China. The emergence of a host of new Central Asian states following the dissolution of the USSR led China to shift its gaze westward. The combination of weak states, indeterminate borders, ethnic minorities and religious tension was one which greatly concerned Beijing. In response Beijing sought to normalize relations, regulate borders, increase regional engagement and finally establish security relationships.

Using the rhetoric of the 'three evils' – separatism, extremism and terrorism – China has sought to characterize Xinjiang as beset by ethnic nationalism informed by radical Islam spurring violent separatism. Beijing's characterization of Uyghurs rests upon shaky foundations, hyperbole, and misinformation. Despite this, China has been extremely successful in persuading Central Asian states to adopt its norms and values regarding the Uyghur issue; facilitated in large part by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and its associated organs.

Collective identity, collective security

China's attitude towards Xinjiang ultimately stems from efforts to bolster 'Chinese-ness' in order to maintain nationalism. Such efforts are doubly important in border areas and other autonomous administrative regions such as Xinjiang.

To a large extent, much of the unrest in Xinjiang stems from Uyghur discontent about the pace of economic growth, inequality, and the encroachment of mass Han migration into the area. These sources of discontent have over the years led to a series of uprisings and riots in Xinjiang, notably in 1996 and 2009 (when 197 people were killed). Such unrest constitutes a direct threat to the CCP's effort to realize Hu Jintao's "harmonious society, harmonious world."

Many Uyghurs do not self-identify with many of the key elements of 'Chinese-ness' as perpetuated by Beijing. Their status as non-Han individuals in many ways already positions them outside of Beijing's vision of itself; namely as the successor of an expanded, Han dominated, Mandarin speaking, Central Kingdom. By not subscribing to these ideals, Uyghurs incur the wrath of the government which sees any renunciation of this vision of the Chinese state as a renunciation of the regime.

During the 1990s and 2000s, Chinese authorities undertook various policies in order to pacify Xinjiang. The 1996 Strike Hard Campaign targeted what Beijing saw as ethnic separatism driven in part by anti-government political Islam. The heavy-handed nature of this response was largely due to the rapidly changing times. Internally, the Deng era reforms combined with increased travel to and from Central Asia, Han migration westwards, and rapid economic growth all created sources of tension.

Emergence of Central Asian states proves worrying

Externally, the collapse of the Soviet Union provided a new set of security challenges for China along its Western flank. However, a greater security challenge was the creation of a number of politically unstable and economically weak states on Xinjiang's border.

During the Chinese Civil War, Xinjiang was independent from 1944-1949, styling itself the East Turkestan Republic. This historical legacy, combined with the "emergence of states named after other Central Asian peoples…did resound symbolically in Xinjiang, where by the early 1990s many Uyghurs were saying that there should be an independent 'Uyghurstan' to match," according to James A. Millward in *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang.*

Fearing another Tibet scenario, China sought to be proactivep; seeking to systematically undermine any real or imagined separatist movements in the region by focusing on the 'three evils'. In 1996 Jiang Zemin (and Hu Jintao in 2004), stated that illegal religious organizations and ethnic separatism constituted the two greatest threats to China.

In 1996, during the same time as the Strike Hard Campaign, China began fostering security cooperation with Central Asia, forming thee Shanghai Five and later SCO.The 'three evils' have been honed and exploited by the Chinese leadership ever since in order to conflate the Xinjiang issue with greater instability in Central Asia.

Beijing touts spectres of Islamism, terrorism

China sees the issue of Islamic terrorism as directly related to, and informing, Uyghur dissidence in Xinjiang. Beijing holds Muslim Uyghurs collectively responsible for the refusal of a section of their community to conform to the CCP's assimilationist aspirations. Furthermore, Gardner Bovingdon in *The Uyghurs: Strangers in Their Own Land* argues that "Beijing's obdurate insistence that all Uyghur independence

is the outward face of its strategy of refusing all compromise. This stance neatly
complements the demonization of domestic Uyghur critics of Xinjiang's policies as
splittists, terrorists and religious extremists."

This tendency towards over-generalization and hyperbole is further demonstrated by the
claim by a 2002 State Council Information Office report that all 200 attacks during the
1990s were the product of a single coordinated group. This claim was patently false, due
to the use of the ill-defined term 'East Turkestan forces,' as well as the fact that no Uyghur
group claimed responsibility for any of the attacks. China also claims that in 1994 there
were secret training camps in Xinjiang, which in the late 1990s allegedly moved into
Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

Similarly, China over-estimated the influence of Al-Qaeda in Xinjiang, after erroneously
claiming that all attacks in Xinjiang were linked to said organization. After 9/11, Beijing
sought to capitalize on the War on Terror to link all East Turkestan organizations to Al-
Qaeda, despite being mostly inspired by secular or moderate Muslim ideologies.

Ironically, it was only after the 2009 riots and Beijing's harsh repression of the Uyghurs
that Al-Qaeda for the first time identified China as an enemy, with Abu Yahia Al Libi calling
on Uyghurs to prepare for holy war against the Chinese government in Xinjiang. Worries
over foreign Islamists has prompted China to increase ties with Central Asia, playing on
regional concerns about Islamic terrorism. Terrorism and separatism have been
conflated, because to China the two are one and the same.

After 9/11, China sought to characterize itself as a fellow victim of terrorism, in part to get
Washington to list various Uyghur organizations as terrorist groups. China therefore
expected the world to accept its post-9/11 crackdown in Xinjiang; an expectation which
was affirmed by many Central Asian states. Consequently, after China's declaration that
"its fight against Uyghur separatism was part of the global war on terror, Central Asian
government policies toward Uyghur separatism turned nearly as hostile as those of China
itself."

Fears over cross-border Uyghur sympathies

Despite concerns about foreign religious and political meddling in Xinjiang, the main area
of concern for Beijing are the Uyghurs themselves, and the potential safe-haven role
which neighbouring countries could, either intentionally or inadvertently, play. It was
these various diaspora and exile groups that internationalized the Xinjiang/Uyghur issue
in the 1990s.

Moreover, cross-border trade and connections concern the Chinese, as does the
significant Uyghur diaspora in Central Asia, who have "organized, lobbied politicians and
employed the Internet to publicize effectively their grievances to a global audience. As a
result in the twenty-first century the Xinjiang region...looms larger in Chinese regional
and international affairs than it has for centuries," notes Millward. As a result the
dominant narrative in Chinese Central Asian security relations has become the cutting of
international links between Xinjiang's Uyghur separatists and their kin across Central
Asia.

China is concerned that Uyghurs in neighbouring states will sympathize with those in
Xinjiang and offer assistance and refuge. China's concerns are understandable, given the
fact that Uyghurs are the seventh largest minority in Kazakhstan, where they enjoy

shelter to Xinjiang's pro-independence activists.

Furthermore, alongside Central Asia's 500,000 strong Uyghur diaspora, 25% of Uzbekistan's 27 million citizens enjoy close blood ties with the Uyghurs. These numbers appear to show a strong base of support for Uyghurs in Xinjiang; and while this is certainly how Beijing views the situation, the reality is more complex.

Uyghurs in Central Asia can be divided into two groups; the mainly secular and Russified long-term residents of Central Asia, who are Europe-orientated and in many cases not preoccupied with the Xinjiang issue; and the recent arrivals from China. The latter group fled, mainly to Kazakhstan in the 1970s due to repression in China and it is this group, many still with family ties to Xinjiang that are primarily concerned with issues of independence and Uyghur nationalism.

China heads west, buys friends

Xinjiang borders seven countries, many with significant Uyghur populations, yet despite this vast and potentially sympathetic hinterland, Hastings marvells how "it is outstanding that Uyghur rebels seem to have been unable to take advantage of [this] fantastically long border." This inability is the direct result of a concerted Chinese effort to engage Central Asian countries in order to root out and deny any safe-havens for potential Uyghur dissidents. Beginning in the early 1990s, China sought to normalize relations with the nascent Central Asian states by settling border disputes. China's ability during the 1990s to convince these states to cooperate has been specifically linked to Uyghur separatism.

Beijing operated in a highly pragmatic way when dealing with these new Central Asian states. Despite having the means to dominate the demarcation discussions as well as the hard power to back up any land claims; in many cases China gave up on most of its claims, moves directly linked to settling the Uyghur question in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. China has since sought to use its economic clout and hard power to entice Central Asian leaders. Specifically, the political pressure that Beijing has exerted on Central Asian authorities in regard to the Uyghur issue is – according to most of Central Asian experts – such that China coerces these governments by directly applying pressure at the highest levels of state, with the capacity to buy-off political elites, including the presidential families. This tactic is significantly simplified given the high level of corruption in the region.

In 1994, Li Peng toured Central Asia promising economic aid to the struggling republics in return for assurances that they would not harbour Uyghur activists. The following year Kazakhstan's Nazarbayev and Jiang Zemin signed an agreement under which Kazakh security services would monitor Uyghur activities and share their findings with Beijing. Almaty made similar assurances in 1998 and the following year signed a $9.5 billion investment package with China.

In 1996, the same year as its Strike Hard campaign, China organized the creation of the Shanghai Five (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan) which sought to target the 'three evils'; threats which, according to China are – in large part -perpetuated by the Uyghurs. Uyghurs minorities in Central Asian states had had uneasy relations with the larger ethnic groups, with Bovingdon noting that "in addition to pleasing China by clamping down on Uyghurs, Central Asian leaders found it quite convenient to blame 'outsiders' [i.e. non-Kazakh, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, etc.] for domestic political problems [...] Beginning in 1996, Bishkek, Almaty, Tashkent all stepped up the pressure on Uyghur

minister of Kazakhstan warned the Uyghurs of that country, that Almaty would tolerate no agitation for self-determination, condemning separatism as the 'political-AIDS' of the late 20th century."

The SCO and spirited RATS

For China, the first and last objective of the SCO was to secure Xinjiang province from any Uyghur insurgency emanating from neighbouring countries. The Chinese government has expertly perpetuated concerns about the Uyghurs amongst Central Asian countries, to the point that "the whole region [is] concerned about growing Uyghur violence. Central Asian countries, especially those with sizable Uyghur minorities, already worry about Uyghur violence and agitation."

Stephen Aris in *Eurasian Regionalism: The Shanghai Cooperation Organization* hits the nail on the head, when he writes that the SCO overwhelmingly owes its existence to the internationalization of Chinese domestic issues. The SCO is a result of Beijing's concerns "which [were] a very strong motivating factor behind China's promotion of the SCO mechanism...indeed [the] SCO can be seen to have its origins in China's Xinjiang problem."

Consequently, one can see how the establishment of the SCO and Chinese efforts against Uyghur unrest did not simply coincide in 1996. Similarly after the 9/11 attacks, the issue of terrorism reached even higher levels of importance for China. Soon thereafter, then Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji made two suggestions at the SCO conference: open the proposed SCO anti-terrorist centre *tout de suite*, and speed up the drafting of the SCO Charter.

The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) was created in 2002, and is a detailed multilateral security agreement between SCO member states. Specifically, the primary goal of RATS is to coordinate efforts against the 'three evils'. While RATS engages in non-military actions, this does not mean that the forces involved are civilian ones. Under the RATS framework, Hastings notes that China conducted its first ever military manoeuvres with another country;

"Notably these were joint border security exercises with Kyrgyzstan, exercises that could only have been targeted at stopping the illicit movement of Uyghur rebels [...] In 2003 and 2006 China conducted further military exercises with SCO members, emphasizing border security and attacks on mock terrorist training camps, in an apparent bid to build political support for cracking down on Uyghur rebels."

United in spirit and suppression

Reference to the 'three evils' is explicitly made in the SCO Charter and it therefore confirms the subscription of Central Asian states these norms. As SCO members have adopted the so called 'Shanghai Spirit', this in turn has fostered consensus and allowed Chinese norms to take hold. Consequently, Aris shows that "within the SCO China can be secure in the assurance that its fellow members will not only accept each others' characterizations of their various dissidents, but engage in practical national and multinational efforts to suppress such elements and keep all borders closed against them."

The realignment of Central Asian policies regarding Uyghurs can be seen to develop over the years, for several incidents between 1997-2000 involving Uyghurs were swiftly put down by regional governments. China has made significant efforts to step up policy

Pakistan.

Consequently, Central Asian nations, notably Kyrgyzstan, have made several attempts to crackdown on Uyghurs on their own soil. Similarly, the struggle against "Uyghur Islamic separatists forms the strategic basis of military and political cooperation between Kazakhstan and China." In addition, Millward has highlighted how various Central Asian governments have also curtailed the rights of "political assembly, and fair legal process for both their long-term Uyghur minority citizens and recent immigrants and sojourners."

Playing the 'Uyghur Card'

By introducing policies which crack down on supposed Uyghur subversives, Central Asian nations utilize the so called 'Uyghur Card" – namely engaging in anti-Uyghur efforts in order to curry favour with China. This trend is reinforced by the lack of any condemnation or objection emanating from Beijing regarding the treatment of Uyghurs outside of Xinjiang. Unhampered by human rights concerns, China and Central Asian states engage Uyghur populations as they see fit. Consequently, of particular international concern remains "the return extraditions to China, of known Uyghur separatists from states such as Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan to face death penalties."

An important tool in China's arsenal against Uyghurs are its many extradition treaties, which allow the Chinese justice system and therefore Chinese security mechanisms access across foreign borders, in ways otherwise impossible. The mid-1990s saw Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan cooperate with extraditing Uyghur suspects to China at Beijing's behest, and since then China has also signed extradition treaties with Tajikistan, Pakistan and Nepal, in efforts to "target alleged Uyghur terrorists residing in those states."

Extradition treaties are one of China's most effective means to influence Central Asian policies and to apply pressure on governments. Aris explains that China exerts this pressure via the SCO, as seen in 2005, "when the director of the SCO regional anti-terrorist unit, Vyacheslav Kasymov accused Kazakhstan of harbouring terrorist organizations within its territory...[consequently] Kazakhstan tightened up its security with regards to such extremist groups, largely in response to pressure from China about the activity of Uyghur separatists on the Kazakh side of the Sino-Kazakh border."

China's reach becomes international

Kazakhstan's quick about-face is important, because Kazakhstan, unlike some other states in the region is not threatened by large-scale violence, terrorism or separatism. Kazakhstan's policy reversal is therefore doubly important because it demonstrates the clout China exerts in the region via the SCO; corralling states to support policies, which, while espoused as international, remain largely domestic Chinese issues.

Similarly in August 2009, under pressure from China, the Kyrgyz government arrested Dilmurat Akbarov, the chairman of the Kyrgyz Peoples' Uyghur Friendship Society Ittipak, and his deputy Jamaldin Nasirov. Akbarov's group was protesting Chinese actions in Xinjiang during the 2009 unrest, and his arrest coincided with the Chinese crackdown during the same period.

The case of Huseiyn Celil also offers a stark example of exactly how far China's reach extends. Celil, a Canadian citizen and Uyghur political activist, was arrested in, and extradited from, Uzbekistan to China while visiting his family in March 2006. Celil's arrest was made at the request of the Chinese government, and Uzbekistan extradited him

imprisonment in June 2000.

According to China, Celil allegedly belonged to the East Turkestan Liberation Organization. China ignored efforts by the Canadian government to secure his release, arguing that they did not acknowledge his Canadian citizenship, claiming that he left Xinjiang illegally as a refugee in the early 1990s.

Chinese concerns regarding Xinjiang and its Uyghur population have resulted in the region and its people becoming one of Beijing chief domestic and international concerns; and the primary leitmotif in its dealings with Central Asia. China successfully managed to institutionalize its own norms in the SCO, and utilize said organization's various mechanisms to internationalize its anti-Uyghur efforts. The creation of security cooperation and extradition treaties have allowed Beijing to surmount the hurdles posed by weak states and the hard law of national sovereignty.

By co-opting neighbouring countries, Chinese "justice" has been able to seamlessly traverse borders to apprehend those it views as dangerous. Yet in the process of doing so, the rights of all Uyghurs, not just those in Xinjiang have been eroded as part of China's hyperbolic reaction to a questionable threat.

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Taranchis, Kashgaris, and the `Uyghur Question' in Soviet Central Asia

David Brophy

Abstract

Up till now, the problem of Uyghur identity construction has been studied from an almost exclusively anthropological perspective. Little Western research has been done on the history of the Uyghur community in the Soviet Union during the period of national delimitation, and the process by which a re-invented `Uyghur' identity was fostered among settled Turkicspeakers of East Turkestani origin. In this paper I have set out to trace some of the key events and debates which formed part of that process. In doing so I provide evidence that challenges certain aspects of the standard account of this period, in particular the role of the 1921 Tashkent conference. In 1921 the term `Uyghur' was not used an ethnic designation, but as an umbrella term for various peoples with family roots in Eastern Turkestan. It was not until several years later that the term took its place beside other ethnonyms in the Soviet Union, provoking debate and opposition in the Soviet Uyghur press. This paper is largely based on the recently republished writings of leading Uyghur activists and journalists from the 1920s, and focuses on the role of the Uyghur Communist Abdulla Rozibaqiev. My paper attempts to demonstrate the importance of basing the study of Uyghur history on Uyghur language sources, rather than Russian or Chinese materials alone.

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THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF EASTERN TURKESTAN AND THE FORMATION
OF MODERN UYGHUR IDENTITY IN XINJIANG

by

JOY R. LEE

B.S., United States Air Force Academy, 2005

A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Lasting from 1933-1934, the Turkic-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan (TIRET) was the culmination of various rebellions in Xinjiang, China. Founders of this republic, influenced by Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism used it to promote a Turkic-Muslim identity independent from Chinese and Soviet control and unique to the sedentary, oasis-dwellers of Xinjiang. The qualities of this political identity were formalized and given the label Uyghur in 1934. The significance of the TIRET, despite its troubled and short existence, was that its message transcended localized identities to create a Uyghur political consciousness. Though Uyghur identity has continued to shift and adapt since then, the TIRET remains the starting point from which Uyghurs today trace their present relationship and contention with the Chinese state.

This study examines the military and political actions surrounding the formation and dissolution of the TIRET in the early 1930s, the republic's ideological origins in Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism, and finally the social and political conditions in Xinjiang that facilitated the creation of Uyghur identity as a result of rebellions from 1931 to 1934. I argue that modern Uyghur identity emerged from the events surrounding the TIRET was a combination of a nascent Uyghur nationalism combined with interests of the Chinese Nationalist to create ethnic categories for the people of Xinjiang.

My purpose is to show that the formation of Uyghur identity in Xinjiang was a result of the same process that led to the creation of Turkic Muslim ethnic nationalities in the Soviet Union. In this respect, I will show how ideologies of Pan-Islam, Pan-Turkism and the reforms carried out through the Jadid movement supported identity formation and affected Central Asia including Xinjiang.

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INTRODUCTION – Conceptualizing Ethnic Identity

Currently, the Uyghurs make up the majority of the population in Xinjiang. With their own set of ethnic characteristics including language, culture, religion and territory, they Uyghurs are one of fifty-six ethnic nationalities in the Peoples' Republic of China. Unlike other ethnicities that live in Xinjiang such as Kyrgyz, Kazaks and Mongols who have a majority of their populations elsewhere, 99.8% of the Uyghurs live in Xinjiang. From this basis, Uyghur separatists today use issues of the Chinese government's oppression of their religion, language and culture to justify the right for their people to have an independent Eastern Turkestan.

Throughout the history of the People's Republic of China, Uyghur separatism has been related to the PRC's policies toward allowing ethnic minorities to practice religion and other elements of their culture. Since 1949, the PRC's policies towards developing regions, such as Xinjiang, that have a high percentage of minority populations have increasingly become interconnected with China's general economic and political ambitions. June Dreyer's *China's Forty Millions*[1] and Colin Mackerras's *Ethnic Minorities and Globlaisation*[2] are two studies that discuss how major events in PRC history have affected the Chinese government's treatment of culture among ethnic minorities. Particularly concerning the relationship of Uyghur identity and the Chinese state, Gardner Bovingdon's *Autonomy in Xinjiang*[3] traces Uyghur identity along a trajectory that faces increasingly hostile policies of the PRC government.

The purpose of the following discussion on the formation of Uyghur identity is to provide a starting point for when and how the Uyghur ethnicity became part of China. This study also suggests that treatment of the Uyghurs by the PRC has been shaped not

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[1] June Dreyer, *China's Forty Millions: Minority Nationalities an National Integration in the People's Republic of China*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976).

[2] Colin Mackerras, *China's Ethnic Minorities and Globalisation*, (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

[3] Gardner Bovingdon, "Autonomy in Xinjiang: Han Nationalist Imperatives and Uyghur Discontent." (Washington: East West Center Policy Studies, 2004).

only by conditions during the Qing administration of the Xinjiang region from the mid-eighteenth century through the early twentieth century, but also by the definition of Turkic-Muslim nationalities in the Soviet Union during the 1920s which Chinese authorities mimicked during the 1930s through the 1950s. Therefore, it is the principal objective of this study to examine why rebellions in Xinjiang from 1931 to 1934 led to the formation of Uyghur identity thereafter.

The existing body of historical research concerning Xinjiang during the twentieth century has included analyses of political and economic competition of foreign powers that intersected in Xinjiang, primarily those of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and Japan. Arthur Hasiotis[4] and Lars-Erik Nyman[5] have both written, in detail, about Xinjiang as a contested territory among foreign powers. These studies, although thorough in their treatment of the interaction of foreign interests with one another, include little about the Chinese government in or people of Xinjiang as active contributors affecting the situation in Xinjiang. By examining social, religious and political conditions and reform movements among the Turkic-Muslim populations of Xinjiang leading up to the 1930s, the following will highlight Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism as focal points for both Muslim rebellions against the Chinese state and a phenomenon to which foreign powers reacted.

Of other works on Xinjiang political history, Andrew Forbes's *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia* and Laura Newby's "The Rise of Nationalism in Eastern Turkestan" both primarily give detailed accounts of various rebellions that took place in Xinjiang during China's Republican period and secondarily address Muslim social and political motivations behind those events. Though the scholarship of both of these works has been invaluable in this study by providing a chronology and dramatis personae, the following will make a more in-depth examination of these events with respect to how Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism influenced rebellions and supported the definition of ethnic nationalities in Xinjiang specifically during the early 1930s.

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[4] Arthur Christos Hasiotis, Jr., "A Study of Soviet Political, Economic, and Military Involvement in Sinkiang from 1928 to 1949.," Ph.D diss., New York University, 1982.

[5] Lars-Erik Nyman, *Great Britain, Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests in Sinkiang. 1918-1934,* (Sweden: Scandinavian University Books, 1977).

Masami Hamada's article "La Transmission Du Mouvement Nationaliste Au Turkestan Oriental (Xinjiang)" examines events and people in the development of Muslim nationalism in Xinjiang from the late Qing dynasty through the end of the 1920s. Hamada argues that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Muslim nationalism increased in opposition to increasing Chinese nationalism and programs to impress Chinese culture on the Muslims of Xinjiang.[6] This study is a continuation of Hamada's work and discusses the early 1930s as a political application of nationalism in Xinjiang that led to the formation of ethnic identity.

More recently, there have been several social anthropological studies specifically concerning Uyghur identity with respect to separatism in the PRC that differ on the point indicated as the beginning of modern Uyghur identity. Dru Gladney's "Ethnogenisis of the Uighur" identifies Yakup Beg's establishment of an independent Kashgar Emirate during the late nineteenth century as the event that crystallized Uyghur resistance against the Chinese state. Geng Shimin dates the beginning of modern Uyghur identity in the late fifteenth century using the stabilization of Turkic ethnicity and Islamic religion as the point of origin for Uyghur ethnicity. Though Gladney's and Geng's statements point to steps that led to the formation of modern Uyghur identity, the following shows instead how Uyghur identity has its origins in the early 1930s when separatist leaders used their culture, history and religion to make political distinctions in rebellions against the Nationalist Chinese government.

My argument is that ethnic identity is both a cultural and political construction and that Uyghur identity came into its present form in name, content and meaning, as a result of rebellions that took place in Xinjiang from 1931-1934. During that time, individuals influenced by Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism took advantage of unstable conditions to create the Turkic-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan (TIRET) based on their vision of creating an independent nation for the Turkic-Muslim peoples of Xinjiang, the majority of which soon after became known as Uyghurs. Furthermore, I will argue that the successful formation of Uyghur identity took place at this time because the

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[6] Masami Hamada, "La Transmission Du Mouvement Nationaliste Au Turkestan Oriental (Xinjiang) " [The Transmission of the Nationalist Movement to Eastern Turkestan (Xinjiang)], *Central Asian Review,* 9, no. 1, 1980 : 29-48.

Chinese government, in reaction to the rebellions of the early 1930s, institutionalized Uyghur identity, thereby incorporating the Uyghurs as peoples of China.

In *Oasis Identities*, Justin Jon Rudelson explores the social, economic and political dynamics of current Uyghur identity in Xinjiang. He characterizes the relationship of the Uyghurs and the Chinese state as one fraught with tension and conflict related to issues concerning the rights of ethnic minorities in China and the problematic status of Xinjiang as an autonomous region. Furthermore, Rudelson argues that inter-oasis tensions among Uyghurs in different regions of Xinjiang create a challenge for Uyghur nationalists in creating a unified Uyghur identity throughout the province.[7] The following will provide further explanation, using a historical case study, on the origin and nature of conflict between Uyghurs in Xinjiang who want to maintain their culture and identity and the Chinese state who needs to incorporate Xinjiang as a part of China.

In order to discuss formation of ethnic identity, there must first be a conceptual definition of ethnicity and its purpose. In "Ethnicity, Culture and the Past"*,* Jack Eller argues that "Ethnicity is consciousness of difference and the subjective salience of that difference. It is also mobilization around difference – a camaraderie with or preference for socially similar others."[8] What Eller implies in this statement is that ethnicity is, essentially, how a group interprets perceived differences and applies them for its own interests. Therefore, ongoing conflict, resistance against Chinese rule for the Uyghurs, is essential to the continued existence for an ethnic group.

The adversarial nature of Uyghur identity including its struggle to maintain its language, culture, and religion against policies of the Chinese state drives the need for Uyghurs to define themselves in opposition to the social, economic and political conditions dictated by the PRC government. In *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, Fredrik Barth further claims that cultural boundaries are the means by which ethnic groups can exist among one another and that these boundaries are more intense and strengthened when in close proximity to an "other." Barth explains that ethnic groups within close

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[7] Justin Jon Rudelson, *Oasis Identities: Uyghur Nationalism Along China's Silk Road,* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997).

[8] Jack David Eller, "Ethnicity, Culture and the Past," in *From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 9.

proximity of one another depend on those differences to maintain their own cultural boundaries. He lists three requirements for interdependence of ethnic groups: important, complementary cultural difference; differences obvious in ethnic group and highly stereotyped, stable understanding.[9] The first chapter of this study will explore how Uyghur separatists in the early 1930s activated submerged attitudes among their people and capitalized on that moment of upheaval in Xinjiang to define themselves through the exclusion of various groups of "others."

If ethnic identity is a constructed definition, there should also be a process by which elements of an ethnic identity combine to create a meaningful concept acceptable for political usage. For the Uyghurs, this process involved three steps. First, an ethnic group must define itself. According to Benedict Anderson, in his study of modern nationalism, awareness of membership in a nation derives from both emotional and cultural connections present among a group of people. Anderson defines the nation as "an imagined political community" that subscribes to a shared identity.[10] Founders of the TIRET and subsequent Uyghur nationalists saw themselves as part of an "imagined community" that included their western neighbors in Soviet Central Asia. Furthermore, Anderson's idea of "national imagination" is not a spontaneous phenomenon that naturally appears and takes on meaning. Instead, it must be actively cultivated and propagated through common language and public discourse.[11] Chapter Two will show how the developments of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism through the work of Jadids in Central Asia, starting in the late nineteenth century, spread to Xinjiang and provided the impetus and infrastructure of an "imagined community" among the Muslim Turks of Central Asia that formed the basis for the development of Uyghur identity to the present.

The second step in the process of identity formation is for the group to decide and realize its need to use ethnic characteristics to secure the survival and interests of its members. In Xinjiang, various ethnic groups realized their need to assert their ethnic identity to protect themselves from the increasingly oppressive regimes of Xinjiang

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[9] Frederick Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries,* (Boston: Little and Brown, 1969), 19.

[10] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism,* (London: Verso, 1983), 6-7.

[11] Ibid., 32.

governors. In his work concerning Muslim identity in China, Dru Gladney argues that the type of state and the role of its people within the political system is irrelevant, "whether the people have a significant role in governance is not at issue for ethnic identity. Rather, it is the notion that there are peoples requiring identification and representation that is crucial."[12] In the case of the TIRET leaders, the ideals of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism in conjunction with a more cosmopolitan, secular education led Uyghur nationalists to perceive the condition of their people as unacceptable and in need of change. Thus, the impact of changes and reforms in Central Asia made it obvious to Uyghur leaders that their people had indeed suffered a long history of subjugation by the Chinese government. For Uyghur separatists, this condition was not only detrimental, but also unjust and intolerable.

The third and final step in forming ethnic identity, crucial for the perseverance of that identity, is establishing an agreement between the ethnic group and the state concerning the existence of that ethnic group. In Xinjiang, the mutual acceptance and usage of the term "Uyghur" as an official label established a channel by which Uyghur identity could continue to develop as a part of China. It is only from this point of mutual acknowledgement that the dialogical process of negotiating identity, described by Gladney below, can take place. On the precise nature of how ethnic groups and the state interact, Gladney defines a process of dialogue, which allows ethnic identities to adapt to changing circumstances. This fluidity allows ethnic identities to survive and maintain meaning for both sides though political, social, and economic conditions may change:

> ...cultural identity and ethnogenisis in the modern nation-state are a process of dialogical interaction between self-perceived notions of identity and sociopolitical contexts, often defined by the state…I suggest that the process is one of dialogue and interrelation, not dialectics, in that new identities do not always emerge antithetically to the old: new identities may surface, old ones may be reinvented, and all will be in constant dialogue with one another...However, ethnic identity and change are often a convoluted process of dynamic interaction with prior notions of identity and environment – a set in constant flux due to migration, power relations, and state policy.[13]

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[12] Dru C. Gladney, "The Ethnogenesis of the Uighur," *Central Asian Survey* 9, no. 1 (1990): 5.

[13] Dru C. Gladney, "Clashed Civilizations: Muslims and Chinese Identities in the PRC," in *Making Majorities: Constituting the Nation in Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia, Fiji, Turkey and the United States* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 120-1.

Chapter Three will examine how Uyghur identity provided a term acceptable to both the majority of Turkic-Muslims in Xinjiang and the Chinese government. Therefore, the creation of Uyghur identity during the 1930s fulfilled the needs of the Uyghurs to assert an identity and the Han Chinese who previously did not have a standardized label for the peoples of Xinjiang.

Because I will argue that modern Uyghur identity emerged as a political identity after rebellions in the mid-1930s, I will start with an examination of ethnic and religious stereotypes in Xinjiang already present at the time. During the rebellions in Xinjiang from 1931 to 1934, stereotypes and other popular concepts about ethnicity were already prevalent and used as motivation during the fighting. This point is important because it is upon these existing stereotypes and informal distinctions that the Chinese government created its fourteen official ethnic categories for the people of Xinjiang in 1934.

Also during the rebellions, a new dimension of ethnic identity started to appear among the sedentary Turkic-Muslim in Xinjiang. This new political movement for an independent Eastern Turkestan embodied ideals of a separate republic with closer cultural and social ties to Soviet Central Asia rather than China. Therefore, I will discuss the social, religious and political impact of Pan-Islam, Turanianism and Pan-Turkism on the establishment of the Turkic-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan.

The final part of my argument concerning the formation of modern Uyghur identity is to suggest that the events of the early 1930s led to the institutionalization of ethnicity in Xinjiang and a problematic relationship between Uyghurs and the Chinese government. Because of the cultural, historic and social elements embedded in Uyghur identity at its starting point, Uyghur nationalism and separatism have continuously been in conflict with the policies of the PRC government.

CHAPTER 1 - Perceiving Identity in Conflict, 1931-1934

Muslim rebellions (*huiluan*) are not an uncommon occurrence in Chinese history, nor are they unique to China's Northwest. In fact, Muslim resistance and revolt against Chinese rule occurred so frequently that Chinese historiography and popular sentiment accepted this kind of violent upheaval as innate social behavior of Muslims. These stereotypes are based on the Han belief that Muslims, because of their religion, sometimes referred to as "small religion" (*xiaojiao)* by the Han Chinese, are fanatic, violent and irrational. Therefore, the phenomenon of Muslim rebellions against Chinese rule had the tendency to be diagnosed as a problem with Muslim sensibilities and not an indication of the Chinese government's inability to achieve harmonious and prosperous social and political conditions. Using logic characteristic of Han chauvinism, Chinese officials reasoned that since Muslims lacked the virtues of Confucian teachings, their society was poor, backward and therefore unable to assimilate or at least participate in the Chinese empire. Muslims fell into the category of the uncivilized barbarian (*huawaizhimin*).

The solution was therefore to educate Muslims in the Han tradition so that they too might become part of the Chinese family. Thus, the Chinese government, throughout its history, used programs of Sinicization to address the shortcomings of Muslim societies so that they may be assimilated into Chinese culture. The intensity of Sinicization programs to diminish the causes of Muslim rebellions was directly proportional to the intensity of the perceived threat. The larger the rebellion, the stronger the reaction was to force Sinicization. Significant in this study were the events in and around Yakup Beg's successful independent khanate in southern Xinjiang from 1864-1877.[14] Yakup Beg's Islamic government was a major event in terms of raising awareness among various oasis communities of a common Turkic-Muslim identity.

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[14] Hodong Kim, *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864-1877,* (Stanford: Stanford U. Pr., 2004), 129.

Starting from the 1820s and continuing through the 1860s, the Qing government adapted its policy in Xinjiang to address the grievances causing Turkic-Muslim populations to rebel. Muslim populations especially in the south of Xinjiang revolted against their colonial overseers. In a moment of Muslim unity, both Turkic and non-Turkic,[15] Muslims rebelled in the early 1860s against the Qing government. In 1864, incited by rumors that the Qing was planning to exterminate the Muslims of Gansu, Xinjiang again fell into a state of rebellion and chaos.[16] This time, Qing forces could not subdue the rebellions and Yakup Beg, a native of Koqand, an oasis west of Xinjiang in the Ferghana Valley, succeeded in establishing an independent khanate in southern Xinjiang. However, Yakup Beg's independent government was far from a cooperation of Muslims in Xinjiang to develop an independent state. In fact, it was the disunity among various Muslim groups that allowed Yakup Beg to consolidate and monopolize political and military power in Xinjiang.

The causes for the rebellions that led to Yakup Beg's independent Kashgaria set an example of the potential of Muslim leaders to defeat the Chinese empire. That Yakup Beg was from what is now Kyrgyzstan also established a connection between Central Asia and Xinjiang. Later, for the Uyghurs and other Muslim groups that rebelled in the early 1930s, Yakup Beg's success set a strong precedent. First, it was a victory for the Turkic peoples who continued to seek independence from misrule by the Chinese government. Second, Yakup Beg's independent diplomacy with Russia, Great Britain, Turkey and Afghanistan made foreign powers and parts of the Muslim world aware of the plight of the Turkic-Muslim population in Eastern Turkestan, so that later in the 1930s, foreign powers were also aware of the possibilities of an independent republic in Xinjiang.

Perhaps as important in further motivating Turkic Muslim populations to rebel against Chinese rule was the reaction of the Manchu government after Yakup Beg's defeat by Zuo Zongtang in 1877. After reconquest, Zuo Zongtang enacted intense

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[15] Non-Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang are part of another ethnic group in China called *Hui* by the Chinese and Tungan, in Xinjiang. This group is Muslim, live throughout China and have acquired Han Chinese language, culture and customs.

[16] Kim, 61.

Sinicization projects because he felt that Muslims rebelled because of their failure to grasp Confucian values and therefore encouraged assimilation of Muslims in Xinjiang into Chinese culture.[17] Zuo tried to assimilate Muslims of Xinjiang by establishing schools that taught classical Chinese literature and promoted literacy in Chinese language. Zuo also set up a printing press for the production of textbooks in these new schools and hired teachers from China proper to run the classrooms. Zuo's vision of educating Muslims in the traditional Chinese method would allow more Muslims to enter civil service.[18] In some respects, Zuo's policies succeeded, but the Muslims who entered civil service in Xinjiang were mostly Hui. The Turkic-speaking Muslims of Xinjiang remained outside the reach of Zuo's reforms.

In 1884, the Qing government decided to support Zuo's cultural Sinicization, and incorporated Xinjiang into China as a province, thereby replacing local Muslim leaders (*begs*) with Qing bureaucrats. As such, conditions and policies previously sensitive toward ethnic tensions in the region turned toward a more restrictive policy that suppressed the expression of non-Han traditions and cultures. It is in this context of the government's emphasis on Chinese culture over Islamic culture that Xinjiang entered the twentieth century.

With respect to causes for rebellion, the uprisings of the early 1930s had a proximate cause, resentment of autocratic provincial administrators, similar to those that ended in Yakup Beg's independent Kashgaria. People of Xinjiang against Chinese rule revolted against oppression by the provincial government. The appearance of this similarity had two effects. First, it encouraged rebels because it seemed to them that their actions had a strong positive example implicating prospects of success. Second, China as well as Russia and Great Britain, whose empires and diplomacy had been affected by Yakup Beg, treated the rebellions of the 1930s as if they could end with another independent Islamic government in Xinjiang. However, the ultimate cause of these rebellions included ambitions for Xinjiang to be an independent, modern, Islamic

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[17] Gladney, *Dislocating China: Reflections on Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 13.

[18] Lee Kuo-chi, "Social Change in China's Frontier Areas during the Ch'ing Dynasty," *Chinese Studies in History* 17, no. 3 (1984): 44.

republic. This idea developed among Uyghur intellectuals influenced by Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism.

The presence of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism also changed Xinjiang's relationship with its foreign neighbors. Considering the increased political and strategic stakes that evolved in the region by the 1930s, Muslim rebellions against the Chinese government evoked a reaction by the Soviet Union and Great Britain colored by their recent experiences with Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism within their own empires. Examining the influence of foreign powers with respect to the threat of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism also increases the number of interested parties to include Japan and Turkey. Thus, the presence of Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic ideology, which were highly politicized by that time, made the rebellions in Xinjiang from 1931 to 1934 the beginning of a new epoch in Xinjiang's history.

During the first two decades of the Republican period (1911-1949), the provincial governors of Xinjiang, Yang Zengxin (1912-1928) and Jin Shuren (1928-1933), continued the precedent of autonomy inherited from their Qing predecessors. Unlike Yuan Dahua, the last Qing-appointed governor, his successors, Yang Zengxin, Jin Shuren and Sheng Shicai (1934-1944), all had their authority confirmed by the Chinese government after they had already established themselves as governor. That these three governors assumed their posts without direct appointment from the Nationalist central government shows the relative isolation of Xinjiang in the administration from the central government.

During this time, the autonomy of the Xinjiang governors remained intact and the Han Chinese ruling class maintained its status while accounting for only about six percent of the provincial population.[19] Given these circumstances, Xinjiang's trajectory concerning almost all aspects of government depended on the resourcefulness, competence and authority of its governor. It is therefore important to understand the actions of Yang Zengxin and Jin Shuren as they affected the social, political and economic conditions which led to Muslim discontent and eventual rebellion against Chinese authority.

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[19] F. Gilbert Chan, "The Road to Power: Sheng Shih-Ts'ai's Early Years in Sinkiang, 1930-1934," *Journal of Oriental Studies [Hong Kong]* 7, no. 2 (1969): 230.

After assuming the post of governor in 1912, Yang Zengxin, already a high-ranking civil servant, ruled Xinjiang for almost two decades in an isolated state of relative peace and stability. A shrewd autocrat, Yang based his regime on creating a bureaucracy that would maximize his personal gain while isolating and marginalizing his enemies and potentially rebellious groups that threatened to usurp his power. He censored the press, used secret police to enforce his authority and imposed policies that channeled all political power and economic gains into his own hands. Yang monopolized trade and agricultural production and absorbed the proceeds. Economically, Yang's policies were "bleeding Xinjiang to death."[20] However, they were not particularly unfair to the Turkic-Muslim population. Realizing that the Turkic-Muslims of southern Xinjiang could challenge his authority, Yang tried to appease the local *begs* by redistributing some of the tax revenue so at least the leaders in southern cities could benefit from his corruption. As an additional measure to preserve his authority, Yang took personal responsibility for various offices in the government and delegated few positions of authority. According to Owen Lattimore, by 1927, all the magistrates of southern Xinjiang were related to Yang either directly or by marriage.[21]

However, it would be erroneous to equate the absence of rebellion to a sustainable peace. In fact, the skill and effort required of Yang to manage a regime such as he did lends credence to the observation that though he was an autocrat, at least he was a competent one. The same type of regime would prove to be volatile in the hands of a lesser governor. Unfortunately, Jin Shuren, Yang's successor as the governor of Xinjiang, lacked the political and administrative acumen needed to maintain order in Xinjiang. Jin tried to maintain the autocracy of his predecessor but was far less capable in preserving stability. A Han native of Gansu and witness to Muslim rebellions that devastated that area in the late nineteenth century, Jin was suspicious of all Muslims living in Xinjiang. Therefore, he enacted economic policies explicitly privileging non-Muslims at the expense of both Tungan and Turkic populations.

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[20] Andrew D.W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang, 1911-1949,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 31.

[21] Owen Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia; Sinkiang and the Inner Asian Frontiers of China and Russia,* 1std ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1950), 53.

As a result, Turkic populations became increasingly incensed about measures against them, which they perceived to be driven by racial and religious bigotry. Particularly provocative for the Turkic-Muslims was Jin's policy that settled refugee communities from Gansu on already cultivated land and even gave provided a tax exemption for new settlers.[22] Muslim communities dispossessed from their land therefore had to face a higher tax burden to support the increasing non-Muslim population. Furthermore, Jin doubled the land tax and monopolized private trade, which had previously been profitable for merchants trading with India and the Soviet Union. Jin also instituted a tax on the slaughter of animals and forbid travel on the Hajj.[23] In 1930, tensions that had been building up between the Turkic-Muslims and Jin's regime reached a breaking point. Aitchen Wu (Wu Aichen), an advisor sent by the Nationalist central Chinese government (KMT) to work for Jin arrived in Urumqi, observed that "The whole province was a powder mine of religious hatred awaiting only a chance to spark.[24]

In March of 1930, the khan of Hami, Shah Maksud, whose lineage of hereditary rule extended nearly two hundred years, died of old age.[25] Less than a year later, the people of Hami rebelled against Jin's authority causing the "spark" described by Wu. At the time of the khan's death, seeing an opportunity to generate desperately needed revenue for the provincial government, one of Jin's advisors suggested that the Hami region should come under the direct rule of Jin's government in order to make tax collecting more efficient. Jin took this advice, but had no intention of ensuring fair treatment of the Turkic-Muslim villages in Hami. Jin's tax collectors sent to administer Hami were corrupt and insensitive toward the native populations. At the same time, Jin settled Han refugees of famine from Gansu on the land cultivated by Uyghurs of Hami. This policy forced native populations to move to uncultivated land without the usually accorded two-year tax exemption. Wu characterized Jin's policies as "sheer robbery only

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[22] Forbes, 46.

[23] Ibid., 40-2.

[24] Aitchen Wu, *Turkistan Tumult,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 55.

[25] Chan, "The Road to Power," 234.

thinly disguised as law."[26] This arrangement further caused resentment for not only Jin, but also new Han immigrants.

However, the death of Hami Khan and the dissolution of hereditary rule in Hami, though symbolic meaning, did not immediately cause the people of Hami to rebel. However, once rebellions started, Jin's poor management of the situation caused rebellion to spread to other towns surrounding Hami. Martin Norins wrote, "The old prince of Qomul [Hami] had been thoroughly hated by this own people, and his demise need not have created such an outbreak. Yet, once the revolt had been started it assumed devastating proportions."[27] In fact, there was a period of a few months from the time Hami was redistricted and rezoned during which the people of Hami sent their grievances by telegram to Urumqi. The people of Hami never received a response and the reason why is unclear.[28]

The final offense that led to revolt in Xinjiang occurred in early 1931 when, Cheng Mu, a Han tax collector in Hami, supposedly seduced a Uyghur girl and coerced her parents to consent to the marriage. This violation of Muslim tradition was too much for the people of Hami to tolerate. In April 1931, whether premeditated or not, riots broke out amid the wedding ceremony.[29] The result of this was the massacre of the Han Chinese troops in the area and capture of their weapons by the Hami rebels.

At this point, escalation of the situation still might have been prevented as similar uprisings had been pacified previously by Yang using diplomacy. However, Jin exercised force of arms instead of negotiation. Jin's suppression of the Hami rebels was merciless. KMT reports sent back to the Nanjing central government stated that Jin's use of force to resolve the Hami rebellion was unreasonably draconian and not in-line with the KMT's policy. [30] Unfortunately for the people of Xinjiang, the chain reaction of increasing violence that resulted from the Hami rebellion lasted the next four years and included various factions trying to outdo one another in their unrestrained violence,

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[26] Wu, 64.

[27] Martin Richard Norins, *Gateway to Asia: Sinkiang, Frontier of the Chinese Far West,* (New York: John Day, 1944), 41.

[28] Ibid., 46.

[29] Forbes, 48.

[30] AAH, Xinjiang Muslim Dispute, Copy—Telegram from Urumqi to Nanjing.

which Wu described at a level equivalent, in proportion, to Stalin's purges in the Soviet Union later in the mid-1930s.[31] Therefore, an ethnic and religiously motivated uprising in Hami became the example for other rebellions to continue fighting along ethnic stereotypes.

The rebellions in Xinjiang from 1931-1934 are a complicated matter because of the dozens of rebel leaders claiming authority in addition to actual or suspected interventions by foreign powers. The following gives a general outline of the competing powers in Xinjiang to establish a timeline of the events. More importantly, however for the purposes of examining Uyghur identity, the following will also show how underlying ethnic divisions in the nature of this interconnected web of rebellions contributed to the eventual creation of ethnic identity in 1934 after Sheng Shicai consolidated his power in Xinjiang. This discussion will analyze: how fighting in the rebellions solidified perceptions and boundaries of ethnic differences in Xinjiang; how the Turkic-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan was the application of Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic ideologies present, but confined to Uyghur intellectuals; and the reaction of foreign powers to the threat of the TIRET both in how they supported and opposed the development of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism in Xinjiang.

After the initial success of the Hami uprising, Khoja Niaz and Yolbars, both advisors to the Hami khan, organized local Uyghur, Kazak and Kyrgyz forces to attack the main KMT force at Hami Old City.[32] However, their attempt to force the city to surrender was fruitless in the short term. Realizing the weakness of their military forces, Yolbars, allegedly enroute to Nanjing in search of support, negotiated a deal with Ma Zhongying, a local Tungan warlord, to come to Xinjiang to support rebelling Muslims at Hami. Though Ma was already an experienced commander, with well-trained and disciplined troops, the combined Muslim forces still could not succeed in their siege of the old fortress. Bent on maintaining control of Hami by force, Jin Shuren then ordered Zhang Peiyuan, the Provincial Commander-in-Chief, from Ili to Hami to disperse the

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[31] Wu, 52.

[32] Theicery Zarcone, "The Sufi Networks in Southern Xinjiang during the Republican Regime (1911-1949): An Overview," in *Islam in Politics in Russia and Central Asia (Early 18th to late 20th Centuries*, (London: Kegan Paul, 2001), 137.

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attacking rebels. With a combined force of White Russian and Han Chinese soldiers, Zhang successfully relieved Hami Old City from its assailants. [33]

Defeated, the forces of Khoja Niaz and Yolbars retreated into the mountains surrounding Hami. Ma Zhongying, having being shot through both legs, returned to Gansu where he press-ganged men to fill his ranks and also became commander of the 36th Division, the official title given to his Tungan army by Chiang Kai-shek. [34] At this time, Jin took actions to try to preserve his control over the situation. Suspicious of Zhang Peiyuan's loyalty to him,[35] Jin replaced Zhang as Provincial Commander-in-Chief with Sheng Shicai, a deputy of Zhang and a recent arrival in Xinjiang. [36] However, despite the illusion of momentary success of Jin's forces maintaining power, Ma Zhongying was not ready to give up his quest to conquer Xinjiang. While still in Gansu, he ordered one of his deputies, Ma Shimin, to organize a Muslim rebellion in Turfan. [37] The ensuing rebellions in Turfan followed the example of Hami and seemed to espouse loyalty to the cause of Khoja Niaz.[38] Ma Shimin was successful and soon Turfan was under the control of the Tungans.

To compound the severity of the situation for Jin Shuren, KMT garrisons in several towns on the south side of the Tarim Basin were also defeated by Muslim rebels. Only Ma Shaowu, the military commander at Kashgar, maintained his post. In the south, however, the nature of the rebellions was much more decentralized. Local leaders fought in a loose confederation against Ma Shaowu. Eventually, three brothers from Khotan, Muhammad Amin, Abdullah, and Nur Ahmad Bughra, styled themselves the three "Emirs of Khotan," and consolidated the loyalties of Uyghur, Kazak, Kyrgyz and Afghan leaders to fight against Ma Shaowu. [39] By 19 May 1933, forces of the Emirs successfully

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[33] Forbes, 59-62

[34] Ibid., 106.

[35] In Chen's history of Xinjiang, Zhang had been privately stewing over the fact that Jin took the governorship after Yang's assassination in 1928. Zhang, who thought the post was rightfully his, still coveted the position. Jack Chen, *The Sinkiang Story,* (New York: Macmillan, 1977), 181.

[36] Forbes, 98.

[37] Ibid., 70.

[38] Sinmen Yasushi, "The Eastern Turkestan Republic (1933-34) in Historical Perspective," in *Islam in Politics in Russia and Central Asia* (London: Kegan Paul, 2001), 137.

[39] Newby, "The Rise of Nationalism in Eastern Turkestan, 1930-1950". , 62.

took control of Kashgar Old City while the Tungans remained at Kashgar New City.[40] Upon this marginal success in Kashgar Old City, Sabit Damulla, an educated Uyghur who had become the political leader in the Khotani forces of the Emirs, proclaimed the formation of the Turkic-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan on 12 November 1933 with himself as the Prime Minister and Khoja Niaz as the President.

In the meantime, Ma Shimin turned from Turfan to Urumqi in February 1933.[41] There, Jin and his remaining forces retreated into the gates of the fortress which Ma Shimin and his army subsequently besieged. By then, Muslim forces were stronger than had been present at the siege of Hami and Jin was running out of supplies while his troops' morale proportionally diminished. On 12 April 1933, Jin's especially disgruntled White Russian troops staged a coup and forced Jin to resign and exit Xinjiang. Upon hearing the news of Jin's escape from Urumqi, Sheng Shicai declared that he and Liu Wenlong, previously the Minister of Education in Xinjiang, would be the acting military and civil authorities in the province.

Sheng, now reinforced by the North East Salvation Army from Manchuria, who had been interned by the Soviet Union in southern Siberia after their defeat by the Japanese, continued the fight against Ma Zhongying, who had returned to Xinjiang in May of 1933 and was now nominally allied with Zhang Peiyuan.[42]   For six months, Sheng and Ma fought with no decisive turn in the events. However, in January 1934, the political intrigues, which Sheng had been conducting with the Soviet Union, produced results. In January 1934, Soviet help for Sheng Shicai arrived in the form of tanks, planes, and other artillery plus manpower.[43]   Soviet troops mixed with Sheng's White Russian ranks disguised as "Altai Volunteers" and included about two brigades. The Soviet Union furthermore sent "10,000 Sinkiang troops completely, from boots to Kuomintang insignia"[44] to help Sheng defeat Ma. Unable to hold his position in Urumqi, Ma decided to retreat southward toward Kashgar.

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[40] Forbes, 82.

[41] Ibid., 101.

[42] Ibid., 111.

[43] Ibid., 120.

[44] Allen S. Whiting and Sheng Shicai, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1958), 26-7.

Once in Kashgar, Ma's army easily dispersed the military forces and leadership of the recently formed TIRET in February of 1934. Within three months, Ma and his army took control of the rest of the Kashgar region. However, in June of that year, Ma Zhongying ordered his troops to retreat to Hami while he and a few of his close associates left Xinjiang for the Soviet Union,[45] thus leaving Sheng Shicai the de facto authority in Xinjiang.[46] Ironically, the independent TIRET, after its struggle for existence and recognition, fell to the army of Ma Zhongying who had come initially to Xinjiang at the behest of Niaz, the President of the TIRET.

By analyzing the causes of these rebellions, it is evident that there existed deep-seated resentment for the Jin's government throughout Xinjiang. Among Turkic-Muslim populations in the south, this resentment against Jin's government also included Tungans, who had been in positions of authority in the South. In addition to how these rebellions started, how they were prosecuted also reinforced ethnic differences for Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang. From the segregation by ethnicity within various armies and patterns of mob violence, it is clear that ethnicity and religion were fundamental concepts in these rebellions. To solidify the idea that rebellion in Xinjiang was the result of ethnic and religious conflict, reports sent to Nanjing often gave a person's ethnicity before his name, for example, *HuiMa*[Zhongyingg] and *HanZhang*[Peiyuan].[47] Following tradition, Jin used the technique of solving a Muslim problem with Muslims and called upon remnants of Muslim divisions (*huibu*) held over from Yang's administration in the south, to put down rebellions in Hami.[48] These Muslim divisions proved to be of little effect for Jin's purposes since their loyalty to Jin was minimal and they were drawn to the side of the rebels because of their shared faith.

The rebellions included racially and ethnically motivated violence committed against soldiers and civilians alike. Throughout the conflict, all parties were guilty of atrocities against people perceived as the villainous "other." One example occurred after

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[45] Forbes, 124.

[46] The reason why Ma left Xinjiang is uncertain and various sources speculate on his fate thereafter.

[47] AAH, Incoming Telegrams, #47492 from Moscow, April 27, 1933.

[48] AAH, Xinjiang Muslim Dispute, Copy – Telegram from Urumqi

Zhang Peiyuan's forces relieved the siege of Hami. Perhaps out of necessity, Zhang ordered the sack of the city. However, out of spite, he allowed only his Han Chinese soldiers to pillage and plunder. The results of these actions were "reprisals on such a scale that even those Uyghurs who had remained neutral felt bound to join the rebellion."[49] Similarly, Ma Zhongying gave the order, after his armies recaptured Kashgar, for his Tungan soldiers to take revenge on the towns of the southern Tarim basis for previous atrocities committed against them by Kyrgyz forces.[50]

The Kizil Massacre was one infamous example of racially motivated violence during the rebellions. Perpetrated outside of Yarkand, Kyrgyz troops attacked a column of retreating Han and Tungan troops enroute from Khotan toward Urumqi and then turned their aggression on Han Chinese villagers also in the area.[51] When questioned about the motivation behind such acts of violence, one Turkic rebel stated that he and his cohorts had massacred an entire Han village because "we didn't want any seeds left to spread that race."[52] Sven Hedin described a similar account of events at the siege of Urumqi, "Uyghurs dashed upon Urumqi like wild beasts, slaughtering every Chinese they met on their way."[53] Therefore, at the most basic levels of observation, people throughout Xinjiang from uneducated and illiterate rural villager to highly educated bureaucrats in Urumqi and Nanjing, the rebellions in Xinjiang included racial and religious motivations.

The defeat of the TIRET by Ma Zhongying's Tungans highlights a deep conflict that existed between the Turkic-Muslims and the Tungans especially in the south of Xinjiang. Tungan-Turkic alliance based on Islamic faith was tenuous and present only in times of necessity rather than formed by the bonds of Muslim unity. How and why Ma Zhongying entered these rebellions shows the power of religion in producing romantic notions in the minds of rebels that at first created Tungan-Turki cooperation. In June of

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[49] Forbes, 62.

[50] Ibid., 122-3.

[51] Newby, "The Rise of Nationalism…," 68.

[52] Peter Hopkirk, *Setting the East Ablaze: Lenin's Dream of an Empire in Asia,* (New York: Norton, 1985), 222.

[53] Sven Anders Hedin and F. H. Lyon, *The Flight of "Big Horse"; the Trail of War in Central Asia,* (New York: E. P. Dutton and co., inc., 1936), 6.

1931 Yolbars, according to his own memoir written nearly forty years after the events, set out for Nanjing to solicit aid from the KMT government. However, while enroute in Gansu, he met Ma Zhongying and there the two negotiated a deal for the Tungan warlord to enter Xinjiang on the side of the Uyghurs in the anti-Jin rebellion.[54] Yolbars expressed his faith in Ma Zhongying's "young Muslim army" (*huijiao qingnian jun*) [55] and Ma's abilities as a commander, calling him the savior of the Muslim brotherhood.[56] In his account on the negotiations between himself and Ma, Ma convinced Yolbars that he was on the side of the Hami rebels and that he would fight to free them from the corrupt rule of Jin Shuren. Ma further promised that he could defeat Jin's forces within three months.[57]

The entrance of Ma Zhongying on the side of the Hami rebels further encouraged Muslim unity among various Turkic-Muslim and Tungan insurgents. The initial zeal of religious war described by observers in terms of "uncontrolled fury" was similar to previous Muslim rebellions in Xinjiang in which Turkic and non-Turkic Muslims fought together. Partly because of the inadequacy of Chinese troops garrisoned in Hami, rebellion was successful for a short time. Reports written by Nationalist observers also noted that Ma Zhongying used the concept of self-determination to try to rouse Muslims into rebellion.[58] There was also Kazak support for the Muslim rebellions in Xinjiang who favored independence for an Islamic government in Xinjiang.[59] Therefore, the Muslims of Hami, obsessed with their hatred of Jin Shuren, temporarily shelved their differences in order to gain a powerful military ally in their revolt against Jin. That the first incursion by Ma into Xinjiang included Kazak, Uyghur and Tungan forces showed the possibility of a union between Tungans and Uyghurs.

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[54] Ibid., 51.

[55] Yolbars quoted in Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang Fengbao Qishinian [Xinjiang in Tumult for Seventy Years],* (Taipei: Lanxi Publishers, 1980), 2751.

[56] Xinjiang Academy of Sociology, Department of History, ed. *Xinjiang Jianshi [Short History of Xinjiang],* (Urumqi: Xinjiang People's Republic Publishing Society, 1997), 145.

[57] Yolbars quoted in Zhang, 2756-7.

[58] Archives, Academia Historica, Incoming Telegrams, #50904 from Moscow, June 17, 1933.

[59] AAH, Incoming Telegrams, #47401 from Tashkent April 24, 1933.

Third party descriptions about Xinjiang during this time also exemplify entrenched ethnic stereotypes. Mildred Cable, a missionary with the China Inland Mission, analyzed the rebellions as Islamic holy war describing the Tungan-Turki alliance, "having gone thus far, the revolt had to run its course, led by the excitable, turbulent, bloodthirsty Uyghurs and backed by the wealthy, astute, calculating Tungans. These two classes of men were in every respect different, but linked in the brotherhood of Islam, they sand all their differences and determined to wipe out in blood an insult which had been offered to their common creed."[60] This account continues to show racial biases that portray the Uyghurs as unrestrained and fanatical, "lusty, riotous, war-like Turkis."[61] In the opinion of a missionary traveling through northwest China, "The Uyghur and Tungan could not work together to maintain any Sinkiang republic over-night, and neither of them could stand alone apart from strong outside financial and military backing. Without the rise of a Tamerlane who shall appeal to the baser human instincts, there will be no pan-Islam in Central Asia."[62] Peter Fleming, a travel writer who traveled to Xinjiang in 1934, had a similarly biased view about Tungan and Uyghur cooperation under Ma Shimin at the siege of Urumqi, "Tungans, who fight as wantonly as weasels and whose Uyghur allies were crusading for their civil rights and their religion."[63] This observation indicates some perceptions that further separate Uyhgurs and Tungans based on their motivations for fighting.

However, as fighting continued, native Turkic populations saw that their condition and the prospects for the future were not improving despite the success of Tungan troops in eroding the power of Jin's government. Aitchen Wu noticed that "The Moslems who had rebelled against Chinese rule were now forced to admit that never in the worst periods of repression had their former ruler done them such injuries as they now suffered at the hands of those who claimed to be their deliverers."[64] Soon after the

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[60] Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *The Gobi Desert,* (New York: The Macmillan company, 1944), 221-2.

[61] Ibid., 227.

[62] H. D. Hayward, "Perplexing Sinkiang," *Moslem World* 25, no. 2 (1935), 192-3.

[63] Peter Fleming, *News from Tartary,* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), 251.

[64] Wu, 245.

siege of Hami, initial cooperation of Tungan and Uyghur forces started to diminish. The alliance between Niaz and Ma was also short-lived. Several events led to Niaz's increasing wariness of Ma's intentions and possible outcomes of their alliance. First, Uyghur soldiers resented the fact that they made up most of the front line while Tungans remained to the rear and did not participate in the siege of Kitai where Uyghur forces sustained heavy casualties.[65] Second, Niaz was also afraid that Ma would take over dictatorship in Xinjiang as soon as he had enough power. Considering his reputation and speculating on the reasons Ma came to Xinjiang in the first place, this assumption was probably correct.

The story of two Tungans leaders who changed their allegiances during the rebellions shows Tungan fear of the Han as well as a reciprocal Tungan suspicion of their Turkic allies. In the autumn 1932 Ma Fuming, previously a KMT commander in Turfan, changed sides to support the anti-Jin forces of Ma Shimin. Wu suggested that Ma Fumin made the decision to fight with Ma Shimin because rumors coming into Turfan from refugees fleeing Hami included those of the atrocities committed by Zhang Peiyuan's Han Chinese army against the Muslims of Hami.[66] The case of Ma Zhancang also illustrates the power of forming alliances among homogenous groups. In 1932, Ma Zhancang, loyal to Ma Shimin and therefore Ma Zhongying, came to power in Pichen east of Turfan and captured Kucha by February of 1933. At this point he allied himself with Timur, a popular Uyghur leader, and the two joined forces and moved west toward Aksu and had that city by the end of the month.[67] However, as fighting continued and Timur's Uyghur and Kyrgyz forces continued to decimate Tungan villages, Ma Zhancang decided that it was in his best interest to separate himself from Timur. Therefore, upon arriving in Kashgar New City, which he was supposed to attack, Ma Zhancang instead surrendered to Ma Shaowu, a fellow Tungan. According to British Consul-General Nicholas Fitzmaurice, for Ma Zhancang, it was "better to surrender to the Tungans than to be slaughtered by the Kirghiz."[68] These two examples, highlight how the Tungans

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[65] Newby, "The Rise of Nationalism…,"56-7.

[66] Wu, 71.

[67] Forbes, 73.

[68] Ibid., 80-1.

were rejected as allies by all other ethnicities in Xinjiang because of the brutality they inflicted during their campaigns.

Further emphasizing the unity of Turkic groups against both Han and Tungan forces, rebelling Turkic groups treated fellow Turkic villages with respect and restraint where none was given to Han or Tungan villages. Niaz, for example, in a gesture of Turkic mutual respect, sent a letter to Khotan apologizing for harsh treatment by Osman Ali, a Kyrgyz leader loyal to him, in the disarmament of the Khotani forces and promised leaders at Khotan that he ordered Osman to return the captured weapons.[69] However, under certain circumstances, Uyghur-Tungan cooperation still took place. Propaganda and incentives along with the fear of racial violence motivated people to make decisions they thought best for survival. For example, Uyghurs joined Ma Zhancang's army in Kashgar because of the promise of monetary reward compounded with rumors that Ma Zhongying's combined Tungan-Han forces were coming toward Kashgar.[70] Therefore, Uyghurs living around Kashgar enlisted in Ma Zhancang's army out of fear that they would be massacred by Ma Zhongying's forces if they remained in their towns and villages.

Turkic leaders were not alone in their distrust of Ma Zhongying as the rebellions continued. Because of Ma's reputation for brutality, Han Chinese and White Russian leaders were also unwilling to ally with Ma Zhongying. Upon hearing reports that predicted Ma Zhongying was going to return to Xinjiang, the British Consul reported that, "Their [Ma Zhongying and his Tungan forces] arrival is feared by many as the story of ruthless killing that preceded them. Turks are nervous, White Russians are nervous."[71] There were also rumors that Zhang Peiyuan rejected a full alliance with Ma because his Han Chinese soldiers refused to fight alongside Ma's Tungan and Turkic people because they feared retaliation for the atrocities they had previously committed against Muslim villagers.[72] Ma had earned himself recognition as the "autocrat of Eastern Xinjiang"

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[69] Sinkiang Internal Situation, no 104-C, 12 Oct 1933.

[70] Ibid.

[71] SIS, no. 242 April 1934.

[72] Chen Huishen and Chen Chao, *Minguo Xinjiang Shi [Republican Era Xinjiang History]*, (Urumqi: Xinjiang Peoples' Republic Publishing Society, 1999), 183.

which entailed the hatred of Muslim and Han Chinese.[73] Therefore, by late 1933, Ma and his Tungans had alienated every possible ally they could of had in Xinjiang.

Slogans and rhetoric used during these rebellions also bolstered a Turkic-Muslim resistance to Han and Tungan invaders. Rebels in the Khotan, Kashgar and Aksu region showed a distinct struggle not only against Chinese (non-Muslim) rule, but also against Tungan (non-Turkic) power. In the south, Turkic peoples had long viewed Tungans as extensions of Chinese rule since Hui Muslims traditionally held delegated positions of authority in the South. Turkic-Muslims rebels used the slogans such as, "Protect religion; kill the Han, destroy the Hui" (*baohu zongjiao, sha Han mie Hui)* or similarly "Extinguish the Han and the Hui" ("*mie han yu hui*") to "create an Islamic country" ("*jianli yisilan guo*").[74] Particularly for rebels in the south, the element of religious war was much more sustained and included matching rhetoric with slogans such as "die and be a martyr, live and be a hero" and "if we die in battle, we are martyrs, if we are in good fortune, we will be the conquerors."[75] Motivated by their economic grievances in conjunction with a call for an Islamic government, gold miners of Kara Kash made a similar statement directed at Jin's officials, "Foolish infidels like you are not fit to rule…You infidels think that, because you have rifles, guns…and money, you can depend on them; but we depend on God in whose hands are our lives."[76]

The most obvious indicator of the underlying religious and cultural currents driving these rebellions was the eventual formation of the TIRET. In part, the cultural and religious tensions were the results of Muslim reformers who affected Uyghur intellectuals especially around the Kashgar region. Islamic schools that taught a broader curriculum to include some secular subjects first appeared in Kashgar in 1885. These schools hired teachers from abroad and sent students to Istanbul, Kazan and St. Petersburg and reached Turfan by 1913. These schools "rejected traditional canonical

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[73] Norins, 44.

[74] Ning An, *Xinjiang Neimu [Xinjiang Inside Report],* (Chongqing: Asia Books, 1945), 48.

[75] Sheng Li, "Xinjiang Lishi Shang De Duanming Fenlie Zhengquan [A Short-Lived Splitist Political Power in the History of Xinjiang]," *China Borderland History and Geography Studies* 12, no. 2 (2002): 46.

[76] Newby, "The Rise of Nationalism," 240-1.

learning in favor of personal and national strengthening through modern education.[77] The fact that the TIRET leadership was largely made up of Muslim intellectuals who had acquired their education and political consciousness from abroad was evidence of a new cultural and political movement in Xinjiang.

For these Turkic-Muslim intellectuals in Xinjiang, objectives for reform were two-fold. They wanted to increase their position in the Chinese system by increasing literacy and economic development. They were also part of the trend coming from the Middle East and Central Asia with Muslim reforms to elevate their conditions as their cousins in Central Asia had. Uyghurs returning from study abroad and going on the Hajj started Jadid schools in Xinjiang. When rebellions started in Hami in 1931, this group saw an opportunity to make their social and religious reforms a political reality. The cultural connection with Central Asia was also a key social factor among the general population that allowed these ideas to come into Xinjiang. Leaders of the Eastern Turkestan Republic had been part of the Jadid reform of schools in Xinjiang throughout the 1910s and 1920s, in towns in and surrounding Kashgar, Khotan and Turfan.[78]

The formation of the TIRET took place in an incremental process that began in Khotan in 1931 as a society of Muslim intellectuals and gradually became more militarily and politically powerful until it was able to proclaim its status as an independent government in Kashgar, complete with constitution, a President and cabinet of ministers. In 1932, Amin Bughra, the oldest of the Khotan Emirs, a student and teacher of Jadid schools, formed the Committee for National Revolution (CNR) in Khotan with his two younger brothers, Abdullah and Nur Ahmad.[79] Later, the three Emirs invited Sabit Damulla, an educated Uyghur, to join and lead their organization in Khotan. Sabit was also notable as a choice to start a new republic because he was the only Uyghur at the time who had graduated from the Russian University of Law and Government, the highest degree-granting institution in Xinjiang at that time.[80] Sabit was also a teacher at

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[77] James Millward and Nabijan Tursun, "Political History and Strategies of Control, 1884-1978," in *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), 73.

[78] Yasushi, 154.

[79] Ibid., 140.

[80] Bao'erhan, 277.

the Kara Kash New Islamic School and therefore a supporter of Muslim education reform. In addition to his status as a religious authority, Sabit had recently returned from the Hajj in 1933 and was heavily influenced by Islamic reform movements during his journey through India, Egypt and Turkey.[81] Thus, the Emirs believed Sabit "brought political information and experience" to the CNR, which had been gaining popularity and included over 300 members by 1933.

Realistically, however, if the plans of the Sabit and the Emirs were going to have their desired effect, their base would have to move from Khotan to Kashgar, historically the center of Islamic culture and education in Xinjiang. As such, Kashgar had also been a major city in Xinjiang on the maps of Pan-Turkists and Pan-Islamists. To move their fledgling government from Khotan to Kashgar required two steps. The first was to take control Kashgar from the Tungans. Therefore, Sabit Damulla and the two younger Emirs led various rebel groups from around the Khotan and Kashgar areas to "rid the people of Eastern Turkestan of the oppression which they had to endure, and to set a revolutionary movement a foot."[82] Amin Bughra, who remained in Khotan announced, "The people were brought to ruin and cannot escape from the oppression. The oppression is becoming stronger day by day. We must mount horse for *gazat* in the way of Allah."[83] Thus, under a banner of jihad, the Khotani government of the Emirs earned the support of local rebel leaders whose ranks filled with Uyghur and Kyrgyz soldiers alike as they traveled toward Kashgar.

In order to maintain the fruits of their military conquest, the Khotanis further needed help from the social and political organizations in Kashgar that supported ideals similar to those of the Committee for National Revolution (CNR). The largest and most influential of these groups was the Young Kashgar Party, an alliance of merchants and intellectuals supportive of western modernization.[84] To increase their political position, Sabit also invited Khoja Niaz, the most well-known Uyghur at the time because of his leadership in the Hami uprising, to be the President for the new republic. Though Niaz

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[81] Newby, "The Rise of Nationalism…," 71.

[82] Bughra quoted in Yasushi , 141.

[83] Yasushi quoting Halil Qidir's *Concise History of the Qyrghyz of Qaqsli*, Ibid.144.

[84] Ibid., 148.

agreed to this offer, he remained only a figurehead while Sabit Damulla continued to lead the establishment of the TIRET.

Once in Kashgar, the CNR started its transition into the TIRET. On 15 August1933, Sabit arranged the Administrative Office of the Khotan government in Kashgar. A month later, the Eastern Turkestan Independence Association met for the first time in Kashgar and finally on 12 November, Sabit, in a public forum, proclaimed the formation of the Turkic-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan. Addressing the "Eastern Turkestan Muslims," Sabit's speech included Pan-Turkic statements such as, "Turkestan is the homeland of Turkic people." Just as important as his message to the people of Kashgar was Sabit's method of delivery since this was the first time political activity took the form of a mass, public announcement.[85]

In addition to proclaiming itself, any new government needs the recognition of other state actors in order to survive as a state. Even before Sabit was ready to announce the formation of an independent Eastern Turkestan, he had already tried to solicit the recognition and help of potential Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic allies. In September of 1933, the separatist government at Kashgar sent delegations to Afghanistan for aid and offered Turkish émigrés citizenship in their republic if they could help in gaining recognition with the Turkish government in return.[86] There were also allegations from TASS that reported that after the establishment of the Kashgar government, Sabit Damulla invited "Turkish emigrants in India and Japan, with their anti-Kemalist organizations, to organize his military forces."[87] These attempts yielded little concrete support for Sabit's independent government.

Undeterred, Sabit and the government of the Emirs pushed forth with their proclamation of the TIRET. In his declaration of independence, Sabit played on the emotions of his constituents and emphasized the need to break free from both Han and Tungan control:

> The Tungans, more than the Han, are the enemy of our people. Today our people are already free from the oppression of the Han, but still continue under Tungan

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[85] Ibid., 149 -52.

[86] Wu, 247.

[87] Archives, Academica Sinica Institute of Modern History, Xinjiang File, TASS News Service January, 24, 1934.

subjugation. We must still fear the Han, but cannot not fear the Tungans also. The reason we must be careful to guard against the Tungans, we must intensely oppose, cannot afford to be polite. Since the Tungans have compelled us, we must be this way. Yellow Han people have not the slightest thing to do with Eastern Turkestan. Black Tungans also do not have this connection. Eastern Turkestan belongs to the people of Eastern Turkestan. There is no need for foreigners to come be our fathers and mothers...From now on we do not need to use foreigners language, or their names, their customs, habits, attitudes, written language, etc. We must also overthrow and drive foreigners from our boundaries forever. The colors yellow and black are foul. They have dirtied our land for too long. So now it is absolutely necessary to clean out this filth. Take down the yellow and black barbarians! Long live Eastern Turkestan![88]

A declaration of the establishment of the TIRET from Niaz to the Nanjing central government used a slightly more formal approach to solicit the approval of the Nationalist government. In his description of the decisions of the Congress of the Eastern Turkestan Republic, Niaz emphasized that the people of Eastern Turkestan were exercising their right to self-determination, a policy at least written in the constitution of the Republic of China. Niaz stated five principles of the newly formed republic:

1. All of Xinjiang is part of the Eastern Turkestan Republic, and that all that do not belong should go back to where they came from.
2. The government and economics will be conducted by the Uyghurs (*chanzu*).
3. All the oppressed people now living in Eastern Turkestan will have freedom to pursue education, commerce, and to build a new nation.
4. The president of the republic, Khoja Niaz, will build a government dedicated to the happiness of the people.
5. The Republic, with is various departments, will strive to catch up with other modernizing societies.[89]

The TIRET, in an effort to assert political sovereignty, put forth its own paper and copper currency, wrote a constitution and began implementing a new tax code. Its message to the masses was also in line with Pan-Turkic literature emanating from Central Asia. *Eastern Turkestan Life* (*Sahri Turkestan Hayati*) was a newspaper published three times a week and bore the slogan "United in Language, Thought and Deed," the same as *Tercumen*, the most widely circulated Pan-Turkic newspaper in Central Asia at the time started by Ismail Gasprinsky. Another piece of evidence implicating the founders'

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[88] Zhang, *Xinjiang Fengbao Qishinian* [Xinjiang in Tumult for Seventy Years], 3393-4.

[89] AASIMH, Xinjiang File. Copy – Telegram from Khoja Niaz to the Nanjing Central Government received March 13, 1934.

intentions on making their movement a part of the Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic movements by which they were influenced was the language they chose to print *Eastern Turkestan Life*. It was not in Uyghur, but Chagatay Turkish which theoretically could be read by a wider audience including their Central Asian neighbors, but perhaps more importantly, the people of Turkey. [90]

After convincing themselves that the TIRET was a functional republic, Sabit and Niaz set out to make the independent government of Eastern Turkestan legitimate in the diplomatic world by obtaining recognition from other states. It is in this effort that Khoja Niaz made his contribution to the survival of the TIRET. Niaz's petition to the British government included a detailed description of the oppression perpetrated against the people of Eastern Turkestan by the Chinese which resulted in the destitute condition of the people of Xinjiang. To add a sense of urgency and pertinence for his British audience, Niaz also highlighted the presence of Bolshevism and Communism in Xinjiang. Clearly, Niaz tailored this message to meet the point most important to the British government at the time because it related to the only reason which would compel the British to intervene in Xinjiang on the behalf of the TIRET – Soviet encroachment into India.

However, almost immediately after the declaration of the Eastern Turkestan Republic, the schisms and differences already present among the leaders of the TIRET started to break apart the solidarity of its leaders. Conflict on what to name their republic is one example where factions competed for power. On one hand, more radical members such as Sabit and the Emirs had more extreme ideals for the TIRET. They wanted an Islamic state governed by the *Shariah* independent from China. However, Niaz, the President of the republic, favored a more realistic resolution that would include compromising with Sheng Shicai as well as the Soviet Union. In a Turkish language newspaper, the republic called itself the "Turkic-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan." However, in Niaz's correspondence to Nanjing, he used a more Chinese friendly term, "the country of Eastern Turkestan." Coins minted under the republic also represented a dichotomy of opinions. The front of one coin had the name "Uyghurstan" in Uyghur

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[90] Newby, "The Rise of Nationalism…," 78.

Arabic script, but also included the flag of the KMT and the denomination of the coin written in Chinese.[91] Despite an extreme position evident in the rhetoric of the TIRET, Sabit was still willing to make some compromises as the TIRET's situation continued to deteriorate. Showing his priorities, Sabit offered a truce to the Tungans instead of seeing the republic fall into the hands of the USSR with whom Niaz had already been negotiating.[92]

Perhaps the most detrimental aspect of this fractionalization to the further existence of the TIRET was the loss, or failure to ever solidify, Niaz's undivided support. Previously, Niaz had kept some form of cohesion among Eastern Turkestani revolutionaries. However, as his dealings with enemy factions increased, his leadership position in the movement also decreased.[93] Examining Niaz's activities throughout the rebellions, his relationship with the TIRET was superficial, at best, and insincere at worst. After a failed attempt to defend Aksu from the Tungans in 1933, Niaz and Sabit divided their forces and parted company. Niaz and Sabit further split on grounds that Niaz had independently negotiated the dissolution of the TIRET with the Soviet Union in exchange for military assistance against Ma Zhongying.[94] At this point of imminent defeat, Niaz started negotiations with Sheng Shicai and accepted a position under Sheng's government as the Vice-Governor of Xinjiang.[95] When questioned by a Soviet official about his behavior, Niaz responded to allegations of disloyalty to the republic, of which he was the president, by saying, "the Eastern Turkestan Republic is not my creation, but that of Sabit Damulla." At this point the response of the Soviet agent was that Niaz should hand over the republic over to Sheng in order to show his allegiance to the Soviet Union, which Niaz subsequently did.[96] Further evidence of Niaz's lack of support for the Khotanis appear in British reports that stated Niaz had negotiated with

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[91] Chen and Chen, *Minguo Xinjiang Shi* [Republican Era Xinjiang History], 283.

[92] Newby, *The Rise of Nationalism...*, 83.

[93] Ibid., 81.

[94] Forbes, 121.

[95] Newby, *The Rise of Nationalism...*, 89.

[96] Zhang, 3403-4.

the USSR for weapons, but intended for them to be used only by his Uyghur forces and not the Kyrgyz from Khotan.[97]

Solidarity of the movement also suffered because of the ongoing military assaults on Kashgar Old City, which TIRET forces could not repel. The TIRET's pleas for foreign support and recognition also produced little effect. By June 1934, the separatist government in Kashgar effectively dissolved amid factional fighting and the Tungan assault on the city.[98] A message from Yarkand to the British Consul stated that the government of the Emirs were forced to join Khoja Niaz, but since Niaz had colluded with Soviet Union and negotiated the dissolution of the TIRET, "they [the Emirs] therefore to avoid further bloodshed would prefer to make terms with Tungan if this was possible."[99]

One reason the TIRET was not successful in gaining recognition, at least as implied in British reports, was that because the TIRET looked everywhere and anywhere for help, which made the TIRET's goals seem ambiguous and more importantly made the objectives of the TIRET unclear.[100] Therefore, the foreign powers had a considerably larger calculation to complete in order to decide if supporting the TIRET would incite some kind of retaliatory action from a competing power. Not surprisingly, the TIRET received no official recognition. Considering the state of global politics of the interwar years, the likelihood for a foreign power to intervene in Xinjiang was minimal because such an action would have magnified repercussions for international diplomacy.

The appearance of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism in Xinjiang made these rebellions different, in that they used ethnic and religious differences to instigate conflict. People therefore became more aware of their own race, religion and ultimately ethnicity distinct from other groups. This awareness of ethnic differences and their usage as a means to incite conflict was the problem in Xinjiang which led to the formalization of ethnic identity in Xinjiang in 1934. However, outside appraisals of Pan-Turkism differed. In his account of his tour to Xinjiang, Aitchen Wu, although he does not use the terms Pan-

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[97] SIS, no 106-C, 19 Oct 1933.

[98] Newby, *The Rise of Nationalism…*, 83.

[99] SIS, no. 39. April 19, 1934.

[100] SIS, no. 108-C, 26 Oct 1993.

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Islam and Pan-Turkism specifically, describes the motivation behind the rebellions he observed. "With the stories of Ghengis Khan and Timur to inspire them there are always soldiers of fortune ready to start Islamic revolts."[101] An American newspaper in China called the rebellions part of a "Great Mohammedan National Movement"[102] Another report gave little credence to the goals of the TIRET, stating that the three mullahs of Khotan "shed an intolerable amount of blood to their pennyworth of Pan-Islamic achievement."[103] To others, Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islam posed a political and social threat to the existing equilibrium.

Parroting Soviet sentiment about Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism, Sheng made this comment about the rebellion in southern Xinjiang: "the influence and spread of Pan-Islamic ideas among the Moslem population underlined that pan-Islam as a trend did not have boundaries and that it easily could spread into the Soviet Central Asian Republics."[104] Sheng's aversion to Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism had been a policy of his two predecessors. Both Yang had Jin had tried to suppress Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic influences as well as other outside influences during their respective tenures, but people and propaganda still permeated the Soviet-Xinjiang border.[105] It seemed, rightly so, that the Soviet Union was still suspicious that Pan-Islam remained a threat to the stability of the Central Asian region.

Indeed, the strategic position both in time and place of these rebellions elicited reactions by foreign powers that played a significant role in these rebellions. Intensified action on the part of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and Japan was also due to an awareness of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism in Xinjiang connected to previous experience with similar movements during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Foreign interest and conflict in Xinjiang historically included territorial and economic competition between Britain and Russia during the Great Game. These

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[101] Wu, 36.

[102] China Weekly Review, "The Triangle of Entanglement in Sinkiang (Chinese Turkestan), March 18, 1933.

[103] Fleming, 252.

[104] Newby, "The Rise of Nationalism," 92.

[105] Justin Jon Rudelson, *Oasis Identities: Uyghur Nationalism Along China's Silk Road,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 56.

suspicions continued through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and tensions increased because of the added number of players and the inclusion of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism into the realm of Xinjiang politics. The following will characterize the role of foreign powers in Xinjiang as they reacted to Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism.

Generally, the USSR's behavior in Xinjiang revolved around two issues. First, the USSR wanted Xinjiang to remain under the stable control of the Chinese government, which meant it did not want an unpredictable, independent republic opposed to relations with the Soviet Union to become popular. Soviet leaders further feared that a successful Islamic republic in Xinjiang would incite similar disturbances to arise among neighboring populations in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The latter of these concerns was the result of the Basmachi Rebellions which took place from 1918-1931 and included several rebellions throughout Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

At their core, Basmachi rebels fought for a right to self-determination, but more immediately for independence from the Bolshevik government in Tashkent. What sensationalized these events was the participation of Enver Pasha, the exiled former Minister of Defense of the Ottoman Empire, as a noted leader of rebellions. With his charisma, experience and potential capabilities, Lenin initially recruited Enver to fight against the Basmachis. However, Enver supposedly had a change of heart and decided to fight on the side of the rebels in the name of spreading Pan-Turkism upon his arrival in Turkestan. Giving himself the title "Commander-in-Chief of all the Armies of Islam, Son-in-law of the Caliph and representative of the Prophet,"[106] Enver led his "Army of Islam" against the Red Army. Enver further proclaimed his Pan-Turkism by stating his connection with the Turks of Central Asia in their struggle against the Russians, "This is also part of my fatherland. The blood which flows in the veins of these people is the same as that is in mine. This is no Russian land, but a purely Turkic one."[107]

Despite unlikely chances of success and eventual dissolution of the Basmachi rebellions, nationalistic leaders representing Turkestan (at that point, not yet formed into

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[106] Glenda Fraser, "Enver Pasha's Bid for Turkestan 1920-1922," *Canadian Journal of History [Canada]* 23, no. 2 (1988): 53.

[107] Enver quoted in Ibid., 62.

the Soviet Central Asian Republics) capitalized on this opportunity to spread pan-Turkic propaganda in an effort promote Muslim unity throughout Central Asia. Vali Kajum-Khan, Chairman of the National Turkestanian Union Committee, described the Basmachi rebellions, "All tribes without exception took part in this movement for liberation…the mass rising of the indomitable will of the people to regain their lost liberty."[108] With respect to the place and time of the Basmachi rebellions, any resemblance of Pan-Islam or Pan-Turkism in Central Asia would draw the attention of the Soviet Union.

With the experience of the Basmachi rebellions ended as recently as 1931, Soviet officials were keenly tuned to the possibility that Pan-Turkism still ran beneath the surface of its Central Asian republics and Outer Mongolia. [109] To compound this stance against possible Pan-Turkic and Pan-Islamic intrigues, the similarities between Ma Zhongying and Enver Pasha were too apparent to overlook. A TASS report dated 17 July 1933, increased the threat of Ma Zhongying's forces by linking Pan-Islam in Xinjiang with expanding Japanese imperialism: "it is well known that the rebellion has been staged under the slogan of Mohammedan unification for struggle against the Chinese and that the Islamic circles inspiring the movement have their center in Tokyo. These circles it is stated publish a paper which is distributed among the Dungans."[110] Reports sent from the Chinese ambassador to Moscow, Yan Huiqing at the time, repeatedly also warned of the threat posed by Ma Zhongying and his supposed quest to build an Islamic empire in Xinjiang. [111] Yan reported that Japanese officers were among Ma Zhongying's advisors who had been trying to foment a "Pan-Islamic Empire" (*dahuijiao diguo)* which was part of the Japanese plan for Pan-Asianism (*dayazhou zhuyi*).[112] The reality of whether Ma was as ardent a Pan-Islamist as Soviet sources accuse him to be is debatable.

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[108] Charles Warren Hostler, *Turkism and the Soviets; the Turks of the World and their Political Objectives,* (London; New York: G. Allen & Unwin; F.A. Praeger, 1957), 127.

[109] AASIMH, Xinjiang File, "Britain and Japan In and Out of Western China", Pravda Vostoka. Translated into Chinese.

[110] AASIMH, Xinjiang File.

[111] AASIMH, Xinjiang File, Telegram from Ambassador Yan Huiqing, Moscow to the Nanjing Central government received, December 10, 1933.

[112] AASIMH, Xinjiang File, Telegram from Moscow to Nanjing, January 21, 1933.

Nonetheless, a more concrete concern of Soviet interest was the whereabouts of Basmachi rebels who fled the Soviet Union. Ma Shaowu's autocracy which included the areas of Kashgar, Yarkand, and Khotan, had been isolated from the Soviet Union and by 1928 had become a haven for anti-communist sentiment. Refugees who fled to this area of Eastern Turkestan, most notably Yusuf Jan and Janib Beg, later participated in rebellions in Xinjiang.[113]

During the 1930s, the USSR reacted to the potential of Muslim rebellion in a way that showed their sensitivity to the issue of Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic inspired agitations. However, this did not prevent Soviet officials from soliciting deals from Sheng, Ma and Niaz, all of whom sought Soviet support. British reports suspected that the USSR used the promise of support to cause conflict among Uyghur leaders and therefore weaken their drive against the Chinese government.[114] The Soviet Union also continually pressured the President and Minister of Defense of the TIRET to relinquish their goals for independence.[115] As previously discussed, both of these measures succeeded in driving Niaz and Sabit apart in their cooperation to create and independent Eastern Turkestan.

Inverse to the rise of Soviet influence in Xinjiang, by the early 1930s Great Britain's position in Xinjiang continued to decline. Diplomatically, Britain trailed the Soviet Union in the number of consulates it maintained in Xinjiang. Though Britain established its only consulate at Kashgar in 1890, it was not recognized by the Chinese government until 1908.[116] The Soviet Union, however, had established consulates by treaty throughout Xinjiang's major cities. Despite a lesser presence, the British government still had a vested interested to protect India from suspected Soviet encroachment that could possibly come through Xinjiang. Also being in a compromised position of not having a consulate in Urumqi gave the British even more motive to support a strong anti-Soviet government in Xinjiang. Therefore, the British ideally

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[113] Newby, "The Rise of Nationalism…," 69.

[114] SIS, no 108-C, 16 Oct 1933.

[115] Ghulamuddin Pahta, "Soviet-Chinese Collaboration in Eastern Turkestan: The Case of the 1933 Uprising," *Journal (Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs) [Great Britain]* 11, no. 2 (1990): 246.

[116] Max Everest-Phillips, "British Consuls in Kashgar," *Asian Affairs [Great Britain]* 22, no. 1 (1991): 20.

wanted the Chinese to strengthen their borders against Soviet aggression; however, at the time, the central Chinese government had little capability to do so and its authority to dictate such actions by the governors of Xinjiang were minimal.

The danger therefore for the British was that amidst the deteriorating economic conditions, the Muslim populations might turn to the Soviet Union as their only resort for restoring order and prosperity.[117] From this position, the British policy in Xinjiang was generally reactionary and in self-defense against the possibility of Soviet and Japanese threats. Thus, to maintain the desired status quo, Britain was interested in supporting changes in Xinjiang that were ideologically and economically opposed the Soviet Union and the spread of communism. The logical choice for British in the events of the early 1930s in Xinjiang was the secessionist, anti-Soviet party that formed the TIRET.

This support for Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism to try to establish a buffer zone between the Soviet Union and India would have been unlikely for Britain, which previously acted against the spread of these two ideologies. However, at this point, the British reasoned that since Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism already existed in Xinjiang, at least they could be used as a weapon for and not against them. The danger of the Soviet Union using Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism to spread Communist propaganda into Xinjiang was an unacceptable outcome to the British. Great Britain also did not want open confrontation with the USSR in Xinjiang, but also could not stand by while Soviet dominance continued to increase. Therefore, as Soviet support for Sheng increased, so did British weapons appear with greater frequency in the hands of Muslim rebels.[118] The British also tried other ways of wooing Muslim support away from the Soviet Union, including allowing Hajj pilgrims to travel through India.[119] As a result, at least according to allegations of Chinese and Soviet sources, the TIRET was implicated as a creature of British imperialism.

Japan's interest in supporting rebellions apparently driven by Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism was part of greater ambitions for a Pan-Asian ideology. However, like the Soviets and British, the Japanese did not want to make their support for Ma Zhongying

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[117] Hopkirk , 99.

[118] Norins, 114.

[119] Everest-Phillips, 23.

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overt since they were uncertain about Ma's intentions and possible outcome of events in Xinjiang. However, Japan did take actions to win the hearts and minds of Muslims in Xinjiang as a means of increasing its sphere of influence. Japan had been working since the beginning of the twentieth century to promote itself as a protector of Islam and, in some respects, a qualified candidate for the position in the Far East. There was already an admiration among Asian Muslims for Japan after its defeat of Russia in the Russo-Japanese war of 1905. That event had significant meaning since an Asian power, which had acquired western technology, defeated a traditional Western power. For Pan-Islamic idealists, this example of the rise of an Asian power strengthened the idea that Islam, something traditionally opposed to the West, could have the same success.[120] Therefore, Japan, to Muslims, seemed to be one step ahead of them in the process to modernize and challenge Western powers.

Seeing an opportunity to use this momentum to advance its own dreams of imperialism, Japan encouraged Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic propaganda, which Selcuk Esenbel links to previous connections with the Ottoman Empire and Sultan Abdulhamid II. Placing itself at one end of the "Altaic Crescent" that linguistically unites Japan with the Central Eurasia from Manchuria to Hungary, Japanese propaganda urged a union of this region against communism.[121] For the first few decades of the twentieth century, Japan also became an émigré haven for Muslim intellectuals fleeing Turkey and Russia. Émigrés from Russia during World War I and the 1917 revolutions set up cultural centers in Tokyo in 1928 and a Turko-Tatar society in Kobe in 1934.[122] Under the auspices of the Japanese government, these émigrés regrouped and continued their political and intellectual activism. In this respect, by 1920, Japan had become the most outspoken supporter of Pan-Islam in Asia. Japan wanted to create allies with disaffected Muslim populations of the Tsar's colonies in the Caucasus and Turkestan. Moreover, secret organizations in Japan including the Black Dragons, a group particularly focused on Japanese activities in China, also sent agents throughout Germany, Japan, Great Britain,

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[120] Selcuk Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900-1945," *American Historical Review* 109, no. 4 (2004): 1146.

[121] Ibid., 1155.

[122] Ram Rahul, *Modern Central Asia,* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1979), 35.

the Soviet Union and Turkey to promote Pan-Islam among Muslims.[123] However, the closest approximation of Japan's support for Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic ideas come from their greater goal of building a Pan-Asian empire. They saw Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism as instruments to help unite a numerous and marginalized group in Asia, which occupied a tenuous position in the periphery of other states.

Through the 1930s, Japan continued its cooperation with Turkey to form a "citadel against communism" by supporting Ma Zhongying's forces in Xinjiang.[124] So, like the British, the Japanese supported Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic solidarity to create a defense against the ever ominous Soviet Union. In this plot, the Turko-Japanese collaboration even went as far as choosing an exiled Ottoman prince to be the leader of and Eastern Turkestan Republic upon the success of Ma Zhongying in taking Xinjiang.[125] Japan also saw an opportunity to use Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic support to gain anti-Soviet allies in Xinjiang. For these purposes, the Japanese supported Ma Zhongying's forces instead of Niaz or Sabit because Ma was in the most powerful position and therefore had the highest likelihood of success. Commenting on Japan's strategy in Xinjiang, Masumoto Kitada, Japanese Minster in Kabul, stated that Japan's purpose was, "to make an ideological drive into Sinkiang. For this, armed invasion is unnecessary. Such an ideological drive might disturb the situation in Soviet Turkestan, the weak point of Soviet Russia."[126] Nonetheless, Japan did not outwardly thwart the actions of the TIRET, but proved themselves supportive of the exiled leaders of the TIRET after their defeat in the winter of 1934. For the most part Japan's involvement was an abortive ideological ambition, which was abandoned by 1937.

Of all the outside support that appeared for various factions in the Xinjiang rebellions, that of the KMT had the least impact on the eventual outcome. Even Chiang Kai-shek's appointment of Ma Zhongying as a divisional commander in the KMT army was only a temporary pledge of support for Ma when he seemed to be the dominant and most capable power among the Xinjiang rebels. Later reports show that Chiang's support

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[123] Sun Chengyi, 100.

[124] Ibid., 160.

[125] Ibid., 161

[126] Whiting, 36.

for Ma turned to suspicion because Chiang suspected Ma might try to establish an independent Muslim state which would either directly or indirectly invite foreign powers into Xinjiang.[127] According to Owen Lattimore, "Kumingtang policy in this frontier region can best be described as one of fitful opportunism in the face of chronic emergency."[128] In some respects, this is true. However, this type of assessment should not diminish the need to understand KMT policy. Though the KMT government from Nanjing could exercise little power in Xinjiang, the Nationalist government absolutely needed to maintain territorial possession of Xinjiang and at least superficial authority over the provincial governor. More important for the KMT was to pacify the situation in Xinjiang as quickly as possible or face the possibility of losing the province to foreign powers.

There was also extra urgency to resolve the issue of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism because it could lead to similar uprisings in Tibet and Qinghai.[129] Therefore, the KMT central government sent two envoys for pacification to Xinjiang, but no one, including Sheng, trusted Nanjing's intentions. The Nanjing government tried many venues to try to improve conditions and steer Xinjiang toward peace, but none produced the desired results. In a precarious position subservient to the actions of Sheng Shicai, after the summer of 1933, the KMT was willing to accept a less than ideal resolution of the rebellions in Xinjiang for the sake of stability. Precisely how these conditions led to the institutionalization of ethnic identity in Xinjiang will be discussed in Chapter Three.

Aside from the Soviet Union, Great Britain and Japan, who took and active interest in the rebellions in Xinjiang, the implication of Pan-Turkic and Pan-Islamic currents in the rebellion reached Turkey, which had its own experiences with those ideologies and shared some previous connections with Xinjiang. Though there was a historical precedent for the hopes of the TIRET that Turkey would support them as they had supported Yakup Beg's government, circumstances had changed and the emotional link that existed between Turks and the Uyghurs was not enough to overcome the risks for Turkey if it entered in open conflict with the Soviet Union, Japan and Great Britain.

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[127] AAH, Xinjiang Muslim Dispute, Copy—Telegram from Lin in Nanjing to Urumqi.

[128] Lattimore, 52

[129] AASIMH, Xinjiang File, report received by Nanjing Central Government, January 15, 1933.

However, this did not prevent intrepid individuals from lending their expertise to help the Turkic-Muslim separatists in Xinjiang. Two Turks, Mustapha Ali and Mohammed Nadhim Bey were advisors to Khoja Niaz. They visited schools, advised the military and suggested a national flag instead of the use of many local flags.[130] Niaz heeded their advice and created the flag of Eastern Turkestan which took the design of the Turkish flag but used a white star and crescent on a blue background. This flag is still used today to represent Eastern Turkestan.

Turkey, therefore played a symbolic role in the TIRET movement such that it served as the Turkic homeland in the minds of Pan-Turkic and pan-Islamic revolutionaries in Xinjiang. The reaction of the Turkish press also seemed optimistic announcing, "the rebels had fought as 'true Turks' for the freedom and the foundation of a 'modern State which will advance along the road to perfection.'"[131] However, initial support ended after this reaction to the TIRET's New Year's resolution sent to Turkey in 1934. Unfortunately for the Eastern Turkestan Republic, Turkey had no interest in supporting an independent Turkic state in Xinjiang and had since 1924 been without the caliph and turned to a secular, Turkish nationalism under the leadership of Ataturk.

Therefore, given the dominance of the Soviet Union and the subservient role of other powers to Soviet actions, it is not surprising that the TIRET did not receive official recognition from either Great Britain or Turkey. The fact that Sheng received Soviet assistance and Ma supposedly had Japan supporting him, combined with the fact that the TIRET had failed in its attempts to acquire foreign support of any kind, further entrenched the idea among TIRET leaders that their struggle was one against foreign imperialism.

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[130] SIS, no 107-C 9 Nov 1933.

[131] Lars-Erik Nyman, *Great Britain, Chinese, Russian and Japanese Interests in Sinkiang, 1918-1934,* (Sweden: Scandinavian University Books, 1977), 115.

CHAPTER 2 - Elements of Uyghur Identity

The previous chapter discussed the ethnic and religious differences that defined rebellions in Xinjiang from 1931-1934, and how the TIRET embodied aspirations for an independent Eastern Turkestan for the Turkic-Muslim peoples of Xinjiang based on Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism. The following examines the development of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism throughout Central Asia from the late eighteenth into the early twentieth century to show how those ideologies provided the motivation for and definition of Uyghur identity.

To make this argument, there should first be a definition of Central Asia's position in the Muslim world and then Xinjiang's position in Central Asia. John Voll argues that Central Asia should not be relegated to the periphery of the Muslim world because of its geographic and cultural distance from the Arab-centered world of Islam. Instead the Muslim world, despite various cultural differences, has long been interconnected throughout history. Furthermore, Voll indicates that common experience of the Muslim world under colonialism during the eighteenth through twentieth centuries strengthened its sense of a unified Muslim nation (*ummah*).[132] Considering the role of Central Asia in Muslim reform and modernization movements, both as a source as well as a target audience, this historic entity of the Islamic *ummah* grew stronger to bring Central Asia and the Middle East together. In this respect, the Muslim reforms that took place in Central Asia had previous movements in the Middle East as a model and example.

Usage of the term "Central Asia" in this study includes those areas that became Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan in the USSR, and Xinjiang in China. Culturally, with the exception of the Tajiks, who are speak an Indo-Iranian language and are Shiite Muslims, the majority of people in Central Asia acknowledge a common ancestry of a Turko-Mongol origin, are Sunni Muslims, and

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[132] Voll, "Central Asia as a Part of the Islamic World," 63.

speak Turkic languages. These similar characteristics form the boundaries of a cultural "imagined community" called Turkestan among the Turkic-Muslims of Central Asia.

The experience of "Western Turkestan" and "Eastern Turkestan" under the colonial rule of the Russian and Chinese empires, respectively, further defined the Turkic-Muslim "imagined community" by imposing similar economic and political characteristics. Conquest of Eastern Turkestan by the Manchus in the mid-eighteenth century and Western Turkestan by the Russians in the late nineteenth century led to the internal colonization of Central Asia within Russia and China. As a result, an influx of non-Turkic colonists and colonial administrators led to competition and conflict between newcomers and the indigenous peoples of Turkestan. The imperial governments of Russia and China also implemented heavy-handed Russification and Sinicization programs in their colonies to assimilate their respective empires. Both Chinese and Russian governments further employed economic policies to exploit their Central Asian borderlands for agricultural production (primarily cotton and grain) and extraction of mineral resources.

It is within this Turkic-Muslim "imagined community" of Turkestan that identity formation took place in the 1920s in the Soviet Union and in the 1930s in China. The institutionalization of these identities was the resolution of the struggle of an awakened Turkic-Muslim identity influenced by Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism to bring about social reform and a call for the Turkic-Muslims to have a better status as citizens of a nation-state. This politicization of social reform in Central Asia therefore had a causal effect in the formation of the official definitions of ethnic and national identity in Central Asia for Kazaks, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, Turkmens, Tajiks and Uyghurs.

To understand the development of Pan-Islam into Pan-Turkism that led to the formation of Turkic-Muslim identities in Central Asia, it is important to discuss the characteristics of Islam in Central Asia since it facilitated the spread of social and religious reform. One prominent characteristic of Islam in Central Asia is the Sufi networks that acted as the social and political connections between otherwise unlinked communities. Categorically, Sufism is a type of Islamic mysticism in which spiritual leaders perform rituals and ceremonies designed to guide people to a higher awareness of God's relationship with individuals. Most of Central Asia adopted Sunni Islam during

the fourteenth and fifteenth century through the work of Sufi missionaries from the Middle East. Widespread conversion to Sunni Islam via Sufism, according to Micallet and Svanberg, provided a unique social structure made up of local religious and social leaders who would later use their local authority to provide organization for popular resistance to Russian or Chinese rule starting in the late eighteenth century.[133] A number of Sufi networks such as the Yasavi and Naqshibandi were particularly active and popular throughout Central Asia.

The doctrinal approach of Sufism also helped set the stage for it to spread liberal reforms. Even at early stages of Islam in Central Asia, Sufis proclaimed themselves to be part of a movement to support the oppressed masses against the corrupt, but powerful Muslim clerics (*ulama*) of the time. Because of Sufism's origins in reform, Central Asia was already less conservative and further from the orthodoxy than Muslim cultures in the Middle East. From the late nineteenth century, widespread Sufi networks supported and facilitated attempts at modernization. Also due to the detached nature of Sufism, and power of Muslim religious scholars (*mullah*), Sufi orders were more open to popular political sentiments because it was in their own interest to advocate social reform through political action to maintain public support.[134] Therefore, well-established Sufi networks with their consolidated religious, social and political authority, acted as the arteries used by Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism to spread throughout Central Asia.

This Turkic-Muslim "imagined community" had many parts. Ideologically, Pan-Islam established the vision of an ideal Muslim society. It included a call for all Muslims to renew and revive not only their faith, but also their awareness of secular trends in learning and politics. Pan-Turkism added a sense of shared territory and common ancestry. Finally, the actions and reforms of the Jadids in Central Asia that spread Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism emphasized bonds of common language and culture.

Pan-Islam, in its highest rhetorical form, suggested the unification of all Muslim nations to produce a political and cultural force to surpass that of European powers. As an ideology, Pan-Islam included a vast range of reforms and supported the agendas of many people. However, the most important element of Pan-Islam was that it was

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[133] Micallet and Svanberg, 153.

[134] Ben-Adam Justin, "China," in *Islam Outside the Muslim World* (London: Curzon, 1999), 199.

positivistic and progressive. It urged that strengthening and mobilization of Islamic society was possible and prescribed practical steps to reform education, morality, and political behavior to create a stronger, unified society.

Its most influential messenger, al-Afghani, deserves credit for making the idea vastly popular throughout the Muslim world. Starting around 1883, al-Afghani built upon existing, but isolated, reform ideas and applied his consolidated ideas about Pan-Islam to Muslim grievances. Al-Afghani based his reasoning on Quranic thought, and derived practical solutions to address discontent in Muslim communities.[135] The original goal of Pan-Islamism, in al-Afghani's mind, was the unification of the Muslim world (at least spiritually), the modernization of education, economics and politics to strengthen Muslim societies from within, and ultimately breaking free from Western domination. Jacob Landau describes the importance of al-Afghani's political views in that "its recurrent theme was the mobilization of Muslims (and especially their leaders and intellectuals), simultaneously against European aggression and corrupt tyrannical rule at home."[136]

Al-Afghani's diagnosis of why the world of Islam had declined revolved around four interconnected issues. First, Muslims, living under imperialistic rule for so long had lost their political consciousness. Second, Muslims had become indifferent to the economic disparity between Europe and the Muslim world. Third, Muslims had neglected learning and education. Fourth, that there was a general weakening of the Muslim moral fiber with the decline of Muslim clerics.[137] The solution al-Afghani proposed to reverse these conditions, in line with Muslim tradition, was to affect change from within in order to combat foreign oppression. A part of this approach was the recognition that Muslim rulers and clerics had become inept and corrupt in their roles as political, intellectual and spiritual leaders. Muslim societies therefore found themselves

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[135] Nikki R. Keddie, "Pan-Islam as Proto-Nationalism," *Journal of Modern History* 41, no. 1 (1969): 18

[136] Jacob M. Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization,* (New York: Oxford U. Pr., 1990), *14.*

[137] Ahmed Abdulla, "Syed Jamaluddin Afghani's Ideas Blaze the Trail," *Pakistan Horizon [Pakistan]* 34, no. 2 (1981): 39

in a subservient position dominated by European colonialism because their own social and political mechanisms were not functioning effectively or efficiently.

To counteract these shortcomings, al-Afghani urged Muslims to take an active role to do the will of God instead of passively having the will of God impressed upon them.[138] Therefore, Pan-Islamic rhetoric focused on the need for the masses to understand the message of the Quran instead of just receiving it and memorizing it in rote. Al-Afghani rejected blind imitation (*taliq*) and encouraged a deeper, analytical understanding of religious texts. He also urged Muslims to root their education in reason and rationality and the acceptance of western science.[139]

Al-Afghani also saw communication, the exchange of ideas and interaction of enlightened Muslims, as crucial to the self-strengthening of Muslim society. He suggested using mosques as nodes to propagate Muslim unity, establishing centers throughout Muslim nations to maintain interstate contact and forming of a central body in Mecca as a hub of learning and communication, and emphasized the Hajj as a shared spiritual experience among Muslims and an opportunity for ideas to permeate the vast geography of the Muslim world.

However, proponents of Islamic reform and modernization faced strong resistance from the conservative *mullah* and *ulama*, sometimes affiliated with the conservative political party of the Kadimists, who considered ideas of modernization, and in some respects Westernization, as unholy pollutants that would corrupt the Muslim faith. To counteract these fears that modernization would be detrimental to the fabric of Islamic morals, al-Afghani and others like him reassured critics that there was inherently nothing in Islam forbidding modernization but that Islamic society had stagnated because of a failure to understand the Quranic doctrine completely and use it to its full potential. Quoting al-Afghani, "Muslim peoples grew weak because the truth of Islam was corrupted by successive waves of Falsity…Muslims are weak because they are not really

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[138] Aishah Mohamed, "A Critique of Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani's Reformist Ideas and their Importance in the Development of Islamic Thought in the Twentieth Century," *Islamic Quarterly [Great Britain]* 45, no. 1 (2001): 56.

[139] Mortimer, "Faith and Power : The Politics of Islam," 52

Muslim."[140]   This way, Islamic reformers stated their case as a win-win situation where Muslims would increase their faith for the purpose of breaking away from the tyranny of European imperialism.   Al-Afghani also emphasized that renewal and reform were part of the Islamic tradition and had a precedent in Muslim history.[141]   Thus, al-Afghani's tempered his radicalism with traditional elements, therefore allowing his message to reach even the conservative segment of traditionalist *mullah*.

Part of why Pan-Islamism became such a powerful sentiment among the public was the way in which its advocates spread their propaganda. Traveling throughout the Middle East from Afghanistan to Cairo and also India, al-Afghani was well-known for his public speaking. Part of this success was that he adapted his speeches to the people receiving them and matched his ideologies as closely as possible with indigenous conditions and delivered his message in a manner comprehensible to a largely illiterate population.[142]

Even though the al-Afghani's rhetoric was lofty, the evidence he used to support his ideas was obvious and apparent at a fundamental level. The effects of Western imperialism were the most blatant evidence that reform from within Muslim society was not only necessary, but also a matter of dire urgency. Since defeating imperialism was an objective, and measurable, al-Afghani's appraisal of the situation facing the Islamic world became popular. The defeat of Turkey in the Russo-Turkish War in 1878 supported al-Afghani's urging that conditions for Muslims would only continue to degrade if they remained under colonial rule. Al-Afghani also used an emotionally based argument that Islamic unity was possible based on Muslim religious superiority, history of greatness and environmental advantages over the West.[143]   Pan-Islam, as popularized by al-Afghani, "was an important phase in preparing minds and spirits for the local nationalism whose appeals are often so similar to his."[144]   Thus, Pan-Islam, because of its

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[140] Javaid Saeed, *Islam and Modernization: A Comparative Analysis of Pakistan, Egypt, and Turkey,* (New York: Praeger, 1994), 47.

[141] Ziaullah Khan, "Sayyid Jamal Al-Din Afghani's Reflections on Western Imperialism: An Analysis," *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture [Pakistan]* 10, no. 2 (1989): 64.

[142] Keddie, "Pan-Islam as Proto-Nationalism," 22.

[143] Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam: Ideology and Organization, 17.*

[144] Keddie, "Pan-Islam as Proto-Nationalism," 27

popularity, remained a useful set of ideas for later reformers to take and blend into their own agendas. Therefore, though Pan-Islam did not lead to a unified nationalism throughout the *ummah*, it provided the foundation for several nationalistic movements to start throughout the Muslim world along state boundaries.

The next element of the "Turkestanian imagined community" was a definition of its boundaries and the history of its people. The ideology of Turanianism brought exactly that to the Turks of Central Asia. Related to Pan-Turkism, Turanianism is based on the unification of all the peoples living in a crescent-shaped land mass called Turan which extends from Hungary, around the Caucasus and Central Asia, through Mongolia and ends in western China, on the basis of uniting a community of common decent.[145]

Ziya Gokalp, an influential Turanianist closed his famous poem "Red Apple" with these lines, "The country of the Turks is not Turkey or yet Turkestan. Their country is a vast and eternal land, Turan."[146] Generally, the concepts of a people and place called Turan was a hyperbolic expression of nationalism on a smaller scale. The ideological foundation for Turanianism focused on the geographic area of the steppe empires that had co-existed with China, Rome and India. Despite a different approach, the problems Turanianists described that faced the Turks were similar to the ideology of Pan-Islam in that they described stagnation and a need to revive the glorified past of their previous civilization.

In Central Asia, the adaptation of Pan-Islam and Turanianism resulted in the creation of Pan-Turkism through the reform movement of the Jadids. Practically, appearance of Pan-Turkism in Central Asia was not unlikely since ninety percent of the Muslims were Turks and ninety percent of the Turks were Muslims.[147] Pan-Turkism was also a powerful tool because it could include the lineage of Turkic empires of the Central Asian steppe, which extend into pre-Islamic empires dating back more than two millennia, into the collective history of Central Asia. Pan-Turkism also solved a problem characteristic of steppe tribes who had difficulty rooting their individual genealogies in one place for more than a few generations. But collectively, as "the Turks," a more

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[145] Ibid., 63-4.

[146] Gokalp quoted in Lewis, 351.

[147] Hostler, 106.

generic term, the peoples of these tribes could claim that they were deeply rooted in Central Asia as members of the Turkic race.

Ideologically, Pan-Turkism was suited to address the grievances of Muslim Turks in Central Asia. Practically, Jadidism provided emphasis on language and culture and provided the infrastructure, through its schools and propaganda, for ideas of Muslim reform, Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism to spread. The origin of Jadidism started at roughly the same time in the Crimea as Pan-Islam was becoming popular in the Middle East. Jadidism was a social reform movement aimed at the development of the Tatar population of southern Russia through the modernization and compartmentalization of Islamic culture. Part of its aims was to secularize Islamic culture so that it was part of a more robust and diverse Muslim society. The founder of Jadidism in Central Asia, Ismail Gasprinsky (1851-1914), was a highly educated man who thought of himself as an enlightened individual. Educated in Odessa, Moscow, Paris and Istanbul, Gasprinsky was well aware of the rising currents of European nationalism, and more recently, the Pan-Islamic ideology of al-Afghani.

During his time in Istanbul, Gasprinsky was one of al-Afghani's students and afterwards made the connection that the down-trodden condition of the Muslims in his homeland was similar to those targeted for reform by al-Afghani. Gasprinsky also found common ground with the Young Ottoman/Young Turk movement based on shared visions of cultural revitalization and secular nationalism.[148] The significance of Gasprinsky's contribution to the later creation of Turkic-Muslim identity in Central Asia was that his worked to remedy conditions separating and alienating Muslims in the Russian empire. The results were increased levels in education and awareness of a Turkic-Muslim identity. Empowered by Jadid reforms, Muslim Turks in Russia participated in their own political organizations when the opportunity arose after the 1905 and 1917 revolutions. This kind of participation and ability to conduct politics independent from previous colonial rulers were the objects of modernization for Turkic reformers in Central Asia.

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[148] Dietrich Jung and Wolfango Piccoli, *Turkey at the Crossroads: Ottoman Legacies and a Greater Middle East,* (London: Zed, 2001), 177.

In Gasprinsky's vision of reforms, what he would put into practice as Jadidism in Russia included elements of Pan-Islam, which was a foundation to bolster support for his cultural reforms. At the core of these ideologies was the issue of how Muslim society should handle modernization, a process which Western countries had already begun. Gasprinsky developed the following points in his plan for revitalizing Muslim culture: critical and analytical assessment of history emphasizing progress; using Islam as a cultural force that people take part in shaping; modernizing curricula in schools to include math, science and Western languages in addition to religious schooling; rights for women; and developing industry so Muslims could become economically independent from the West.[149]

Of these five points, Gasprinsky pursued reform in education with the most fervor. The name given to this movement, Jadidism, comes from the Arabic "*usul al-jadid*" meaning "new method," which described the new phonetic system Gasprinsky organized to teach students to read and write. Gasprinsky's concern with education went beyond the method of teaching, to include training for teachers, and most importantly, the opening of traditional discourse to critical analysis that challenged complacency. By subjecting traditional Islamic thought to outside criticisms, Gasprinsky believed that Muslims could strengthen their core beliefs with developments of Western political, cultural and economic progress.[150]

At its beginning, Jadidism in the Crimea was a cultural and social reform and looked to Russia as a supporter of a renewed Muslim society. Aiming at cultural unification, Gasprinsky envisioned that Pan-Turkism would "become the uniting force of the Central Asian intelligentsia, who were beginning to strive for cultural and social reforms."[151] At its beginning, these reforms were aimed at better relations between Muslims in the Russian empire and were pro-Russian.[152] In "First Steps Toward Civilizing the Russian Muslims," published in 1901, Gasprinsky wrote concerning the

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[149] Edward Lazzerini, "Beyond Renewal: The Jadid Response to Pressure for Change in the Modern Age," in *Muslims in Central Asia: Expression of Identity and Change* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992),161-4.

[150] Ibid., 160.

[151] Jung and Piccoli, "Turkey at the Crossroads: Ottoman Legacies and a Greater Middle East, 177.

[152] Hostler, "Turkism and the Soviets; the Turks of the World and their Political Objectives," 126.

lack of education, "In short, whatever may have been the circumstances of the civilized world four hundred years ago, we Muslims find ourselves today in exactly the same circumstances; that is we are four hundred years behind."[153] According to Gasprinsky, the betterment of Muslim society had to come from an increased understanding of both religious and secular subjects. He wrote, "it was necessary to complete the teaching of religion well and in a short time, and then find a way to provide [the students] with the skills, languages and information needed for today's world."[154] To his credit, Gasprinsky was responsible for starting a movement that subsequently saw the creation of thousands of new-method schools and the broadening of education opportunities. Gasprinsky started the first "new method" school in 1883. By 1917, there were 5,000 such schools throughout the Crimea and Central Asia.

Gasprinsky particularly emphasized the proactive nature of reform: "everything in life develops and improves from year to year; nothing remains the same. The future therefore is calculable, and man need not expect only that which fate would provide."[155] Muslims needed to help themselves reach better places in society and within Russia. The issue of education reform was also successful because Jadid goals worked in conjunction with Tsarist programs to bring education to populations in its newly acquired southern borderlands. Russian native-schools therefore joined with Jadid schools in their goal of spreading education and literacy to the Muslims of Central Asia and the Crimea. Therefore, Jadidism enjoyed the support of the state through the end of the nineteenth century.

Gasprinsky's other major contribution to the development of identity in Central Asia was his attempt to create and propagate a unified Turkic language. For Gasprinsky, creation of a standardized, written Turkic language, used in a vernacular, was not only a tool for public education, but also crucial if the Muslims of Central Asia were going to advance their cultural status within the Russian empire. Moreover, Gasprinsky saw the

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[153] Edward J. Lazzerini, "Gadidism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: A View from within," *Cahiers Du Monde Russe Et Sovietique [France]* 16, no. 2 (1975): 252.

[154] Lazzerini, "Beyond Renewal: The Jadid Response to Pressure for Change in the Modern Age," 255.

[155] Lazzerini quoting Gasprinky, in Ibid., 164.

possibility of building unity among Central Asian peoples by showing language similarity as empirical proof of common ancestry among the Turks.[156]

Gasprinsky's bilingual Pan-Turkic newspaper, *Tercuman/Perevodchik* meaning "Interpreter," is perhaps the clearest example of Gasprinsky's goal of not only encouraging learning among Muslims, but also mutual understanding between Russians and Muslims. *Tercuman* was successful in its circulation. It had over 5,000 subscribers in the 1880s and over 6,000 by 1900.[157] The newspaper was written in a simplified Turkish, which Gasprinsky purged of Farsi and Persian loanwords, along side a Russian translation. In his first editorial statement for the paper, Gasprinsky wrote, "[The newspaper] will serve so far as possible to bring sober, useful information to Muslims about [Russian] culture and, conversely, acquaint the Russian with [Muslim] life, views and needs."[158] Literally, Gasprinsky's newspaper tried to bring mutual cultural understanding.

Gasprinsky also took active measures to spread the reforms of Jadidism. He made several trips into Turkestan and Bukhara starting in 1893 to start Jadid-style schools. Politically, he looked to the help of the Emir of Bukhara who at that point was not only the leader of an independent Muslim protectorate, but also supportive of liberal modernizations.[159] In Central Asia, Jadids used six instruments to promote their reforms: new-method education, historiography, literature, press and publishing, religion and theater. These tools were a mixture of venues designed to reach not only educated Muslims such as themselves, but more importantly the majority of people in Central Asia who were still illiterate. Jadids also introduced new forms of expression into Central Asia including prose, fiction and drama written in a vernacular form of the existing literary language. Through these types of activities, Jadidism's effect of stirring reform and introducing new ideas permeated all levels of Central Asian society.

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[156] Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism in Turkey: A Study of Irredentism,* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon, 1981), *179.*

[157] Landau, *The Politics of Pan-Islam*, 10.

[158] Gasprinksy quoted in Edward J. Lazzerini, "Ismail Bey Gasprinskii's Perevodchik/Tercuman: A Clarion of Modernism," in *Central Asian Monuments* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1992).

[159] Edward Lazzerini, "From Bakhshisarai to Bukhara in 1893: Ismail Bey Gasprinkii's Journey to Central Asia," *Central Asian Survey* 3, no. 4 (1985): 77-9.

After Gasprinsky's trip to Central Asia, Jadidism in Central Asia developed its own characteristics tailored for its local audiences focused more on the issues concerning Central Asia, which at this time was still fighting the central government as well as the provincial government in Tashkent. Following Gasprinsky's example of using mass media, Jadids in Central Asia had twenty-three publications in circulation by the beginning of the twentieth century. These publications addressed public, not political, issues, including: purifying religious practices, revolutionizing religion and the perfecting of social institutions. As a source of news, Jadid writers also took the liberty of spinning current events with Jadid interpretations.[160] These newspapers and journals circulated into Central Asia and served as a venue for the spread of not only ideas, but also discussion about conditions and the future of modernization and enlightenment.

These discussions later gravitated toward politics and started to engage in forming an identity among the educated elites of the Central Asian oases. The importance of these publishing ventures was that they "combined the influence of print culture and official culture and reinforced the awareness among educated Sarts, the sedentary, urban populations of what is now Uzbekistan, of a shared ethnic identity tangibly experienced in daily publication through a common shared language."[161] Therefore, the Jadid focus on language, education and political activism played an important role in the later development of ethnic identity in Central Asia by spreading political and cultural versions of Pan-Islam and Turanianism as Pan-Turkism.

With regard to fomenting a concept of identity in Central Asia, the effect of language reform and increased publications in Turkic languages was influential in its effect on developing ethnic identity in Central Asia. In Central Asia, Jadids worked to form a standardized Sart, which later became Uzbek, language.[162] The Jadids also used the term Turkestan in their publications and other displays to cultivate a broader sense of identity that supported Turkic-Muslim interests in political events at the time. Usage of

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[160] Allworth, 153.

[161] Daniel R. Brower, *Turkestan and the Fate of the Russian Empire,* (London ; New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), 75.

[162] Brower, 71.

terminology such as "us Turkestanians" also helped to promote community building.[163]
Later the newspaper *Great Turkestan* expanded the meaning of Turkestan to include parts
of Kazakhstan and Xinjiang and defined itself more by culture and race instead of
territory.[164] In this respect, Jadids devoted a portion of their efforts to create national
identity among the urban populations.

Using "Turk" and "Uzbek" instead of "Sart," Jadid rhetoric through newspaper or
public oratory focused on building an "imagined community" based on national
consciousness of shared identity. Through ideas of modernization and religious reform,
the Jadids started to imagine themselves in a global context, "as citizens of a modern,
interconnected world, of a community of Muslims within it and of a community of Turks
that overlapped with the community of the world's Muslims."[165] Khalid credits the
rhetoric of Pan-Islamism as a key component that allowed this framework to solidify.

Gasprinsky's ideas behind Jadidism were also significant because they presented
an alternative way of thinking for Muslims that reinforced the potential of Islamic society
and the ability for progress. The result of these changes was that by the 1910s, students
educated in Jadid-reformed *madrasa* started to form a Muslim intellectual class of
mu'allims, or as Gasprinsky called them "young mullahs,"[166] which means teacher but
lacks the quality of official religious training. Though they did not have traditional
religious training, these young "teachers" started gaining popularity within their
communities and challenged the established *ulama* for local leadership. Gaining
popularity and support mosques, schools and other Muslim institutions started receiving
more patronage from the state and private contributors to build larger facilities for public
learning and gathering. Jadidism also connected with the merchant middle class on the

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[163] Edward A. Allworth, *The Modern Uzbeks: From the Fourteenth Century to the Present, a Cultural History,* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institute, 1990), 121.

[164] Ibid., 180.

[165] Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia,* (Berkeley: U. of California Pr., 1999), 187.

[166] Gasprinsky, "First steps" in Lazzerini, "Gadidism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century: A View from Within," 253

grounds of promoting progress in society since this group was also more moderate than the mullah and were willing to use their resources to support Jadid reforms.[167]

When placed in the hands of the urban bourgeoisie, Jadidism mixed with other forms of nationalism and became a "political phenomenon with cultural reform as a major weapon."[168] Politicization of Jadid ideas also came as a result of competition with the *ulama* that traditionally held the political power. By placing themselves culturally and socially in support of reform, Jadids put themselves in a formidable position to challenge the *ulama's* political power. The political actions of some Jadids will be discussed later.

At this point, we have established that the Turkic-Muslim "imagined community" gained its definitions and boundaries through Pan-Islam, Turanianism and Pan-Turkism and became motivated to assert Turkic-Muslim cultural and political identity through the Jadid movement. The next chapter will examine how this new type of ethnic awareness among Muslims Turks arrived at the ethnic label "Uyghur" in Xinjiang in the mid-1930s.

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[167] Allworth, " 142

[168] Arne Haugen, *The Establishment of National Republics in Soviet Central Asia,* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 56.

CHAPTER 3 - Forging Uyghur Identity

The previous has shown the development of Pan-Islam and Turanianism into Pan-Turkism and how those movements defined cultural and social boundaries necessary for the formation of Turkic-Muslim identities in Central Asia. This chapter will first illustrate characteristics of the Uyghurs that made them especially attuned to the developments of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism. Then, it will show how the creation of Uyghur identity was the confluence of Turkic-Muslim identity among Uyghurs and the need of the Chinese central government to adopt a term to label the peoples of Xinjiang that was mutually agreeable to both groups.

In his study of the formation of the Central Asian Republics in the Soviet Union, Arne Haugen speculates that Muslim nationalism included elements of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism was more prominent among the sedentary populations because they were mostly formed around the school and the mosque and social interaction at those fixed locations.[169] The sedentary oasis dwellers that took the label Uyghur had already become the dominant population in Xinjiang at that time.

Not only was this group the most numerous among the peoples of Xinjiang, but because they were more involved with agriculture and more of them were merchants or traders, they were generally wealthier and therefore had more money for education and could afford to send their children to study abroad in the "new schools."[170] Therefore, even before rebellions started in 1933, the Tarim oasis populations were already in a position of higher economic status and political leadership. From a socio-economic point of view, the oasis dwellers of Xinjiang were similar to the Jadids in the Soviet Union. Also, the Uyghurs, more than any other group in Xinjiang, belonged to Sufi brotherhoods, which also linked them to trends developing to their west.[171]

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[169] Ibid., 36.

[170] Newby, "The Rise of Nationalism…," 28.

[171] He Ping, "Shilun Xinjiang Diqu Yisilanjiao De Minzu Tese [On the National Characteristics of Islam in Xinjiang]," *Journal of Xinjiang University (Social Science Edition)* 31, no. 4 (2003): 79

The Hajj was also important in connecting the Muslims of the world. This was not only because it brought Muslims from around the world together in the same location, but the pilgrims were also united in the purpose and participation in religious ritual. Particularly during the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, the pilgrimage to Mecca became a process in which people exchanged ideas and then brought new perceptions and ideas back to their homelands. Considering the amount of wealth needed to go on the Hajj as well as the physical hardship of frequent political obstacles facing the Muslims of Central Asia, those that did go on the Hajj returned home with new knowledge and accordingly a higher status. The prestige of Hajjis naturally made more Uyghurs part of the upper echelon among Muslims in Xinjiang, and therefore in a position of respect and leadership. Both Sabit Damulla and Khoja Niaz were Hajjis.

Common usage of language also facilitated communication among intellectuals. The spoken Turkic languages of most of Central Asia including Kazak, Uzbek, Uyghur, Kyrgyz and Turkmen are descendants of Chagatay Turkic and are to some degree mutually comprehensible.[172] Written in Arabic script, the literary traditions of these Turkic languages were related to Arabic and Persian and easily shared. Because of the role of the Islamic primary and secondary schools (*mekteb* and *madrasa*) as the major places for education, universal usage of the Arabic script as well as a focus on classical Persian and Arabic texts, promoted unity among the educated and wealthier members of Central Asian society and strengthened the spiritual and social connections between Central Asia and the Middle East. This common literary language, though accessible to a smaller percentage of the Central Asian population, was still important in connecting the educated circles in society where Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism would later develop and spread outward to the masses.[173]

In his assessment of the nature of Sufi networks in southern Xinjiang, Zarcone describes how Sufis such as the Emirs of Khotan, in southern Xinjiang, were significantly drawn by attempts to create Muslim states by their western neighbors in the Ferghana

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[172] Hendrik Boeschoten and Marc Vandamme, "Chagatay" in *The Turkic Languages*, (London: Routledge, 1998), 146.

[173] Elizabeth E. Bacon, *Central Asians Under Russian Rule : A Study in Culture Change,* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980), 189-90.

valley and likewise became adamant about asserting the *Shariah* in their own oases.[174]
Zarcone uses the Khotan Emirate and Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan as evidence
to show that Sufism had taken on political agendas by providing the structure and
formation for political change to take place.[175] Sufi leaders in Xinjiang such as Amin
Bughra wanted to make the Shariah the only law of the oases because they felt it was part
of the native culture and therefore more suitable for use in civic matters than the
government imposed by an alien culture. In reaction to this new, political leadership,
provincial authorities in Urumqi imprisoned many Sufi leaders because of how powerful
they were at attracting not only inter-oasis support, but also empathy from their Sufi
brothers in the Ferghana valley.

Because of these conditions, the Uyghur intellectuals of Xinjiang saw themselves
clearly as members of the "imagined community" created in Central Asia defined by Pan-
Islam and Pan-Turkism. Therefore, faced with an increasingly oppressive Han Chinese
regime along with the degradation of traditional local leaders, the ideologies of Pan-Islam
and pan-Turkism found fertile soil among the Turkic-Muslim peoples of Xinjiang.

As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, Muslim intellectuals returning
to Xinjiang from travel and study abroad realized that the condition of Muslims in
Xinjiang was far behind those of the rest of the Muslim world. Marshall Broomhall
described one Menla-abdul Kalim who was as he described, a "Chinese Turk" educated
in Egypt and Turkey, who upon returning from the Hajj was convinced that the *madrasa*
and *mektebs* of his homeland needed new methods of education. He advocated inviting
teachers from Istanbul and India and obtaining a printing press from India to publish a
newspaper in a vernacular to encourage learning and literacy.[176]

Many others followed in the footsteps of Kalim and brought similar impressions
back from their travels. Sufis who gone on the Hajj or had been students abroad had been
exposed to the concept of participatory government and wanted to establish
representative rule, a practice they saw as modern, in their homeland once they

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[174] Zarcone, 120.

[175] Ibid., 128.

[176] Marshall Broomhall, *Islam in China; a Neglected Problem,* (New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corp., 1966), 266-8.

returned.[177] Several Jadid-style schools appeared in Xinjiang started either by those returning from abroad or others coming into Xinjiang. In 1908, for example, Tatar Jadids started a school for girls that taught in Turkic language in Ghulja.

However, Jadid activities were not limited to schools. In 1913, a group of Hajjis from Kashgar attended a meeting of the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) in Istanbul and asked that the Ottoman government establish a presence in Kashgar. As a result, Ahmed Kemal left Istanbul in February of 1914, traveling via Odessa and Tashkent to reach Artush in March of that year. It was his intention to start a school in Kashgar. However, failing to solicit enough financial support in Kashgar, he started a school in Artush under the patronage of Husayn Bey. This school accepted students who had already completed a *madrasa* education, were proficient in Arabic and Persian and taught them a Jadid- style curriculum.[178] Masud Sabri, who later commanded Muslim forces at Kashgar, also started similar schools in 1921 and 1927.[179]

Burhan Shahidi, later the President of the Ili based Eastern Turkestan Republic from 1944-1949 and subsequently the first governor of Xinjiang under the PRC, was educated in a "new method" madrasa in Kazan and returned to Xinjiang in 1912.[180] Upon returning to Xinjiang, Shahidi continued to support the spread of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism which he had learned while abroad. Shahidi circulated Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic propaganda he received via mail from Central Asia, one of these publications was Gasprinsky's *Tercumen*. In addition to spreading propaganda, Shahidi also started his own journal called *Turan*. This publication in conjunction with Kemal's *Yengi Hayat* (*New Life*) were outlets for Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic expression among young Jadids in Xinjiang.[181]

However, resistance and opposition to the "new schools" and their instigators was strong from both conservative traditionalists from within the Muslim community as well as from Yang Zengxin. At this point, the traditional Kadimists saw themselves pitted

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[177] Zarcone, 130.

[178] Hamada, 34-6.

[179] Ibid., 43.

[180] Ibid., 34.

[181] Ibid., 40-1.

against not only Muslim Jadids, but also Bolsheviks and Chinese Nationalists (whom they called Chinese Jadids).[182] Reaction to the Islamic reform and modernization was similar in the political sphere. Yang cracked down the Kashgar schools and imprisoned Ahmed Kemal, an act that enraged a large group of Muslims. Deciding to soften his reaction, Yang agreed to free Kemal on the condition that the Kashgar schools would be turned over to his control.[183] Despite Yang's attempts to subdue and sequester the activities of Muslim reformers, after 1920, Jadid, Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic activities continued secretively. Yunus Beg, for example, who later led Uyghur and Kyrgyz soldiers in rebellions supporting the Republic of Eastern Turkestan, participated in the continued underground publication of *Yengi Hayat.*[184]

In addition to cross-boundary cultural similarities, specific conditions within Xinjiang amplified the effect of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism and made these ideologies particularly applicable for the Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang. Basically, the creation of Uyghur identity in Xinjiang as a result of the rebellions surrounding the Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan as influenced by Pan-Turkism succeeded with the support of efforts of the KMT government to define its policy concerning ethnic nationality throughout China. Common tropes of modernization and anti-imperialism combined with self-determination for ethnic nationalities espoused by the Nationalist government encouraged the seeds of Turkic-Muslim identity that had come to Xinjiang through Central Asia to flourish in Xinjiang as part of China. The following explains why both the Uyghurs and the KMT government needed to reach an agreement on Uyghur identity and how that agreement resulted in a favorable change for both parties.

For Turkic Muslim peoples living in Xinjiang, discontent and desire for independence caused by oppression from the Chinese government came from two different forms of maltreatment by the Chinese. One was the unfavorable political and economic position Turkic populations occupied under Manchu and Han rule. The other was the subjugation of Islam in the hierarchy of Han Chinese culture. Therefore, for the Han Chinese and the Turkic-Muslims, there was mutual rejection of one another's

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[182] Ibid., 38.

[183] Ibid., 39.

[184] Ibid., 41.

appraisal of the other. At a basic level, mainstream Chinese culture has perceived Islam as inferior to Confucian virtues, so Muslims were similarly perceived to be inferior.[185] However, Muslims in China see themselves in an exact opposite position of being more virtuous and superior to non-Muslims, thus creating a roadblock to any kind of progress that may lead to harmonious coexistence between the Han Chinese and Muslims.

But this hindrance was not necessarily insurmountable. In fact, Muslims in China who lived in Ham communities, spoke Mandarin and participated in mainstream Han customs have become normalized members of Chinese society and were given the label *Hui*. However, the acceptance of the *Hui* into Chinese culture has been a long process starting in China during the ninth century where Arab, Muslim traders entered China's Northwest and Southwest.[186] So, by the twentieth century, Muslims were already represented in Chinese culture by the *Hui*. However, though the majority of people in Xinjiang were Muslims, cultural and linguistic differences still hindered the acceptance of Turkic peoples into Han culture.

Therefore, Turkic-Muslims in Xinjiang, ideologically, did not share a reconciliatory view of the Chinese with their Hui co-religionists, and neither were the Han Chinese able to interact with Turkic Muslims based on an understanding of Muslim cultures learned through interaction with the Hui. However, the intensity of the rebellions in Xinjiang and the amount of resources and attention the KMT officials spent on maintaining their control in Xinjiang during the early 1930s was a formative experience that resulted in the appearance of Turkic-Muslim identities separate from the Hui.

The problem of Turkic and Chinese estrangement and animosity has its roots in several factors including the Qing settlement of Xinjiang starting in the mid-eighteenth century and centuries of poor policy management by the Qing and then Republican

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[185] Richard C. DeAngelis, "Muslims and Chinese Political Culture," *Muslim World* 87, no. 2 (1997): 157.

[186] For detailed studies on the history of how the *Hui* have become acclimated into Chinese culture and how this group of Muslims maintains their religious identity, see Dru Gladney, *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), Jonathan Lipman, *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in China's Northwest*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997) and Zvi Ben-Dor Benite, *The Dao of Muhammad: a Cultural History of Muslims in Late Imperial China*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

governments of China. After 1759, Xinjiang was an internal colony of the Manchu Empire. Due to the geographic distance of Xinjiang from Beijing, Qing administrators in Xinjiang were necessarily granted high degrees of autonomy to govern the region. The vast area of Xinjiang also posed a logistical challenge to the Qing bureaucracy. When the Qing first conquered Xinjiang, it had about 25,000 troops to manage the native population of over 600,000 people spread over two million square kilometers.[187]

In light of their manpower and financial shortages, the Qing adopted a policy of "flexibility and non-intervention" throughout its newly acquired borderlands.[188] The overriding objective for all of their borderland policy, which became especially problematic in Xinjiang, was to make the region economically independent and eventually have it contribute to the economy of inner China. Therefore, the Qing government gave their administrators in Xinjiang leeway to improvise policies and mandates even if they were not completely within the letter of the law. Autonomy, therefore, became a characteristic of the governing style that would have a significant impact on later rulers until 1949.

It was also part of Manchu policy to use ethnicity as a social division in Xinjiang in order to maintain their own superiority as the ruling class of China.[189] This was the resultant combination of several factors. First, as foreign people who were in a minority ruling over a Chinese majority, ethnicity and status as a Manchu necessarily became an indication of political power. Second, with the expansion of the Qing Empire outward in all directions, the Manchus required more personnel to fill the positions of the expanded bureaucracy. Therefore, it took advantage of the political structure already in place in Xinjiang to increase the power of their officials.

Realizing that economic gains increased directly with social stability, the Qing government also incorporated the local *begs* as part of the central bureaucracy.[190] By

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[187] James Millward and Peter Perdue, "Political and Cultural History of the Xinjiang Region through the Late Nineteenth Century," in *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), 57.

[188] Ibid., 57.

[189] James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759-1864,* (Stanford: Stanford U. Pr., 1998), 206.

[190] Laura Newby, "Begs of Xinjiang: Between Two Worlds," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 61, no. 2 (1998): 278-297.

empowering native leaders, Manchu rulers effectively expanded their power without having to expand their numerical presence in Xinjiang. The Manchus therefore modified and absorbed the begs into their governmental rank system. This change eroded the traditional meaning of the word beg as a religious leader and in favor of a secular title in a stratified, vertical bureaucracy. The Qing also realized that the position of the begs could be a positive tool for extending its authority. By co-opting the begs of Xinjiang, The Manchus could use the expertise and authority of existing local leaders to facilitate bureaucracy and economic development to a larger extent within Central Asia.

Though Qing policy in Xinjiang struggled to make the region economically self-sufficient, Xinjiang had nonetheless become a non-negotiable part of the Qing empire by the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Great Game between Russia and Great Britain especially made Xinjiang a crucial place the Qing government needed to spend resources to maintain the integrity of the empire. One method the Qing used to try to solidify their claim to Xinjiang was to increase the Chinese population in the province. State-sponsored migration from elsewhere in China increased the population of Xinjiang with a destabilizing effect. This influx of population into Xinjiang displaced native populations especially in and around Ili, Urumqi and Hami. Those forced off their land by new settlers moved southward and into conflict with the existing oasis populations.

But the Qing government did make a conscious effort to control the settlement of Xinjiang by peoples from inner China. Early in the colonization process, the Qing paid particularly close attention to the relocation of exiles to Xinjiang. Generally the Qing avoided settling newcomers south of the Tarim Basin, not only because it was the most difficult to reach logistically, but because the oases cities south of the Tianshan had a higher concentration of Turkic-Muslim populations whereas areas north of the Tianshan had a relatively more sparse population. There was also fear that settling Muslim convicts, or entire Muslim communities among their Turkic co-religionists would encourage continued bad behavior.[191] However, this kind of meticulous planning started to break down as Xinjiang's population increased and the state of events for the Qing became more difficult. By the nineteenth century, Qing administration in Xinjiang

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[191] Joanna Waley-Cohen, *Exile in Mid-Qing China: Banishment to Xinjiang, 1758-1820,* (New Haven: Yale U. Pr., 1991), 68-9.

started decaying at a rapid pace. In addition to Yakup Beg's rebellion, the Qing government was weakening at its core while foreign imperialism became stronger.

The existence of these problems took a new dimensions after the Chinese Republican revolution in 1911. Immediately after the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, Muslims from Gansu, mostly of the Naqshibandi Sufi order, entered Xinjiang to promote the idea of "Muslim brotherhood." These Gansu Sufis also started "new-method" Muslim schools in Xinjiang and encouraged a revival of Islamic religious practices.[192] Muslims, both Turkic and non-Turkic, were also part of the uprisings that took place in Xinjiang immediately after the revolution. They were part of the Independence Party as well as the Society of Brothers and Elders in Ili and Urumqi.[193] Rebellions also took place in Hami in 1907 and 1912, but were resolved by the diplomatic maneuvering by Yang. At the same time, Turkey sent emissaries to Xinjiang to gain support of an Islamic government in China. Not without reason, Yang viewed Pan-Islam as a threat not only to his authority, but as a tool of foreign powers to infiltrate Xinjiang. His suspicions grew when he heard rumors, in 1924, that the Soviet Union had announced that they would permit Xinjiang émigrés already in Kazakhstan to form their own Islamic government.[194]

Therefore, Yang tried to play the role of the enlightened despot. Yang had a vision of maintaining control of Muslims in Xinjiang which he did little to achieve. According to Owen Lattimore, Yang expressed his views on the Muslims of Xinjiang and how the Han Chinese could effectively rule them:

> Only by a Republican federation can racial antagonism be gradually dissolved. Most important of all is to realize political and administrative reform. The land of the Moslems should not be regarded as 'fish or meat' – an object of exploitation. It must be demonstrated that the indirect rule of the Chinese is superior to the autonomy of the Moslems. Otherwise it would be difficult to avoid internal conflicts and to ward off aggression from without.[195]

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[192] *Zhongguo Xinjiang Diqu Yisilan Jiao Shi [History of Islam in Xinjiang],* (Urumqi: Xinjiang People's Republic Publishing Society, 2000), 193.

[193] Ibid., 203-5.

[194] Ibid., 256-7.

[195] Lattimore quoting Yang, 55-6.

Despite the pretense of magnanimity, this appraisal of the possibilities for the Muslims of Xinjiang to voluntarily submit to any Chinese superstructure was fundamentally flawed. Yang did not try to win over Muslim sentiment in a productive or sustainable way. Instead, he divvied some of this earnings with some local begs in exchange for the maintenance of peace and order. In Hami, for example, the same family had been ruling that oasis for nearly two centuries before its authority was dismantled by Jin Shuren.

After the coup of 12 April 1933, Nanjing sent auditors to investigate the circumstances in Xinjiang.[196] In a report sent by a Nationalist government agent, the author describes that the source of the Muslim rebellions was a reaction to the poor conditions suffered by the people due to degraded relations with inner China as well as deterioration of foreign trade. This report also cites the popular support for a coup to overthrow Jin. Aside from the poor economic conditions causing rebellion, this report also cited the resentment of Muslims against Chinese rule as a result of the suppression of the education system in Xinjiang.[197]

In recognition of the situation in Xinjiang, Wang Jingwei, Chairman of the KMT Executive Yuan, accepted Sheng Shicai's position as military and civil authority in Xinjiang. He told Sheng to bring foreign and military affairs under KMT control and to solve the ethnicity problem.[198] For the Nationalist government, plans for developing Xinjiang were part of nation-building and keeping China territorially intact. The goal was to create a Chinese nationality (*zhonghua minzu*) that would unify all the people of China.[199] Therefore, Sheng decided that defining ethnicities was the first step to keep the people in China and therefore their land in China.[200]

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[196] AAH, Xinjiang Muslim Dispute, Copy – Telegram from Nanjing to Urumqi.

[197] AAH, Xinjiang Muslim Dispute, Telegram from Urumqi, April 14, 1933.

[198] Gao Sulan, "Sheng Shicia Ru Xinjiang Zuzhen Jingwei, 1928-1934 [Sheng Shicai's Entrance Into Xinjiang Government and Military, 1928-1934]," *Journal, Academia Historica* 22 (1997): 135-154. , 148.

[199] Li Huan, *Xinjiang Yanjiu [Xinjiang Study],* (Taipei: Sichuan Document Research Society, 1977), 71-2.

[200] AAH, Received Telegrams, #48980 from Urumqi May 22, 1933.

However, how to define the mosaic of ethnicities present in Xinjiang was Sheng's challenge. By the end of the 15th century, after the "Turkification" and "Islamicization" settled in most of Central Asia, the demographic that would later become the Uyghurs started developing localized identities. These "oasis identities" were the result of the geography of the Xinjiang region where deserts and mountains dictate patterns of human settlement. Jon Rudelson describes, in a social anthropological analysis, that the Xinjiang region actually contains "many Xinjiangs."[201] Rudelson names four such distinctions based on social, economic and political characteristics (see Figure 3.1).

The northwest region, bordering Mongolia and Kazakhstan not only has a higher percentage of Mongol, Kazak and Russians populations, but traditionally has closer ties with the Soviet Union via trade on the Ili River. The major cities, Ghulja and Urumqi, are the two largest cities in the Xinjiang province. The eastern region, centered on Hami is the entry point of the Gansu pass entering Xinjiang from China proper. This region, because of its proximity to inner China, has a stronger connection with the Hui and Han Chinese cultures. These two regions have been the areas historically most inhabited by Han Chinese and Tungan immigrants.

Comparatively, southern Xinjiang is more isolated from China and Russia by the Tianshan, Kunlun and Pamir mountain ranges and the Taklamakan desert. This region, also referred to as Eastern Turkestan compared to the northern region sometimes called Zungaria, maintained strong local government among the Turkic-Muslim peoples of the region who were more strongly connected to their cultural, religious and ethnic brethren of Central Asia. Farming in the south is also more difficult since arable land is more scarce compared to regions in the north. Because of the difficulty in traversing from Ili south through the Taklamakan Desert and Tianshan, the connection between Ili and Kashgar, the largest city in the south of Xinjiang, was relatively little prior to the advent of highways and railroads that now connect the two.

Rudelson further divides the southern region of Xinjiang into two parts. First is an area connected by the cities of Kashgar, Aksu, Kucha and Korla. Because of the geographic proximity, these oases have historically shared a stronger tie with Muslim

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[201] Justin Jon Rudelson, "Bones in the Sand: The Struggle to Create Uighur Nationalist Ideologies in Xinjiang, China" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1992), 32.

culture and social movements emanating from Central Asia. Further south, cities including Khotan, Keriya and Yangi Hissar, though they are still relatively isolated from outside influence compared to other regions in Xinjiang, have had more interaction, through trade, with British India.

L.A. Chvyr, using a different approach based on observation of clothing and customs, finds similar results. Chvyr defines three regions of different types of identity in Xinjiang: West, Northeast and Southeast (see Figure 3.2). Similar to Rudelson's conclusions, Chvyr indicates that the western region of Xinjiang has strong connections with Central Asia. In the Northeast, including Hami and Turfan, self-identification is much more specific. In contrast, the Southeast, a region least infused with outside populations have the strongest ties to locality. Under either scenario, conditions of Uyghur identity in Xinjiang were varied and not discretely defined in a pan-oasis respect.

Therefore, observers writing about Xinjiang used ethnic labels of their choosing. Some English language sources refer to the Uyghurs as Turkis, although this is sometimes a generic term including Kazaks and Kyrgyz. The British Consul-General in Kashgar was fairly consistent by 1933 in its use of Turki and Kyrgyz to distinguish the sedentary and nomadic peoples of Xinjiang. Other less official documentation, including personal memoirs, use the term Turki to cover all Turkic peoples, in conjunction with Tungan meaning Chinese Muslims. Missionaries in China often used "Mohammedan" in general to mean all Muslims, but then "Chinese Mohammedan" to mean the Hui and "Turkic Mohammedans" to mean Uyghur.[202] Eric Teichman makes a similar comparison in his travel account by talking specifically about "[Muslims] of a Turkish race" which he divided into the Kazaks, Kyrgyz and Uyghur which he equates for readers to "Sart" and "Chantou."[203]

Chinese sources are even more varied and inconsistent in their use of language. KMT correspondence of the time shows that the government was using the *minzu* (a term used to mean nationality) concept, in conjunction with the previously popular *chantou*

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[202] Cable and French, 303.

[203] Eric Teichman, *Journey to Turkistan,* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, limited, 1937) , 16.

meaning "turban-headed" or simply *chanbu* meaning "turban."[204] Calling the Uyghurs

the *chanzu* start to appear in reports produced after the establishment of the Eastern

Turkestan Republic, most likely influenced by Niaz's usage of the term.[205]

Some indicators of public knowledge from inner China show that the existence of

many ethnicities in Xinjiang was a fairly unknown. A Chinese Communist agent who

arrived in Xinjiang in the summer of 1934 was shocked to find out from his guide that

there were indeed fourteen nationalities in Xinjiang. He had previously only known that

the people of Xinjiang wore white turbans and were therefore called *chantou,* meaning

turban-headed, and now realized that the *chantou* were actually the Uyghurs.[206] Russian

sources of the period are the only place where the term "Uyghur" appears.[207]

Considering that the term was first revived in Tashkent by Xinjiang émigrés to the Soviet

Union in 1921, this would be the most logical place for "Uyghur" to appear in popular or

official contexts.

For themselves, Uyghurs referred to themselves based on their oases of origin

such as *Kashgarlik* and *Khotanlik* (literally, *from Kashgar*, *from Khotan*). Peter Fleming

made this ambiguous appraisal, "they refer to themselves merely as 'Moslems'; they

seem to have the minimum of racial consciousness and although they form something

like eighty percent of the population of Sinkiang. They are very easily ruled."[208]

Because they divided themselves into identities based on locality, it was difficult for the

oasis dwellers of Xinjiang to be or seem united as the people Eastern Turkestan.

Therefore, there was a crisis for Turkic-Muslim identity because of attempts by the

Chinese government to submerge qualities of Uyghur identity through Sinicization

programs and furthermore, no way for the Uyghurs to negotiate their own identity with

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[204] Instances where *chanbu* appear are in official correspondence, and usually in the from *chanbufei* meaning "turban bandits." AASIMH, Xinjiang File. Telegram received by the Nanjing Central government, March 13, 1934.

[205] AASIMH, Xinjiang File. Copy – Telegram from Khoja Niaz to the Nanjing Central Government received March 13, 1934. In a previous telegram, AAH, Received Telegrams, #47429 from Kashmir, April 26, 1993, the word *chanmin* was crossed out and replaced with *chanzu*.

[206] Wen Fang, *Feng Xue Tianshan [Wind and Snow Over Tianshan],* (Shenyang: Liaoning People's Republic Publishing Society, 1986), 14.

[207] Izvestiya, 17 March 1934, "Conflict of Imperialist Plans in Xinjiang."

[208] Fleming, 198-9

the state. Nationalism was a direct part of the formation of the Chinese Republic. Hamada's study argues that the rise of nationalism in Xinjiang among Uyghurs and an increase in Muslim nationalism was a direct response to increasing Chinese nationalism trying to subdue Uyghur identity.[209]

The concept of ethnic divisions already existed in China during the Manchu Dynasty, but became a more salient issue in Chinese politics after the Republican Revolution that overthrew the Qing Dynasty in 1911. The word *minzu* in Chinese, which roughly translates into nationality or ethnic group, entered into Chinese vocabulary in the early twentieth century from the Japanese *minzoku* via Sun Yat-sen.[210] At that time, Sun equated the Han nationality with the Chinese people thereby defining the Chinese nation-state as a country of the Han and leaving other nationalities in a marginalized position.[211]

Essentially, this was an exercise of power. John Fitzgerald describes this process, "They [the Han] would decide, after all what the authentic Chinese were really like and equally importantly, who would qualify to be counted among them."[212] This concept is most frequently defined in Sun's principle of nationalism (*minzu*), the first of his *Three Principles of the People*. In his speeches, Sun theorized that China was, or could be made into, a nation-state in the purest form. He envisioned that China was and had been "a single state developing from a single race." To reach this ideal, Sun advocated assimilation through integration stating, "We must satisfy the demands of all races and unite them in a single cultural and political whole."[213] The purpose of nationalism in Sun's program was to facilitate "harmony of races within the boundaries of China."[214] In this sense, Sun's definition of race was a group with characteristics that are learned, acquired, or somehow conditioned to supersede all other forms of identity. Using this

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[209] Hamada, 33.

[210] Dru C. Gladney, *Dislocating China : Reflections on Muslims, Minorities, and Other Subaltern Subjects,* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 2004), 14.

[211] Ibid., 226.

[212] John Fitzgerald, *Awakening China: Politics, Culture, and Class in the Nationalist Revolution,* (Stanford: Stanford U. Pr., 1996), 107.

[213] Sun quoted in June Teufel Dreyer, *China's Forty Millions : Minority Nationalities and National Integration in the People's Republic of China,* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), 16.

[214] Sun Yat-sen, *Fundamentals of National Reconstruction,* (Taipei, Taiwan: Chinese Cultural Service, 1953), 266. , 78.

definition made it logical and theoretically possible to create a Chinese identity throughout the Republic of China by "teaching" the Han nationality to non-Han nationalities.

Sun also named five nationalities in China as Chinese (*Han*), Manchu (*Man*), Mongol (*Meng*), Muslim (*Hui*) and Tibetan (*Zang*). He continued to assert that non-Chinese races were "reactionary and religious elements" who were controlled by foreign powers because "these races have not sufficient strength for self defense but they might unite with the Chinese to form a single state...we shall establish a united Chinese Republic in order that all the peoples: Manchu, Mongols, Tibetans, Tartars and Chinese – should constitute a single powerful nation."[215] Therefore, it seems a group given the label "zu" had the status needed to take part in Sun's promise that "all component racial groups in the Republic of China shall enjoy equal rights."[216]

However, "China's Modern Revolution" in 1911 had a delayed effect in Xinjiang for two reasons. The first was Yang Zengxin's autocratic rule in the Qing style that kept Xinjiang isolated from the changes taking place in China. The second was a conservative group of Muslim *ulama* who wanted to maintain their position at the top of a political and religious hierarchy instead of ceding that power to a democracy.[217] In 1928, a KMT official in Xinjiang made this observation, "although the flag of the KMT government flies over the capital, the ideology [of the KMT] has not yet reached the people."[218]

Rhetorically, the KMT's policy on nationality fluctuated over time. Partially because of the newness of the idea of nationality, definitions of terms such as "race," "ethnicity" and "nationality" were vague and inconsistent. Both Sun and later Chiang Kai-shek knew the power and necessity of using nationality in their rhetoric to build a new republic, but were not sure where they wanted to channel that their policy concerning nationality. After 1927, Chiang, taking Sun's ideas of a unified Chinese

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[215] Sun Yat-sen, *Memoirs of a Chinese Revolutionary; a Programme of National Reconstruction for China,* (Taipei: China Cultural Service, 1953), 180.

[216] Sun Yat-sen, *San Min Chu I: The Three Principles of the People,* trans. By Frank W. Price, (Taipei, Taiwan: China Pub. Co., 1943), 6.

[217] Xincheng Li, *Yang Zengxin Zai Xinjiang [Yang Zengxin in Xinjiang],* (Taipei: Academia Historica, 1993), 23.

[218] Chen Ziji quoted in Zhang, 2705.

people, adapted his own vision of a singular Chinese race stating, "…that there are five peoples designated in China…is not due to differences of race or blood but due to religion and geographical environment."[219] However, attempts by the KMT to put an ideological framework on their nation-building policies with five nationalities: *Han, Man, Meng, Hui,* and *Zang*, made no distinction to separate Turkic Muslims from the *Hui*.

This agenda of the Nationalists to maintain control of Xinjiang gained an element of urgency into the 1920s with the success of the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War and creation of the Soviet Union. With the Russian revolutions of 1917 and Lenin's seizure of power, propaganda designed to foment class struggle affected the Uyghurs living the Soviet Union as well as in Xinjiang. In this respect, Yang was (with adequate reason) wary of developments in Russia during its 1917 revolution, and subsequent civil war as well as Islamic nationalism that was stirring populations in the south. Yang's suspicion of Russian encroachment only multiplied when Uyghurs returning from studying abroad brought the Jadid movement advocating revival of Islam through modernization of education back to Xinjiang.

Paranoid that new, western-style schools, located mostly in the Kashgar region, would empower the already separatist Turkic Muslims of the Tarim Basin, Yang closed schools, censored publications and deported a large number of Kazaks and Kyrgyz who had fled to Xinjiang when the Tsarist government tried to draft them into the army during World War I.[220] Once in Xinjiang, these already politically charged groups had agitated local populations around Ili, which included Russians, Kazaks and Kyrgyz who had previously come into Xinjiang, to rebel against rule by Yang's Han Chinese government.[221]

However, considering Yang's pattern of behavior, this action was not unwarranted. Primarily concerned about personal gain, Yang was suspicious if not outright fearful of outside influence entering Xinjiang. Furthermore, from 1917 through the early 1920s, Bolshevik party organizations spread Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic propaganda into Xinjiang in hopes of incorporating the disenfranchised Turkic-Muslim

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[219] Chiang quoted in Dreyer, 17.

[220] Forbes, 17.

[221] Li Xincheng, 55.

peoples of Xinjiang into their international worker's rebellion.[222] Sources written under the auspices of the PRC cite that after the Russian revolution, anti-imperialist sentiment as well as an increased awareness of ethnicity and equality of nationalities increased among the Muslims of Xinjiang because of Bolshevik propaganda.[223]

The Bolsheviks were also interested in supporting the self-determination of Turkestan in their quest to expel the remnants of Tsarist colonial government in Central Asia which included support of the British. In the minds of Soviet leaders, Turkestan was to be a model Soviet republic, 'a flower garden wherein the bees of the neighboring lands of the Orient should take nourishment.'"[224] Furthermore, the Soviets envisioned that Turkestan could function as a "nucleus of a vast Communist Republic of Turkic Peoples.[225] In this respect, the Bolsheviks were hoping to spread their worldwide workers' revolution to the rest of the Turkic Muslim world though its influence emanating from Turkestan.

KMT observers reporting on the conditions in Xinjiang in the early 1930s bemoaned the totalitarianism of Yang and Jin. Therefore, when Liu Wenlong and Sheng Shicai professed their commitment to developing the Revolution of the Three Principles, the central government were confident that confirming Liu and Sheng as the new leaders of Xinjiang would usher an era of progress previously absent there.[226] In fact, at the time of the rebellions, KMT officials were already speaking of the fifth nationality (the Uyghurs) of Xinjiang as the *chanzu*.[227] Liu and Sheng also won over the support and trust of the Nanjing government when they reported that the nationalities were rising up against imperialism and wanted modernization in Xinjiang.[228] By July of 1934, the KMT was willing to grant religious, economic and political self-determination of the peoples of Xinjiang by accepting Sheng's authority in the province if it meant ending the rebellions.

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[222] Ibid., 202.

[223] Bai, 153.

[224] "The Turkestan Commission, 1919-20," *Central Asian Review* 12, no. 1 (1964): 6.

[225] Ibid., 8.

[226] AAH, Xinjiang Muslim Dispute, Telegram from Urumqi, April 14, 1933.

[227] AAH, Incoming Telegrams, #48021 from Moscow, May 6, 1933.

[228] AAH, Incoming Telegrams, #48979 from Urumqi May 22, 1933.

Sheng Shicai's solution for Xinjiang's nationality problem was part of his initial promises to the people. For once, the "tragedy" of ethnic revolutions in Xinjiang, which were usually ended in defeat by overbearing warlords,[229] was averted and instead ended in the recognition of nationalities because of Sheng. Along with the other categories of nationalities, the Uyghurs attained all the characteristics they wanted described with their ethnic label while excluding others which were made parts of different groups. However, categorization of nationalities in Xinjiang by Sheng in the Soviet style was also a tool to keep the Turkic peoples of Xinjiang divided while strengthening the power of the Han minority. If Sheng had applied the same criteria in categorizing the Han population in Xinjiang, there would have been multiple divisions that came out of the "Han" label.

Soon after Sheng took power, he announced that there were fourteen ethnicities in Xinjiang: Han, Manchu, Mongol, Moslem [(Hui)], Uyghur, Kazakh, Tajik, Taranchi, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Sibo, Solon and Russian.[230] In a resolution in the aftermath of the April 12th coup, Sheng wrote referring to his categorization of ethnicities, "The fourteen fresh flowers blossomed in the Taklamakan Desert...advancing the people of China."[231] Gilbert Chan's opinion is that Sheng had no choice but to maintain friendly relations with the Soviet Union and appease minority groups in order to stay in power,[232] and that this policy showed how Sheng viewed the existence of "weak races" [233] in Xinjiang, and illustrated an act of opportunism to gain power at a time when his position was weak. At the start, Sheng's actions appeased the discontent in Xinjiang and showed the Soviet Union his loyalty to their system. In reality, Sheng was wary to trust that the peoples of Xinjiang would follow his rule peacefully and later purged political dissidents from Xinjiang.

Along with the assignment of nationalities in Xinjiang immediately after Sheng took control of the province, status as a nationality was stated to equate to political representation in province-wide congresses. Representation gave nationalities not only a

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[229] An, 47.

[230] Lattimore, 110.

[231] Bai, 221.

[232] Chan, "Regionalism and Central Power," 137.

[233] F. Gilbert Chan, "Sheng Shih-Ts'ai's Reform Programs in Sinkiang: Idealism Or Opportunism?" *Journal of Modern History* 2 (1983): 367.

title, but thus a voice in the government to bring grievances through official channels. This resulting political unity also reinforced a sense of identity because, at least theoretically, the Uyghurs could perceive themselves as part of a larger whole.

Considering the devastating effects the rebellions had taken on the people and government of Xinjiang, this was an opportune time to make drastic changes to the politics and social organization. Essentially, "The whole structure of the government had been crushed and now slowly rebuilt. There were no reprisals and the Moslems were given considerable voice in local administration."[234] Immediately following the April 12 coup d'etat that ejected Jin Shuren from his position as governor, Sheng, as the dominant personality in Xinjiang, convened a meeting of all ethnic groups from throughout the province to decide the characteristics of the new government. On 14 June 1933, according to Shahidi, who was present at this convention, the "most important task at present, was to strengthen the unity of the peoples."[235] Sabit Damulla also attended and represented his Khotanlik government's idea that Islam should be the mandated religion in all of Xinjiang. Considering the fact that not all participants at the meeting were Muslim, Sabit portrayed himself as a radical and received little support.[236] The resolution of these meetings was Sheng's Eight Point Proclamation.

The first point of Sheng's Eight Point Proclamation was the "equality of nationalities." In his definition of ethnicity, Sheng used territory, language, economics, customs, habits and culture to define a group. Showing his Marxist leanings, he also attributed the reason for ethnic tension and violence, in essence, the root cause of all of Xinjiang's problems, to the unequal distribution of wealth under a capitalist economy that brought suffering to the ethnic minorities of Xinjiang.[237] Though Sheng would later change his views and behavior towards supporting proportional representation and promoting equality in Xinjiang, at least for a short period immediately after rebellions subsided in 1934, his policy recognizing nationalities appeased both the Uyghurs, who

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[234] Wu, 253.

[235] Bao'erhan, 197-8.

[236] Ibid., 198.

[237] Sheng's Eight Point Proclamation, point no. 1 quoted in Zhang, 4375-6.

had been rebelling for the recognition of ethnic identity, and the Nationalist government, who lacked a label with which to absorb the people of Xinjiang into China.

The term "Uyghur" was also revived in the early 1930s by a young nationalist poet named Abdukhaliq. During his youth, Abdukhaliq studied Persian and Arabic in religious schools and learned Russian and Mandarin in addition to his native Uyghur language. In 1916 and 1923, Abdukhaliq traveled to Russian Central Asia where he met with Russian Turkologists and learned that the Uyghurs had not always been called "turban-headed" ("*chantou*") as Abdukhaliq had known since his lifetime. At that point, he chose "Uyghur" as his pen name and started writing and reciting poetry upon his return to Xinjiang.[238] His worked urged people around him to "awaken" to the unacceptable state of oppression and take action to make change. In a poem entitle "Awaken" written in 1932, Abdukhaliq wrote a call for action among the Uyghurs of Xinjiang to realize their bleak fate if Han Chinese rule continued to dominate Xinjiang as it had. Until his death in 1934, Abdukhaliq continued to write poetry espousing the urgency of the Uyghurs to participate rebellions and cast off the yoke of Chinese imperialism.

As mentioned previously, "Uyghur" was first used in 1921 by peoples of Xinjiang who had emigrated to the Soviet Union.[239] A Soviet agent in Xinjiang, Garegin Apresoff, may also have suggested the usage of the term. This is another source that influenced the usage of the term "Uyghur" in Xinjiang. Therefore, Sheng's decision to use "Uyghur" came from a combination of the work of people such as Abdukhaliq who used the term as a rallying point for rebellion and nascent nationalism while Sheng used it as a means of showing his loyalty to the Soviet Union.

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[238] Rudelson, *Oasis Identities: Uyghur Nationalism Along China's Silk Road*, 149
[239] Chen, 100.

CONCLUSION – Institutionalizing Uyghur Identity

As previously stated, the process of forming ethnic identity is open to the ambitions of its actors. The preceding three chapters have shown how rebellions in the 1930s clearly demonstrated a need for Uyghur identity in Xinjiang , the ideological origins of that identity, and how the political climate at the time facilitated an official designation of nationalities. These steps which led to the labeling of the majority of the people in Xinjiang Uyghur has given the term meaning so that the identity enclosed within that label continues to the present. After these events culminated in the adoption of the term Uyghur as an ethnic label for the sedentary, Turkic-Muslim people of Xinjiang, the PRC has been institutionalizing particularly conflictual elements of Uyghur identity . The first step of this institutionalization, choosing "Uyghur" had immediate and prolonged effects on placing Uyghurs and the Chinese state in an adversarial relationship.

Despite the recency of the term Uyghur used in Xinjiang, the historical memory of the term is important because it establishes Xinjiang as the ancestral homeland of the Uyghurs even though the Turkic, Muslim Uyghurs of Xinjiang today have little in common with the Buddhist Uyghur Empire located in Mongolia from which they take their name. The term Uyghur also suited the Chinese understanding of the peoples of its northwest borderland. Though what is now Xinjiang was incorporated into the realm of the Chinese government with the Qing conquest of the region in 1759, the area had previously been part of Chinese history and folklore documented since the Han Dynasty, which ended in 220 A.D. Since that time, interactions between the steppe nomads and the sedentary Chinese civilization have had a significant impact on how the Chinese government has perceived its northwestern boundary. Generally, Xinjiang falls within the Chinese conceptual realm "outside the wall" and within the "barbarian lands." This perceptual construct is an engrained part of Chinese historiography and cultural labeling which continued to influence the Manchu rulers of the Qing dynasty.

Xinjiang, as part of the "barbarian" realm, thus had a relationship with China characterized by tribute and warfare. Therefore, in the Han Chinese perspective, the Uyghurs entered Chinese society as an outsider group. Colin Mackerras describes the relationship between the Uyghur Empire and the Tang Chinese, "They [the Chinese] were prepared to use their north-western neighbors for their own purposes, when occasion demanded, and to extend diplomatic friendship towards them, but essentially, feared and distrusted the Uighurs as foreign barbarians."[240] Though the Han population has increased exponentially in Xinjiang since 1949 to the point where presently the percentage of Han is almost the same as that of the Uyghurs, Xinjiang and its people still occupy this relegated and highly stereotyped bias in the view of the PRC government.

For the Uyghurs, calling themselves by the term "Uyghur" connected their present culture and society in Xinjiang to a long history of independent empires dating back to the eighth century, thus allowing Uyghurs to create cultural continuity to past glory, independence, a history of defiance against the Chinese government, and connection with the Turkic people of Central Asia. Originally situated in western Mongolia, the people of the Uyghur empire practiced shamanism and Buddhism. After their defeat by the Kyrgyz and retreat from Mongolia, parts of the Uyghur Empire settled in the southeastern region of Xinjiang around Turfan and named their new home Uyghurstan. To maintain their distinction from the Indo-European, Islamic peoples already living in the southern oases of the Tarim Basin, the Uyghurs overtly rejected Islam while accepting other religions such as Manichaeism and Nestorian Christianity.[241] However, with increased economic contact and intermarriage with other communities while the political power of Uyghurstan decreased, the Uyghurs became indistinguishable from the indigenous populations and the term Uyghur lost its meaning and usage by the twelfth century. In fact, the term Uyghur used to signify a Turkic and Muslim population did not appear until the twentieth century. Revival of the term in this different context, originated from the Soviet Union in the early 1920s. However since the Uyghurs were not included as a

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[240] Colin Mackerras, *The Uighur Empire According to the Tang Dynastic Histories : A Study in Sino-Uighur Relations, 744-840,* 2dd ed. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1973), 14.

[241] Millward and Perdue, "Political and Cultural History of the Xinjiang Region through the Late Nineteenth Century," 40.

separate ethnicity in the Soviet Union, the term still did not receive much usage and recognition until 1934 when Sheng Shicai used the term.

The great advantage for Uyghur separatists in choosing to be the legacy of the Uyghur Empire was that of drawing a long history. Erkin Alptekin, son of Isa Alptekin, a major leader in the Eastern Turkestan independence movement in Xinjiang in 1944 and afterwards, traces the lineage of the Uyghurs that live in Xinjiang today back to the pre-Islamic nomadic steppe empires starting from 210 B.C. Alptekin follows Uyghur history linearly forward through time and attributes the Huns, Mongols, Genghis Khan, and Tamerlane as part of the Uyghur lineage. The importance of this history is that it entrenches separatism deep in the foundation of Uyghur identity. Alptekin cites that during the 855 years of Turkic empires, the Chinese government only succeeded once in ruling the region of Eastern Turkestan for 157 years and that for the rest of the time, Eastern Turkestan remained a free and independent country." Alptekin further delineates the limits of Qing rule from 1759 to 1826, which included forty-two rebellions of the Uyghur against the Manchu government.[242]

Considering the arrangement of characteristics in Uyghur identity, the Turkic element of Uyghur identity precedes religious affiliation with Islam and tends to be a more distinguishing feature among the presence of non-Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang. Asserting a primary identity as being Turkic also better serves the purposes of Uyghurs who increasingly agitate for an independent Eastern Turkestan. Although Muslim identity is still a crucial part of the Uyghur identity, this element is not emphasized as much by some Uyghurs because the PRC after September 11, 2001 has equated Muslim activism, especially in Xinjiang , with Islamic fundamentalism linked to terrorism.

However, there were still some areas where local peoples preferred to refer to themselves as "Turk" or "Turki" in reference to homeland instead of the label "Uyghur."[243] This group opposed the high level of definition used by Sheng because they felt that the Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchi, Uzbeks, Tajiks were all tribes

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[242] Alptekin, "Chinese Policy in Xinjiang" and "The Uygurs."

[243] Linda Benson, *The Ili Rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944-1949,* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1990), 265. 31.

within a Turkic nation.[244]   However, by the mid-1930s, the power behind the meaning of the word Turk as a generality had already passed since those who would have associated themselves with a Central Asian Turkic family, Kazaks, Uzbeks, Turkmens, etc., already had different labels with which each had developed a stronger nationalistic affinity.

The production of Xinjiang histories has also supported the continuance of Uyghur identity from its origins in the 1930s. If the narrative history of a people has as much, or more, impact on the formation of a nation's identity than the historical events themselves, then examining various historical accounts of Xinjiang in the 1930s shows how Uyghur identity has developed in historical definitions and now has become an accepted part of Chinese historiography. In histories written before 1949, Chinese authors used a variety of labels for the Uyghurs. Most of these were adjectives added to the established *hui* label used to describe Muslims and included *chanhui*, versus the usage of *hanhui* to mean Tungan.

Histories of the Republican era also show inconsistencies in their usage of the *minzu* nationality concept. Sometimes terms such as *min* or *ren* meaning people are used when today those would have a specifically defined *zu*. For example, within the same chapter, the terms *huiren, huimin, chanren* are all used to indicate Uyghur. In contrast, in reference to Han Chinese, the term *hanzu,* an unambiguous ethnic label, is more consistent.[245] This example is an indication of how the concept and definition of ethnic identity was developing in China at the time starting from the Han, the one that needed defining the most, and moving outward.

Studies about Uyghurs or history of Xinjiang written in China under the PRC government are clear to state that "splitism," with its negative connotation, in Xinjiang started with the Eastern Turkestan Republics of 1933 and 1944, which were not only led, but started by the Uyghurs.[246] Histories later produced under the watchful eye of censors in the People's Republic of China clearly use the term Uyghur to label the antagonists of the 1930s rebellions in Xinjiang. Some histories written in Taiwan after 1949 lack this

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[244] Lattimore, 112.

[245] Hong Lichun, *Xinjiang Shidi Dagang [Xinjiang History and Geography],* (Shanghai: Zhengzhong, 1947).

[246] Bai, 196 and Wang Wenxin, "Xinjiang Duli Wenti De Tantao [Investigation of the Independence Problem in Xinjiang]," *Zhongshan University Bulletin* 25 (2004): 68

consistency, probably because the Nationalist Republic of China included Uyghur in the definition of Hui. Despite differences in terminology, both Taiwan and mainland histories concerning the Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan use it as a starting point for the problem of separatism in Xinjiang from that point to the present. By blaming Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islam as tools of imperialism for the uprisings in Xinjiang and the establishment of the TIRET, the PRC can implicate foreign powers for the problems of "splitism" in Xinjiang. However, mere acknowledgement of the TIRET has given one more example of how aspirations for cultural, social and political independence had once existed in Eastern Turkestan.

In 1955, the renaming of Xinjiang as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region also reinforced the nationalistic and separatist argument that Uyghurs should have control of their own land. Essentially, "The Chinese Government's classification effectively drew a map within which the Uighurs already saw themselves living."[247] Concerning the identity of an ethnic minority with separatist tendencies, consolidation and uniform usage of the ethnonym Uyghur has strengthened the identity and unity of the people it defines. The renaming of Xinjiang as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in 1955 was a political move by the Chinese government that further legitimized Uyghur identity by acknowledging Xinjiang as the homeland of the Uyghurs. Therefore, associating the Uyghur people with the territory of Xinjiang gave the concept of Uyghur separatism a more nationalistic character.

In *Modern Uzbeks*, Edward Allworth makes the following observation about the creation of ethnic identity in a nation-state in Soviet Central Asia:

> The intimate synchronic connection between name and group must be vital, for although an ethnic group in peaceful times changes almost completely every few generations, the persistent denomination of such an ethnic group holds its power, even though the makeup of the aggregation actually bearing the name differs from the original group. The viability of the group names overlaps the outgoing and incoming membership, embracing the gradual alteration in the population with its potent symbolism.[248]

What Allworth suggests is that ethnic identities are always developing and changing because of various human factors that affect any population that lives among changing

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[247] Justin, "China," 192.

[248] Allworth, 233.

social, political and economic conditions, and that these changes are usually gradual enough that they are reinforced by its people along the way so that the legitimacy of the ethnic label remains even though the definition of the group is in constant motion.

However, despite the apparent victory of the Uyghurs and the Chinese state with the restructuring of Xinjiang as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, this action, in reality, accomplished little to grant autonomy and political power to the Uyghurs. Instead, the concurrent subdivision of more populated regions into twenty-seven *minzu* autonomous prefectures in Xinjiang has diminished the power of the Uyghurs to use their advantage as the numerical majority in a political standpoint.[249] Therefore, Uyghur grievances concerning oppression of their culture and religion remain unaddressed by the PRC government which has outlawed separatism and curtailed the practice of Islam in Xinjiang while at the same time encouraging use of Mandarin and subsidizing Han migration to the province. The resulting situation is that Uyghur separatism continues to gain strength with the PRC's increasingly severe policies while the PRC maintains a course in dealing with Xinjiang strikingly similar to their Qing predecessors.

To recap, the adoption of Uyghur identity in Xinjiang was the result of rebellions that took place from 1931 to 1934 and included, most importantly for the assertion of Turkic-Muslim uniqueness, the existence of the Turkic-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan. At this starting point, the idea of Uyghur included independence as a major component. Such an extreme position made compromise difficult and success unlikely, but separatism is still embedded in Uyghur identity because of its association with the Uyghur Empire of the ninth century. But for Uyghur identity to survive, it also had to be able to change and interact with its surrounding political conditions. The Eastern Turkestan Republic of 1944-1949 was the first step in the process of adaptation. Dropping the Turkic and Islamic emphasis of its predecessor, the ETR effectively governed an autonomous Three Districts region in Ili for four years until it was "liberated" into PRC control with the rest of Xinjiang. During that time, the ETR government tried to portray itself as a secular, pro-Soviet, multi-ethnic and anti-KMT

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[249] Bovingdon,"Xinjiang Autonomy", 13.

establishment. Either purposefully or not, this set of characteristics fit well with the CCP vision for Xinjiang at that time.

As China continued to develop Xinjiang, more Han populations entered the province and built schools, roads and communication lines etc. The effect of these changes was the increasing acclimation of Uyghurs and Han Chinese. Therefore, the need and urgency for most of the Uyghurs is now less than it was in the 1930s. However, this does not mean that the Uyghurs do not feel strongly about their ethnic identity, nor does it mean that separatism has been erased from Uyghur identity. There are still a variety of separatist groups in Xinjiang, and taking the events of the 1930s as a starting point they use the fact that Eastern Turkestan is still under the control of the Chinese and a litany of evidence citing oppression of Uyghur people, in economics, politics and religion to make an even stronger case for independence.

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Appendix A - Xinjiang and Surrounding Areas

Appendix B - Petition of Khoja Niaz to the British Government

From Khoja Niaz Haji, to H. B. M's Consul general, Kashgar.

A petition from Khoja Niaz Haji the President, Islamic Republic and the opressed subjects of Eastern Turkestan, with the hope that it may be translated into English and sent to London to His Majesty the King Emperor and the British Parliament -- and further with a request for a reply.

History proves the fact that for more than a thousand years the yoke of this country was on the shoulders of Muslim Kings. It is now fifty-eight years since the Chinese Government treacherously took away our Independence, and with cruelty brought us under their subjugation. During the fifty-eight years of most oppressive tyrannical rule, the proud atrocious Chinese by showering incessant hardships and cruelties reduced us to our present pitiable state. The proud Chinese officials looked down at us with disdain. Our creed and religion were contemptible objects to their sight. The Chinese deprived us of citizenship rights. They Chinese did not acquaint us with the sciences, art, industry, and trade. The Chinese went as far that they closed the only one press which we brought for our religious books to be printed.

On account of the mismanagement by the Chinese, eighty per cent of the population were out of employment. They tyranny of the Chinese, kept us uncultured, uncivilized and brought evil days on us, which is well known to the world. The oppressed Muslims of the Eastern Turkestan bore with patience all the tyrannies and cruelties of the Chinese up to the present time and did not create any fuss nor did they complain to any foreign power.

Not satisfied with the infliction of all the miseries mentioned above, they intended to take away our daughters. The Chinese sold our trade to the Bolsheviks. From all sides Bolshevik agents began to pour in. They started Communist propaganda. We heard about the tragic fate of the Muslims of Western Turkestan (Qafkas, Dagesthan, Qare, Tatarstan). The Bolsheviks slaughtered a large number of Muslims in Eastern Turkestan, the remaining were turned into atheists by dint of force and cruelty, thus was the religion of Islam trampled. We fearting the fatal infection of Bolshevism, and secondly unable to bear any longer the tyranny of the Chinese, rose and fought without arms against the Chinese.

The All Merciful Lord placed the crown of victory on our heads and we came into possession of numerous arms from the conquered Chinese. The Chinese becoming helpless in avenging themselves on us gave vent to their anger on the Muslims of Turfan-Pichan, by slaughtering and burning their houses. The Muslims of other places becoming aware of this barbaric deed of the Chinese raised the banner of revolt from Altai to Khotan. The Chinese of Urumchi desired peace and the resignation of Jang-Jushi[Jin Shuren], but the latter possessed no other idea except fighting -- in the end he as defeated and fled. After this the Chinese sent their representatives from Urumchi for peace negotiations. We after drafting the terms such that all powers were vested in our own-selves, provisionally accepted peace. The terms of peace were so drafted that from one

hundred kilometers from Urumchi on this side, the whole of Eastern Turkestan was wholly and solely under our rule, and this peace pact was certified by the Chinese of Urumchi.

The Chinese army at Urumchi are in principle followers of Bolsheviks. It might be known to your honour, that when the Bolsheviks came into existence, there was a certain Russian general Dotoff Annekoff (Czar party) who fought against the Bolsheviks but was defeated and he took shelter in Urumchi. and was then handed over to the Bolsheviks. It is not in the laws of any government to hand over a man who has sought asylum. The Chinese being now unable to fight any more with us, the Bolsheviks have entered the war arena. The Bolshevik Red Shirts are excellently armed and are allowed to pass Ili and Chochak. An these soldiers have begun playing havoc with the Muslims. The Bolsheviks have supplied the Chinese with armored cars and other arms. For this reason the Chinese have captured and burnt fourteen towns. After our peace the Bolsheviks remained silent for the time being. Just now in Moscow some thousands of Chinese soldiers are intending to leave for Eastern Turkestan. The Muslims of Chochak have petitioned to me for help, saying that unless the Chinese are not totally turned out of the country the spirit of Communism will soon be spread throughout Sinkiang.

Therefore we look and expect for help from the British Government to save us from the terrible and infectious wave of Communism. Moreover we pray for arms from your government and in return the British Government can receive the products of this country, i.e. silk, wool and skins. The British Government may become our guide, and we request the Government may spread education among our masses. For trade treaty with British Consul-General, I am sending as my "vakils" Abdur Rahim Akhum, Karim Zada Akhun Bayoff and Azam Jan Haji.[250]

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[250] SIS, dated September 1933.

Appendix C - "Awaken" by Abdukhaliq ("Uyghur")

Edited by Abursul Omar, translated by Jon Rudelson[251]

1. Awaken! (*Oyghan*)

Hey, Uyghur, it is time to awaken
　You haven't any possessions,
　You have nothing to fear.
If you don't' rescue yourselves
　From this death,
Your situation will become very grave.
Stand up! I say,
　Raise you head and wipe your eyes!
Cut the heads off your enemies,
　Let the blood flow!
If you don't open your eyes and look around you,
　You'll die pitifully, helplessly.
Your body appears lifeless,
　And yet you don't worry about dying.
I call out to you but you do not react,
　It seems as though you want to die unconsciously.
Open your eyes wide and look about you.
　You must contemplate the future,
　Think about it a long time.
If this opportunity should fall from your grasp,
　The future will bode much hardship, much hardship.
My heart breaks for you my Uyghur people,
　My brothers in arms, relatives, my family.
I worry for your lives,
　So I am calling you to awaken.
Have you not heard me yet?
　What has happened to you?
There will be a day when you will regret,
　And on that day you will understand,
　Just what I have been telling you.
"Damn!" you will say when you realize
　That you missed your only chance,
And on that day you will know that I, Uyghur, was right.

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[251] Rudelson, *Oasis Identities,* 148.

The Mongols in World History

TIMELINE PERIOD: 1000-1500 CE

Faculty Consultant: Morris Rossabi

National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan

CHINGGIS KHAN

INTRODUCTION
MONGOL UNITY UNDER CHINGGIS
CHINGGIS'S 4 GREAT LEGACIES
DEATH OF CHINGGIS
THE MYTH OF CHINGGIS

KHUBILAI KHAN

ÖGÖDEI

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KEY FIGURES IN MONGOL HISTORY

Chinggis Khan's Four Great Legacies

Tolerance

One of Chinggis Khan's greatest legacies was the principle of religious tolerance. In general, Chinggis provided tax relief to Buddhist monasteries and to a variety of other religious institutions. And though Chinggis himself never converted to any of the religions of the sedentary peoples he conquered (he remained loyal to Mongolian shamanism), he was quite interested in Daoism, particularly because of the Daoists' pledge that they could prolong life. In fact, on his expedition to Central Asia Chinggis was accompanied by **Changchun**, a Daoist sage from China, who kept an account of his travels with his Mongol patron. Changchun's first-hand account has become one of the major primary sources on Chinggis Khan and the Mongols. [Also see The Mongols in China: Religious Life under Mongol Rule, to compare Chinggis's legacy to Khubilai Khan's policy of religious tolerance.]

Written Language

The creation of the first Mongol written language was another legacy of Chinggis Khan. In 1204, even before he gained the title of "Chinggis Khan," Chinggis assigned one of his Uyghur retainers to develop a written language for the Mongols based upon the Uyghur script. [Also see The Mongols in China: Cultural Life under Mongol Rule, to compare Chinggis's legacy to Khubilai Khan's commissioning of a Mongol script.]

Trade and Crafts

A third legacy was Chinggis's support for both trade and crafts, which meant support for the merchants and artisans in the business of trade and craft. Chinggis recognized early on the importance of trade and crafts for the economic survival of the Mongols and actively supported both. [Also see The Mongols in China: Life for Artisans under Mongol Rule and Life for Merchants under Mongol Rule, to compare Chinggis's legacy to Khubilai Khan's support artisans and merchants.]

Legal Code

Chinggis also left behind a legal code, the so-called *Jasagh*, which consisted of a series of general moral injunctions and laws. The *Jasagh* also prescribed punishments for transgressions of laws relating particularly to pastoral-nomadic society.

▶▶ **NEXT:**
CHINGGIS'S DEATH

WSJ OPINION

| OPINION

The Real Story of the Uighur Riots

Heavy-handed police tactics by the Chinese turned a peaceful assembly into a bloodbath.

By Rebiya Kadeer
Updated July 8, 2009 12:01 a.m. ET

When the Chinese government looks back on its handling of the unrest in Urumqi and East Turkestan this week, it will most likely tell the world that it acted in the interests of maintaining stability. It will most likely forget to explain why thousands of Uighurs risked everything to speak out against injustice, or why hundreds of Uighurs are now dead for exercising their right to protest.

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The Western Regions

Appendices

Second Edition

(Extensively Revised and Expanded)

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John E. Hill
July 2003

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Appendix A: The Introduction of Silk Cultivation to Khotan in the 1st Century CE.

The legend of the introduction of silk to Khotan by a Chinese princess is given in some detail in Xuan Zang. Aurel Stein gives a good summary of this legend according to Xuan Zang:

> "In old times the country knew nothing of either mulberry trees or silkworms. Hearing that China possessed them, the king of Khotan sent an envoy to procure them ; but at that time the ruler of China was determined not to let others share their possession, and he had strictly prohibited seeds of the mulberry tree or silkworms' eggs being carried outside his frontiers. The king of Khotan then with due submission prayed for the hand of a Chinese princess. When this request had been acceded to, he dispatched an envoy to escort the princess from China, taking care to let the future queen know through him that, in order to assure to herself fine silk robes when in Khotan, she had better bring some mulberry seeds and silkworms with her.
>   The princess thus advised secretly procured mulberry seeds and silkworms' eggs, and by concealing them in the lining of her headdress, which the chief of the frontier guards did not dare to examine, managed to remove them safely to Khotan. On her first arrival and before her solemn entry into the royal

palace, she stopped at the site where subsequently the Lu-shê convent was built, and there she left the silkworms and the mulberry seeds. From the latter grew up the first mulberry trees, with the leaves of which the silkworms were fed when their time had come. Then the queen issued an edict engraved on stone, prohibiting the working up of the cocoons until the moths of the silkworms had escaped. Then she founded this Sanghārāma on the spot where the first silkworms were bred; and there are about here many old mulberry tree trunks which they say are the remains of the trees first planted. From old time till now this kingdom has possessed silkworms which nobody is allowed to kill, with a view to take away the silk stealthily. Those who do so are not allowed to rear the worms for a succession of years.

      That the legend here related about the origin of one of Khotan's most important industries enjoyed widespread popularity is proved by the painted panel (D. iv. 5) discovered by me in one of the Dandān-Uliq shrines, which presents us, as my detailed analysis will show, with a spirited picture of the Chinese princess in the act of offering protection to a basketfull of unpierced cocoons. An attendant pointing to the princess's headdress recalls her beneficent smuggling by which Khotan was supposed to have obtained its first silkworms, while another attendant engaged at a loom or silk-weaving implement symbolizes the industry which the princess's initiative had founded. A divine figure seated in the background may represent the genius presiding over the silkworms." Stein (1907) I, pp. 229-230. See also: Stein (1921), pp. 1278-1279; Watters (1904-1905), pp. 287, 302

The story of the Chinese princess bringing silk to Khotan is also retold in the *Prophecy of the Li Country* – a Buddhist history that contains a list of the Buddhist kings of Khotan. It was compiled about 746 CE, but most of it is obviously based on much older sources.   Wherever it has been possible to check it against Chinese sources the chronology of the kings has been found to be surprisingly accurate (aside from the usual pious Buddhist embellishments). However, it must be noted that the list of queens later in the document is badly out of order. See: "Notes on the Dating of Khotanese History" by Hill (1988). See also text note 4.1.

     The legend is set in the reign of King Vijaya Jaya, who is said to have married the Chinese princess who first brought silkworms to Khotan. King Vijaya Dharma was the youngest of three sons of Vijaya Jaya and appears to be identical with a "high official" named Dumo in the *Hou Hanshu*, and who is mentioned later on in the text as reigning in 60 CE. (For more details on this almost certain identification, see text note No. 20.16).

     The name of this "high official" 都末 – Dumo – is presumably an attempt to transcribe *Dharma*, the king's name in the legend: Du (K. 45e[1] *to; EMC: to / tuo) + mo (K. 277a *mwât; EMC: mat).

     Furthermore, King Vijaya Jaya is recorded as being four generations before King Vijaya Kīrti, who is said to, assisted Kanika (= Kanishka) in his conquest of So-ked (= Saketa), along with the king of Gu-zan or Kucha.

     Now, we know that this conquest apparently took place just prior to, or during the first year, of Kanishka's era, which Harry Falk (2001) has recently identified as 127 CE.

     The evidence is not totally beyond question; however, there are sufficient grounds for asserting that that silk technology probably arrived in Khotan sometime in the first half of the 1st century CE. For further information see: Emmerick (1967), pp. 33-47 and Thomas (1935), pp. 110-119, and note 20.16 for more details.

Appendix B: The Story of "Sea Silk".

There are two early references to *shuiyang* 水羊 – literally, 'water-sheep,' in Chinese literature that have caused considerable confusion for many years.

      The first reference is from the chapter on the Western Regions of the *Hou Hanshu* which deals with the period of the Later Han (25-220 CE), composed by Fan Ye, who died in 445 CE. Fan Ye states that he based most of the information in this chapter on a report presented to the Emperor by the Chinese general Ban Yong about 125 CE. This report contained a considerable amount of information on a country called 'Da Qin', or the Roman Empire.

      The Chinese Envoy Gan Ying apparently collected the bulk of this information. He had been specifically sent in 97 CE to collect information on the Roman Empire by Ban Yong's father, the famous general, Ban Chao. Although he only reached the shores of the Persian Gulf, he managed to gather much information on Da Qin that was new to the Chinese – presumably from seamen and other travellers he met in Parthia. The account preserved for us in the *Hou Hanshu* states:

> "They [of the Roman Empire] also have a fine cloth which some people say is made from the down of 'water sheep,' but which is made, in fact, from the cocoons of wild silkworms."

The story of the 'water-sheep' is also found in the *Weilue*, which was written sometime during the second third of the 3rd century CE by the historian, Yu Huan. It contains no criticism of the story of the 'water-sheep' and even adds that other common domestic animals in the Roman Empire came "from the water." It is worth repeating here McKinley's observation (*ibid*. p. 68) that: "A certain unreality in it may have been tacitly understood by all parties, just as one knows that a 'sea-horse' has few attributes of the land animal."

> "This country [the Roman Empire] produces fine linen. They make gold and silver coins. One gold coin is equal to ten silver coins.
> They have fine brocaded cloth that is said to be made from the down of 'water-sheep'. It is called Haixi ('Egyptian') cloth. This country produces the six domestic animals [traditionally: horses, cattle, sheep, chickens, dogs and pigs], which are all said to come from the water.
> It is said that they not only use sheep's wool, but also bark from trees, or the silk from wild silkworms, to make brocade, mats, pile rugs, woven cloth and curtains, all of them of good quality, and with brighter colours than those made in the countries of Haidong ("East of the Sea").
> Furthermore, they regularly make a profit by obtaining Chinese silk, unravelling it, and making fine *hu* ('Western') silk damasks. That is why this country trades with Anxi (Parthia) across the middle of the sea."

Here we have an account not only of cloth made from the "wool" of "water-sheep", but also made from domestic sheep wool, tree bark, and silk from wild silkworms (*yecan*), as well as from imported Chinese cultivated silkworms.

It was suggested by Emil Bretshneider in his book, *Arabs and Arabian Colonies* (1871), p. 24, that the 'down of the water-sheep' referred to in the Chinese accounts was, "…perhaps, the *Byssus*, a cloth-stuff woven up to the present time by the Mediterranean coast, especially in Southern Italy, from the thread-like excrescences of several sea-shells, especially *Pinna squamosa*." Hirth (1885), p. 262.

Many scholars have since accepted this suggestion. While others remained sceptical and accepted instead the account in the *Hou Hanshu* that clearly states that the so-called 'water-sheep' were a fiction and that the cloth referred to was, rather, wild silk:

> "The down of the water sheep is a particular favourite. HIRTH accepted BRETSCHNEIDER'S suggestion that this was cloth made from the thread-like excretions of sea-shells and that this is what was meant by the term *byssus*! This particular fable, whose acceptance by modern scholars demonstrates an almost absurd naivety, still continues to flourish (e.g. J. FERGUSON, ANRW II 9.2, above p. 590). For the various meanings of byssus see E. WIPSZYCKA, L'industrie textile dans l'Égypte romaine: matières premières et stades préliminiaires (Warsaw 1965), 40-41."
> Raschke (1976), p. 854, n. 849.

> "The conclusion is that, in the whole of Chinese literature, there is only one mention of the *shui-yang*, that found in the *Wei lio*, in the middle of the 3rd cent. Later texts have been copied or abbreviated from it, and do not represent any independent tradition. In the *Wei lio* itself, this "water sheep" occurs only in connection with a certain textile, which was woven with threads of variegated colours without a monochrome ground (地 *ti*; this was the main differentiation between *chih-chêng*, which had no "ground", and the 錦 *chin*, which had one; but it was not always strictly adhered to in the practical use of the two terms); and even then, the author of the *Wei lio* had heard conflicting reports, some saying that the fabric was made of tree-bark (or bast), others of the silk of wild silkworms. Moreover, there is a disquieting sentence in the text: "In that kingdom, the six domestic animals all come out of the water", to which former inquirers did not devote a word of comment. It sounds as though Ta-Ch'in being a maritime kingdom, the "West of the Sea Kingdom", a rumour had reached China that Ta-Ch'in was indebted to the sea not only for its "water sheep", but for its oxen, horses, dogs, etc..... In any case, since all the domestic

animals in Ta-Ch'in are in the same plight, the *shui-yang* is merely the equivalent of *yang* alone, and, as a matter of fact, it is the word *yang* ("sheep") alone, not "water sheep", which is used when the *Wei lio* speaks a second time of the wool of the same animal. Under such conditions, while admitting that there must have been in China, in the early 3rd cent., a tradition about some special sort of "sheep's down" of Ta-Ch'in, I think that we must be careful not to lay too much stress on the statement that this sheep was a "water sheep". Pelliot (1963), pp. 509-510.

Recently I was referred to the work of Felicitas Maeder in Switzerland on this subject who, very kindly, sent me a copy of her excellent article, "The project Sea-silk – Rediscovering an Ancient Textile Material" from the *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* Number 35, Autumn 2002, pp. 8-11. She also included a copy of the fascinating chapter, "Oriental Translations: Pinna Wool, Acquatic Sheep and Mermaid Fleece", pp. 67-75, from Daniel L. McKinley's monograph, "Pinna and Her Silken Beard: A Foray Into Historical Misappropriations" in **Ars Textrina:** *A Journal of Textiles and Costume*, Volume Twenty-nine, June, 1998. Winnipeg, Canada. Pp. 9-223.

   Felicitas Maeder's article not only includes a beautiful full-page colour reproduction of a 14th century knitted cap of sea-silk but points out on page 10 that:

> "Proof of the reality of the use of sea-silk for textile production at least in late antiquity is a fragment of a woven textile of the 4th century. It was found in 1912 in a woman's grave in Aquinicum (Budapest), at that time a Roman town at the north-east frontier of the empire. It was described in 1917 by F. Hollendonner and 1935 by L. Nagy. J. P. Wild mentions this fragment in his study of textile manufacture in the Northern Roman provinces (1970) and adds that it supports the assumption that the 'marine wool' of Diocletian's Price Edict meant sea-silk."

This evidence of the existence of sea-silk textiles in the 4th century Roman Empire, and the fact that the 'marine wool' mentioned in Diocletian's Price Edict of 301 CE possibly refers to sea silk, leads us to re-examine the references in the Chinese accounts.

> "It is all very arbitrarily, it seems to me, that the *shuiyang* 水羊 or 'aquatic sheep' have been connected with the famous *agnus scythicus* which plays such an important role in the accounts of travellers of the Middle Ages until the 17th century. The two legends have nothing in common, for there is no question of water regarding the *agnus scythicus*; as Bretschneider remarked (*On the knowledge . . .,* p. 24) the cloth made from the wool of aquatic sheep must be the Byssus which is manufacured with the excretions of certain seashells, notably the *Pinna squamosa*. This opinion seems confirmed to me by the passage of Alestakhry (10th century) : "At a certain time of the year, one sees coming up from the sea an animal which rubs up against certain rocks on the coast, and deposits a kind of wool of a silken colour, that is, of a golden colour. This wool is very rare and highly valued, and none is allowed to be wasted. It is collected and is used to weave material, which is dyed now in different colours. The Ummayad princes (who reigned at Cordova then) reserved the use of this wool for their own use. It is only in secret that one can succeed in diverting any portion of it. A robe made with this wool costs more than a thousand pieces of gold." Reinard, from whom we have borrowed this translation (*Géographie s''Aboulféda*, II, II, p. 242, n. 1) indicates that the animal which comes up from the sea to rub itself on certain rocks is the marine pinnus, a shell which attaches itself to the rocks. But, if it is true that the Byssus was, in fact, manufactured from the filaments of the *Pinna squamosa*, it is clear, on the other hand, that this manufacture being kept secret, a legend formed which attributed the tufts gathered from the rocks at the edge of the sea to a rot of marine sheep which came to rub against these rocks. The tradition reported by Alestakhry thus appears to me to well account for the expression "aquatic sheep" 水羊 which is found for the first time in this text of the *Hou Hanshu*. – By disassociating the acquatic sheep from the *agnus scythicus,* we cannot therfore say that the legend of the *agnus scythicus* was unknown in China. To the contrary, the Chinese literature which gives us the most ancient evidence relating to this fantastic animal. In fact, Zhang Shouqie 張守節, who published his commentary in 737 on the *Historical Memoires*

of Sima Qian, quotes (*Mém. Hist.,* chap. CXXIII, p. 3a) a passage from the *Yiwuzhi* of Song Ying 宋膺異物志 in which we read that: "To the north of Qin, in a little country which is subject to it, there are lambs which are born spontaneously in the ground. By waiting for the moment when they are on the point of hatching out, a wall is built all around them for fear that they might be eaten by ferocious beasts. Their umbilical cord is attached to the ground and, if one couts it, they die. Therefore instruments are beaten to scare them. They cry from fear and their umbilical cords break. Then they are allowed to search for water and pasture and form a flock…." Translated and adapted from Chavannes (1907), p. 183, n. 4.

On closer examination of the wording of the Chinese text of the *Hou Hanshu*, it appears that the claim that the cloth made from "water-sheep" was false and really referred to wild silks is likely a critical comment added by the compiler Fan Ye in the 5th century CE to the original report by Gan Ying. It seems quite probable to me now that the original reports had a factual basis, only to be discounted as myth at a later period.

In fact, "sea-silk" has always been extremely rare and it is quite plausible that similar cloths from Da Qin examined by the Chinese in later periods were wild silks. Although wild silks were themselves uncommon, they were not nearly as rare (or as costly) as sea-silk.

Wild silks could be easily mistaken sea-silk, as many of them were naturally similar in colour and appearance to sea-silk and were sometimes, apparently, blended together.

"The most famous product produced by the Pinnidae is the byssus fiber, which is an extremely fine and soft but strong fiber produced by a gland in the foot of the animal for the purpose of anchoring the shell. The byssus fiber of some of the larger species in this family is sufficiently long so that it can be spun and then woven or knitted to make small garments. It has a beautiful golden bronze sheen and was often combined with silk when used in making larger garments. Most authorities believe that the use of the byssus as a fiber in making garments probably originated in India near Colchi. This is based on the fact that the earlier Greek and Roman writers referred to *Pinna* but did not mention the use of the byssus before the time of Tertullian (150-222 A.D.). Tarento was the center of the industry in Italy, and Procopius, who wrote on the Persian wars about 350 A.D., stated that the five hereditary satraps (governors) of Armenia who received their insignia from the Roman Emperor were given chlamys (or cloaks) made from *lana pinna* (*Pinna* "wool," or byssus). Apparently only the ruling classes were allowed to wear these chlamys. Even today a small remnant of the former industry remains in Italy and a few articles such as gloves, hats, shawls and stockings are made mainly for the tourist trade. According to Simmonds (1879) in "The Commercial Products of the Sea," the byssus formed an important article of commerce among the Sicilians, for which purpose considerable numbers of *Pinna* were annually fished in the Mediterranean from a depth of 20 to 30 feet. He also said, "a considerable manufactory is established at Palermo; the fabrics made are extremely elegant and vie in appearance with the finest silk. The best products of this material are, however, said to be made in the Orphan Hospital of St. Philomel at Lucca." Though the modern gloves and shawls are knitted, the chlamys, gloves and stockings of the ancients were woven, for knitting was not known until about 1500 according to Yates (1843). Articles made from *Pinna* byssus are extremely strong and durable except that they are readily attacked by moths so that great care must be taken in their preservation. There are, as a consequence, very few examples of the early garments in existence. On Plate 153 are shown the cleaned byssus of *Atrina rigida* Solander ; the shell of *Pinna nobilis* Linné, the species from which the byssus was obtained for the Italian industry ; and a glove made from byssus fibre at Tarento, Italy [presently displayed at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.]." Turner and Rosewater (1958), pp. 292 and 294.

The Oxford English Dictionary (1971), Compact Edition Reprint (1988) gives under **Byssus:**

"3. *Zool*. The tuft of fine silky filaments by which molluscs of the genus *Pinna* and various mussels attach themselves to the surface of rocks; it is secreted by the *byssus-gland* in the foot.

"These filaments have been spun, and made into small articles of apparel.. Their colour is brilliant, and ranges from a beautiful golden yellow to a rich brown; they are also very durable.. The fabric is so thin that a pair of stockings may be put in an ordinary-sized snuff-box." [From: *The draper's dictionary*, by S. William Beck (1886)].

The Treasury of Natural History or A Popular Dictionary of Zoology by Samuel Maunder. London. Longmans, Green, and Co. (1878), p. 526, states:

PINNA. A genus of Molluscs, called also *wing-shell*, which in many respects approaches the Mussels. It has two equal wedge-shaped valves, united by a ligament along one of their sides ; and obtains a very considerable size, sometimes being nearly three feet long. The animal fixes itself, by its *byssus* which is remarkably long and silky, to submarine rocks and other bodies ; where it lives in a vertical position, the point of the shell being undermost, and the base or edge above. Sometimes large bodies of them are found even attached to a sandy bottom at the depth of a few fathoms. They are common in some parts of the Mediterranean ; and are not merely sought as food by the inhabitants on the coasts, but they gather the byssus, of which a stuff may be formed which is remarkable for its warmth and suppleness. The filaments are extremely fine and strong, and the colour, which is a reddish-brown, never fades. The finest byssus of the ancients was fabricated from these filaments ; and in Sicily they are still sometimes manufactured into gloves and other articles of dress, though, it must be confessed, more as an object of curiosity than use."

"The Pinnidae have considerable economic importance in many parts of the world. They produce pearls of moderate value. In the Mediterranean area, material made from the holdfast or byssus of *Pinna nobilis* Linné has been utilized in the manufacture of clothing for many centuries: gloves, shawls, stockings and cloaks. Apparel made from this material has an attractive golden hue and these items were greatly valued by the ancients.

Today, pinnidae are eaten in Japan, Polynesia, in several other Indo-Pacific island groups, and on the west coast of Mexico, In Polynesia, the valves of *Atrina vexillum* are carved to form decorative articles, and entire valves of larger specimens are sometimes used as plates." Rosewater (1961), pp. 175-176.

The word *byssus* not only refers to the excretions of seashells, as sometimes assumed, but originally referred to fine threads of linen, and later, of cotton and silk. It is derived from Latin *byssus* via Gk. *byssos* – flax, linen. It is of Semitic origin related to Hebrew *būts* – fine linen. This word is probably related to the material "'Böz,' an exotic cloth in the Chinese Imperial Court." Discussed in Ecsady (1975), pp. 145-153.

On the basis of the admittedly rather sparse information available it seems that the initial reports of sea-wool reaching China in the 1st century CE were based on a genuine tradition. These reports were then embellished by the 3rd century to the point that the six main domestic animals known to the Chinese were said to have come from the water in the Roman Empire.

By the 5th century, the whole story was being dismissed as a fable; the sea-wool explained away as merely a form of wild silk – with which the Chinese had had long experience – see Appendix C.

Appendix C: Wild Silks in Ancient Times.

Commercially reared silkworms are killed before the pupae emerge by dipping them in boiling water or they are killed with a needle, thus allowing the whole cocoon to be unravelled as one continuous thread. This allows a much stronger cloth to be woven from the silk.

"Wild silks" are produced by a number of non-domesticated silkworms. They all differ in one major respect from the domesticated varieties. The cocoons, which are gathered in the wild, have usually already been

chewed through by the pupa or caterpillar ("silkworm") before the cocoons are gathered and thus the single thread which makes up the cocoon has been cut into shorter lengths, making a weaker thread. They also differ in colour and texture and are often more difficult to dye than silk from the cultivated silkworm.

There is ample evidence that small quantities of wild silk were already being produced in the Mediterranean and Middle East by the time the superior, and stronger, cultivated silk from China began to be imported.

Pliny, in the 1st century CE, obviously had some knowledge of how silkworms were utilised, even though his account included some fanciful ideas:

"Another species of insect is the silk-moth which is a native of Assyria. It is larger than the insects already mentioned [i.e. bees, wasps and hornets]. Silk-moths make their nests of mud, which looks like salt, attached to stone; they are so hard they can scarcely be pierced by javelins. In the nests they make wax combs on a larger scale than bees and produce a bigger larva.

Silk-moths have an additional stage in their generation. A very big larva first changes into a caterpillar with two antennae, this becomes what is termed a chrysalis, from which comes a larva which in six months turns into a silkworm. The silkworms weave webs like spiders and these are used for *haute couture* dresses for women, the material being called silk. The technique of unravelling the cocoons and weaving the thread was first invented on Cos by a woman named Pamphile, the daughter of Plateas. She has the inalienable distinction of having devised a way of making women's clothing 'see-through.'

Silk-moths, so they say, are produced on Cos, where a vapour from the ground breathes life into the flowers – from the cypress, terebinth, ash and oak – that have been beaten down by the rain. First, small butterflies without down are produced; these cannot endure the cold so they grow shaggy hair and equip themselves with thick coats to combat winter, scraping together down from the leaves with their rough feet. They compact this into fleeces, card it with their claws and draw it out into the woof, thinned out as if by a comb, and then they wrap this round their body.

Then they are taken away, put in earthenware containers and reared on bran in a warm atmosphere. Underneath their coats a peculiar kind of feather grows, and when they are covered by these they are taken out for special treatment. The tufts of wool are plucked out and softened by moisture and subsequently thinned out into threads by means of a rush spindle. Even men have not been ashamed to adopt silk clothing in summer because of its lightness. Our habits have become so bizarre since the time we used to wear leather cuirasses that even a toga is considered an undue weight. However, we have left Assyrian silk dresses to the women – so far!" Pliny *NH* (a), pp. 157-158. (XI, 75-78).

"The use and production of wild silk was known to geographically widely diverse areas of the ancient world. In this case the larvae are not cultivated or fed. They spin the cocoon and then chew their way out of it. The cocoons are then collected and unwound. The domesticated silkworm is killed, either by scalding the cocoon or by the insertion of a needle, to insure that the thread remains undamaged from the efforts of the larvae to escape. Wild silk is coarser and somewhat less expensive and is the product of a considerable variety of larvae of the sub-order *bombycina*. It is to this class that the famous Coan silk of the ancient world belonged. Such wild silk was produced in China and possibly also in India, Central Asia and Mesopotamia. How much, if any, was exported to the West is unknown." Raschke, Manfred G., 1976: 623. (Also see the discussion of Coan silk, *ibid*. 722, nn. 380, 381).

"One knows that Aristotle mentions frabrics made from the cocoons of a wild silkworm on the island of Kos." Chavannes (1907), p. 184, n. 1.

"The more than 500 species of wild silkworms fend for themselves, feasting on oak and other leaves. When they become moths, they are bigger and more gorgeous than the commercial

Bombyx. More robust than their domesticated cousins, wild silkworms produce a tougher, rougher silk, not as easily bleached and dyed as the mulberry silk.

China is the chief supplier of an off-white wild silk known as tussah. India has a monopoly on the muga caterpillar, which thrives in the humidity of the Assam Valley and produces a shimmering golden silk. The eri silkworm, raised on the castor plant in India, produces silk that is extremely durable, but that cannot be easily reeled off the cocoon and must be spun like cotton or wool." Hyde (1984), p. 14.

See, also: "On the question of silk in pre-Han Eurasia" by Irene Good. *Antiquity* Vol. 69, Number 266, December 1995, pp. 959-968; "Silk in Ancient Nubia: One Road, Many Sources" by Nettie K. Adams (to be published soon).

Appendix D: Gan Ying's Route to the Persian Gulf.

The itinerary of the Chinese envoy Gan Ying, who the *Hou Hanshu* says reached the shores of the "Great Sea" or Persian Gulf in 97 CE (see notes 9.1, 10.13, 15.3), has caused considerable speculation and hot debate amongst the various commentators.

It was generally assumed that Gan Ying made a round trip, going out through Jibin via Kandahar in Arachosia, and returning to Chinese territory by a northern route, through Sibin (usually identified as Ctesiphon), Aman (usually identified as Hamadan or Ekbatana), and Mulu or Merv. Sometimes this journey has been described in reverse order.

This has led to unsatisfactory geographical directions and distances, as well as rather dubious phonetic reconstructions of the place names needed to justify them. They have for long been recognised as unsatisfactory, causing concern among scholars. Most scholars have accepted the suggestions of Freidrich Hirth in his excellent pioneering book, *China and the Roman Orient*, first published in 1885. The many discrepancies are usually explained by assuming that the Chinese had only vague notions of the region, or had copied information from imperfect foreign sources.

The discrepancies are, I believe, more likely due to the fact that Gan Ying did not travel via Hamadan (Ekbatana) and Ctesiphon at all, but that he took a different route.

He was sent on his mission by the famous Chinese General Ban Chao and so, presumably, he started on his journey from somewhere in the Tarim Basin.

He could have first headed mainly west to the Parthian frontier east of Merv (Mulu, Margiana), and then on across Parthia to the Gulf.

Alternatively, he could have started by heading south to Gandhara, and then west to Kabul, or the region of modern Ghazni, crossing into Parthian-controlled territory on his way to Kandahar and points west.

Another possibility is that he headed south from Gandhara along the Indus into Sind which was, apparently, still held by the Indo-Parthian successors to Gondophares (although possibly as tributaries to the Kushans). From there he would have headed west to Kandahar. It seems quite logical that Gan Ying would refer to the territories from the Sind region on as Anxi or Parthia, as these territories were still controlled by Indo-Parthian princes.

"We see the emergence of Gondophares, the 'winner of glory' and founder of the dynasty in the Indus provinces, Kapisene and east Panjab. His immediate successors Abdagases and Sasan lost Kapisene to Kujula Kadphises but retained the Indus provinces, Arachosia and east Panjab, and Sasan controlled Sind. In the latter half of the first century A.D. later Indo-Parthian rulers are to be found in east Panjab and Sind. The *Periplus*…, probably dated towards the end of the first century A.D. [actually now dated to between 40 and 70], says that the provinces of the lower Indus, still called Scythia, were ruled by Parthians who were continually expelling each other. There is no doubt that this feuding and civil warfare make the sequence of rulers here so complex.

At its height the empire of Gondophares covered substantially more territory than the Indo-Scythian dynasty of the House of Azes had done, extending from Aria and Sistan in the west to Mathura in the east and including Kabul and Begram in the north and Kandahar and the mouth of the Indus in the south." Puri (1994), p. 199.

I thought it might be useful to examine the main possible routes that Gan Ying could have taken across Parthian territory to the head of the Persian Gulf. There are several branches of both the major northern and southern routes between India and Parthia to consider.

The northernmost route ran from the Tarim Basin through Bactria or Kangju territory to Merv (Mulu, Margiana) and thence, via Parthuaia (also known as Parthyene), the ancient homeland of the Parthians, on to Hyrcania at the southeast corner of the Caspian Sea. From there, it led southwest across the ranges to the Parthian capital of Hecatompylos (at Qumis between modern Semnan and Damqan). From Hecatompylos Gan Ying could have headed on to the Caspian Gates (southeast of modern Tehran) and from there either west towards Syria; southwest to the great centres of Seleucia and Ctesiphon on the Euphrates; or more southerly to the second greatest city of Parthia, Susa, the ancient capital of the Persian Empire, and then on to the port of Charax Spasinu near the head of the Persian Gulf.

The route originally proposed by Hirth, suggests that he travelled via Hamadan (identifying Aman with Ekbatana – an identification with little to support it, either linguistically or otherwise) and Ctesiphon (identifying this as the Sibin of the text). This route is certainly possible, but unnecessarily long. Moreover, the indication that Yuluo was southwest of Sibin cannot be justified if we accept that Yuluo refers to Charax/Characene, as discussed in detail in note 10.12.

The alternative branch of the northern route avoided Hyrcania altogether. This route became critically important to the Parthians after Hyrcania became independent in the middle of 58 CE (and maintained its independence from Parthia for over a century). The main route branched off from Margiana (Merv), and headed south to Areia (with its capital city, "Alexandreia in Areia" or "Alexandreia among the Arians;" – modern Herat). From Herat it ran via Nishapur, southwest of modern Mashad, where it joined the route just described above, and then on to Hecatompylos.

The main southern routes went from Gandhara south along the Indus valley crossing into Parthian-controlled territory at some still unknown frontier point – but likely to have been somewhere near modern Uch, or Mithankot which is about 50 km further downstream, near the present junction of the Indus and Jhelum rivers. He then would have travelled mainly west through modern Quetta, across the Khojak Pass [2,707 m or 8,881 ft], and on to Kandahar.

"Rejoining the main road to the border, we shadowed the rail line past Fort Abdullah and climbed towards Khojak Pass, the gateway through which British troops invaded Afghanistan after occupying Baluchistan's provincial capital, Quetta, in the nineteenth century. Cresting the pass we saw it, hundreds of metres below us: the Reg, sprawling with cruel majesty to the far horizon. A patch of measles on the Registan Desert floor identified Chaman, the last Pakistani town before the border. It was a daunting view, God's own warning to the fainthearted, backed up by map names such as Dasht-e Margo (Desert of Death), Sar-o Tar (Empty Desolation) and Dasht-e Jehanum (Desert of Hell)….

Nomadism exists where mountains meet deserts. When summer scorched the winter grasslands of the Reg, the Kuchi would migrate onto the cool highland pastures, returning to the desert when winter snows buried the mountains….

The Khojak Pass, where we now stood buffeted by rising thermals off the Reg, had long been part of the nomad superhighway into the Indus Valley. While the majority of Kuchi were pastoralists, some of the more enterprising facilitated the Silk Road trade, moving deep into India on their summer migrations. With the coming of the Raj they were required to deposit their weapons at armouries on the Indus, but could travel on the new trains to Bengal, Karachi or Bombay carrying carpets, embroidered skullcaps, pistachio and *chilgohza* nuts, dried fruits from Kandahar, lapis lazuli, jade, turquoise, Russian gold coins and even Venetian ducats. On their return from India they would take oranges, muslin, tea, coffee, glass, crockery and guns. As elsewhere on the Silk Road, the goods moved by a relay, not a marathon. Returning to the Reg in winters, the southern nomads would meet up with those who had spent the summer north of the Amu Darya in places like Samarkand and Bukhara. Items exchanged with them were carried out and sold the following summer." Kremmer (2002), pp. 329-331.

Uch is probably the site of ancient 'Alexandreia at the Confluence,' founded by Alexander after he was

wounded near Multan. At that time it was at the actual confluence of the main Indus River with the rivers from the Punjab. Sometime later this convergence of the rivers meandered further southwest towards its present position near Mithankot. This junction of the rivers has always provided a convenient political dividing point between the Punjab and the Sind. It is not certain where this frontier with the Kushan territories to the north lay at the time of Gan Ying's travels during the late 1st century CE, but it would have been somewhere between Mithankot and Uch.

> "Not far south [from Multan], at the confluence of the Indus with the Punjab rivers, Alexander founded another city and dockyard. He called it Alexandria at the Confluence, 'expressing the hope that it would become a world famous city'. When you drive along the flat plain of the Indus for four hours south of Multan, you come to the little town of Uchch Shariff: 'Uchch the Holy.' An ancient mud-brick town on a high mound, it is surrounded by rice paddies and palm groves, and dotted with the blue-tiled shrines of Sufi saints, the ancestors of the great families who came from Central Asia in the thirteenth century. A famous centre of religion and culture in the subcontinent during the Middle Ages. Uchch was once in the middle of the confluence, because the Indus and the Chenab met below the city. It has now been left high and dry by the shifting of the Indus, which is now 50 kilometres off, and the other Punjab rivers now combine 20 kilometres away at the Panchnad. But Uchch is still a pretty country town with an annual fair much frequented by travelling singers, poets and holy men and women who still conserve the memory of the great saints of the Indus valley. the old part of the mound is a warren of brick streets with painted shrines hung with flags and offerings. Outside one of these, I met the town's genealogist, the keeper of the family records of the descendants of the Prophet – a distinguished man with a thin weaselly face, pointed beard, and an outsized turban. composed and quietly spoken, with intense eyes, he was nothing less than the memory of the town.
>
> 'Uchch had many names in the olden days,' he said. 'It's present name means a high place, but when the Muslims first came here it was called Iskandera or Eskanderiya because Alexander came here. He stayed for six months, and built a city 10 kilometres round – not on this part of Uchch but on the eastern mound.'
>
> 'How do you know this?
>
> 'The ancient books say so, and the tradition is handed down.'
>
> Later, on the terrace of the Bukharis' hostel, we sat on charpoys and sipped green tea while the sun set over the palm forests. In front were the broken domes of grand tombs on the edge of the mound, their bands of blue tile luminous in the last light. It is a lovely spot, one of the most delightful in the subcontinent. Another Alexandria, and still a good place to live, too." Grant (2001), p. 202.

Another route headed west from Gandhara over the ranges (usually by the Khyber Pass) to Kabul, and then southwest through the region of modern Ghazni to Kandahar. Verma (1978), p. 227, maintains that, during the early Muslim period, the route from the Sindh region was more frequented than the route through Kabul.

From Kandahar there were two choices. The first route ran west to Drangae itself (modern Zaranj) at the mouth of the Helmand River. From here one headed mainly west across the desolate Carmanian wastes via Kirman to Istakhr / Persepolis, the ancient capital of Persis (Farsistan), and from there northwest on to the head of the Persian Gulf.

The other route headed northwest toward modern Farah (Prophthasia in the satrapy of Drangae) and then straight north to Herat to join the northern routes already described above. It is this route that I believe is outlined in the *Hou Hanshu*.

Strabo XV, II, 8, (as quoted in Majumdar (1981), p. 97), also gives some information on these routes:

> "He (Eratosthenes, born *c*. 276 BCE) says that Ariana is bounded on the east by the Indus River, on the south by the great sea, on the north by the Paropamisus mountain and the mountains that follow it as far as the Caspian Gates, and that its parts on the west are marked by the same boundaries by which Parthia is separated from Media and Carmania from Paretacene and Persis. He says that the breadth of the country is the length of the Indus from the Paropamisus mountain to the outlets, a distance of twelve thousand stadia [2,418 km] (though some say thirteen thousand) ; and that its length from the Caspian Gates, as recorded in the work entitled *Asiatic Stathmi* [i.e. *Halting-places in Asia*, apparently written by Amyntas, who accompanied Alexander], is stated in two ways: that is, as Alexandreia in the country of the Arii [Herat],

from the Caspian Gates through the country of the Parthians, there is one and the same road; and then, from there, one road leads in a straight line through Bactriana and over the mountain pass into Ortospana [Kabul] to the meeting of the three roads, which is in the country of the Paropamisadae; whereas the other turns off slightly from Aria towards the south to Prophthasia in Drangiana [Farah], and the remainder of it leads back to the boundaries of India and to the Indus; so that this road which leads through the country of the Drangae and Arachoti is longer, its entire length being fifteen thousand three hundred stadia [3,083 km].”

I believe that Gan Ying travelled from the Tarim Basin via Hunza / Gilgit (the 'Hanging Passages') to Gandhara and then headed south, crossing the frontier of Parthian territory somewhere southwest of Uch near the Indus before heading mainly west via Kandahar and Herat, to Susa. From there, he would have then travelled *southwest* (as stated in the text) to the port city of Charax Spasinou and the coast of the Persian Gulf. Although we are not given any specific information, he may well then have headed back along much the same route as far as Herat and then north to Merv (Mulu – described here as 'Eastern Anxi') which would explain its inclusion in this account. From Merv he would have then headed east back to the Tarim Basin through Bactria and/or Sogdiana.

The directions given in the *Hou Hanshu* fit my identifications well enough for such a rough itinerary – that is one travelled mainly west (and then northwest) from the Indus valley to Herat; mainly west (and then southwest) from Herat to Susa, and from Susa first south and across a river (the Karun or Karkheh), and then southwest to Spasinou Charax.

The distances given in the *Hou Hanshu* accord remarkably well with the true distances. I have measured the distances along the routes proposed here on modern maps and compared them with those of the *Hou Hanshu*:

a. Herat via Farah, Kandahar and Quetta to Mithankot in the Indus valley I measure as about 1,410 km which is for all intents and purposes identical with the distance given in the *Hou Hanshu* between [the extreme eastern frontier of] Anxi and Aman of 3,400 *li* or 1,414 km.

b. From Herat through Nishapur, the Caspian Gates and Qom to the site of ancient Susa is just about exactly 1,500 km on my maps – the *Hou Hanshu* gives 3,600 *li* or 1,497 km between Aman and Sibin.

c. Although the exact location of ancient Spasinou Charax is still undetermined, it was almost certainly somewhere not far to the northwest of modern Basra. I have measured from site of ancient Susa southwest to the assumed site of ancient Charax (about 30 miles or 48 km northwest of Basra) as approximately 175 km – which is nowhere near the 960 *li* or 399 km mentioned in the *Hou Hanshu*.

However, we are told by Pliny *NH* (b), p. 134. (VI. xxxi) that the shoreline of the Persian Gulf had extended some 120 Roman miles (178 km) from Charax. If Gan Ying was recording the distance from Susa to the shore of the Persian Gulf in the kingdom of Characene, rather than just to the town of Spasinou Charax, we get a total of about 353 km, which is closer to the 399 km of the *Hou Hanshu*.

Pliny also states that the shoreline had extended some 70 Roman miles (104 km) further out to sea between the time of Juba II (died *c*. 24 CE) and Pliny (who was writing in 77 CE) – so it may well have extended significantly further between the time of Pliny's informants and 97 CE when Gan Ying visited the region, making the measurements given in the *Hou Hanshu* very credible. For further details, see also notes 10.9-10.12.

As far as I can determine, the route I have outlined above is the only one that fits the information given in the *Hou Hanshu*.

Appendix E: Speculations on the Dates of the Early Kushans

Here I will focus on a few aspects of the dates of the first two of the Great Kushans: Kujula Kadphises and Wima (or Vima) Taktu.

This is not an exhaustive study of these subjects, but merely a discussion of a few of the issues and speculations on these contentious subjects in the light of new archaeological and historical data.

As shown earlier, in notes 13.10 and 13.15, Qiujiu Que 丘就卻 and Yan Gaozhen 閻高珍 in the *Hou Hanshu* almost certainly refer to Kujula Kadphises and his son, Wima Taktu, respectively.

To begin this discussion it is absolutely critical to be aware of the information contained in the now-famous Rabatak Inscription discovered in Afghanistan a few years ago. I am very pleased and grateful to Professor Sims-Williams for his kind permission to reproduce here the revised version of the translation of this remarkable inscription as presented in his article, "Further Notes on the Bactrian Inscription of Rabatak, with an Appendix on the names of Kujula Kadphises and Vima Taktu in Chinese". See Sims-Williams (1998), pp. 81-90.

The revised translation of the inscription says:

". . . . of the great salvation, Kanishka the Kushan, the righteous, the just, the autocrat worthy of divine worship, who has obtained the kingship from Nana and from the gods, who has inaugurated the year one as the gods pleased. And he *issued a Greek *edict (and) then he put it into Aryan. In the year one it has been proclaimed unto India, unto the *whole of the realm of the *kṣatriyas, that (as for) them – both *Wasp, and Sāketa, and Kauśāmbī, and Pāṭaliputra, as far as Śri-Campā— whatever rulers and other powers (they might have), he had submitted (them) to (his) will, and he had submitted all India to (his) will. Then King Kanishka gave orders to Shafar the *karalrang* *at this . . . to make the sanctuary which is called B . . . ab, in the plain of the (royal) house, for these gods, whose *service here the . . . *glorious Umma leads, (namely:) the above-mentioned Nana and the above-mentioned Umma, Aurmuzd, the Gracious one, Sroshard, Narasa, (and) Mihr. And he gave orders to make images of the same, (namely) of these gods who are written herein, and he gave orders to make (them) for these kings: for King Kujula Kadphises (his) great grandfather, and for King Vima Taktu (his) grandfather, and for King Vima Kadphises (his) father, and for himself, King Kanishka. Then, as the king of kings, the scion of the race of the gods . . . had given orders to do, Shafar the *karalrang* made this sanctuary. [Then . . .] the *karalrang*, and Shafar the *karalrang*, and Nukunzuk the *ashtwalg* [performed] the (king's) command. (As for) *these gods who are written here—may they [keep] the king of kings, Kanishka the Kushan, for ever healthy, fortunate, (and) victorious, and [may] the son of the gods *rule all India from the year one to the year *one thousand. . . . the sanctuary was founded in the year one; then in the *third year [it was] completed . . . according to the king's command, also many *rites were endowed, also many *attendants were endowed, also many . . . . . . the king gave an *endowment to the gods, and for these . . . *which [were given] to the gods . . . "

In 2001 another very important advance was made in our understanding of Kanishka's Era with the publication of, "The *yuga* of sphujiddhvaja and the era of the Kuṣāṇas" by Harry Falk in *S.R.R.A.* VII, pp. 121-136. In this article a very strong case is made that Kanishka's era started in 127 CE, and this seems to gaining general acceptance among scholars around the world. There is also a wealth of other data that points to a date about this period and provides confirmatory support for Falk's dating.

As the basis for the rest of this discussion, I intend to accept Falk's arguments and those of Professor Sims-Williams.

Although there have been many other dates proposed for the beginning of the "Kanishka Era", several other researchers have arrived at similar conclusions, dating the beginning of the era to about this period. Among them, Dr. van Wijk presented a very strong case for 128 CE – see the discussion in Konow (1929), pp. xciii-xciv.

The Kushan trilingual inscription from Dasht-i Nāvur near Kabul seems to provide good evidence that Wima Kadphises was reigning in 124 CE – see Bivar (1983), pp. 201-202. Those interested in checking a wide range of theories would do well to start with: *Papers on the Date of Kaniṣka*. Edited by A. L. Basham,1968. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Accepting these data as given, we have the outline of the rise of a powerful family, starting with Kujula Kadphises, then his son Wima (or Vima) Taktu, his grandson, Wima (or Vima) Kadphises and, finally, his great grandson King Kanishka, who inaugurated an era in 127 CE.

Kanishka is known from his inscriptions to have reigned at least until year 23 (149 CE), and was then followed by further Kushan kings until at least the year 98 (224 CE), and, according to Joe Cribb in Sims-Williams and Cribb (1995/6), p. 101, possibly to the year 141, (i.e. 267 CE).

In my opinion, the first year of Kanishka's era probably does not celebrate his ascension to the Kushan throne but, rather, commemorates his extensive victories in eastern India that are celebrated in the inscription.

The extent of his conquests in the first year of his era is supported by the finding of inscriptions from eastern India very early in the era which mention "Mahārāja Kaniṣka" – from the 8th day of the 2nd month of winter of year 2 from ancient Kosam or Kauśāmbī, and two inscriptions dated from the 22nd day of winter of year 3 from Sarnath.

It is, however, unclear from the sources how long it was between the time Kanishka ascended the throne until the beginning of his era. However, if Bivar (1983), p. 201 is correct in stating that the trilingual inscription from Dasht-i Nāvur near Kabul is attributable to Wima Kadphises, and that it is dated 124 CE, then one must assume that Kanishka came to power sometime between 124 and 127 CE.

Unfortunately, the only historical information we have on these kings in the Chinese sources is the very brief account preserved in the *Hou Hanshu*, undoubtedly due to the breaking off of communications with the Western Regions for sixty-five years between 9 and 73 CE, and again from 106 to 127 CE.

The only chronological clues we are given are very vague: "More than a hundred years later [after the Yuezhi had conquered Bactria and set up the five xihou], the *xihou* ('Allied Prince') of Guishuang, named Qiujiu Que (Kujula Kadphises), attacked and exterminated the four other *xihou* ('Allied Princes'). He set himself up as king of a kingdom called Guishuang. He invaded Anxi (Parthia) and took the Gaofu (Kabul) region. He also defeated the whole of the kingdoms of Puta (probably Parthuaia, in 55 CE), and Jibin (Kapisha-Peshawar). Qiujiu Que (Kujula Kadphises) was more than eighty years old when he died." He was followed by his son Yan Gaozhen (Wima Taktu).

We can, however, fairly confidently assume from the historical context of the *Hou Hanshu* that Kujula Kadphises came to power sometime after 25 CE (the beginning of the Later Han dynasty); and his son, Yan Gaozhen (Wima Taktu), was still ruling at least until 102 CE, when the famous general, Ban Chao, returned to China, and probably until 106 CE when the Western Regions rebelled, and relations with China were cut. We are told that this chapter is based on a report by Ban Yong to the Emperor circa 125 CE (probably largely based on the reports of his father, Ban Chao). Relations with the Western Regions were not restored until 127, which is almost certainly the explanation for the silence in the report on the reign of Wima Kadphises and the coming to power of Kanishka.

Fortunately, however, the Indian historical and archaeological sources are somewhat more informative. We can identify Kujula Kadphises with some confidence from dated inscriptions which, although they don't mention him by name, they do include the titles by which he is also known on his coins: ("Maharaya Gushana" in year 122 (65 CE) and 134 of the Azes or Aja era, and as Mahārāja (Rājātirāja) Devaputra from 136 (79 CE) of the Azes era which is popularly known as the Vikrama era. See, for example, Kumar (1973), p. 44 and Sims-Williams and Cribb (1995/6), pp. 103-104. Some authorities place the beginning of the Azes or Vikrama era in 58 BCE, but the Indian sources seem quite definite that it began in 57 BCE, and so it is this year I have made my calculations from, remembering of course, that the apparent difference may well have been due to the overlapping of the years in our calendar. See, for example, Jain (1964), pp. 41-42, 65-66, 80; Kumar (1973), pp. 44, 243.

The Vikrama (or Azes) years began in the month of Kārttika or Kārtika (roughly October in our calendar), while the Saka era of 78 CE began on the first moon of the month of Caitra or Chaitra – the beginning of the vernal equinox, usually in March by our calendar.

From this we know that Kujula ruled from at least 65 to 79 CE. However, there is also a relationship that can be made with the reign of Gondopharnes ("Maharaya Guduvhara"), an Indo-Parthian king whose reign can be dated with a strong degree of confidence from 20 CE to at least 45/46 CE (on the basis of an inscription in year 103 of the Azes era which is dated to the 26th year of his reign, plus other supportive evidence – see Joe Cribb in Sims-Williams and Cribb (1995/6), pp. 100 and 103-104).

> "Gondopharnes was a Parthian viceroy of Arachosia who became independent of the Parthian kings. He occupied Kabul and Taxila, but soon lost Kabul and continued to rule over Taxila for a long period. He acceded to the throne in 20 A.D." Kumar (1973), p. 36, n. 32.

We know from coins that there were several other short-lived Indo-Parthian kings at Taxila after Gondopharnes. These Indo-Parthian kings may have continued to rule the Punjab and the eastern part of Gandhara from Taxila until the advance of Kujula into the region sometime after 55 CE (according to my dating of his invasion of Puda or Parthuaia/Parthyene) – see notes 13.10 and 13.12.

"These general indications correspond closely with the evidence of the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, datable to the period AD 40-70. The *Periplus* mentions that the lower Indus region is ruled by Parthian princes. The Parthian coins of this region are dateable to the same context by being overstruck on and by the coins of Nahapana, identified in the *Periplus* as the king of Barygaza (Broach). The last coins issued by the lower Indus Parthians are in the name of Sasan, the second successor of Gondopharnes as Parthian king of Gandhara and Taxila. The lower Indus Parthian coins are followed by copies in the name of Kujula Kadphises (Cribb 1992, 1995).

The Takht-i-Bahi inscription therefore appears to date Gondopharnes' reign to *c*. AD 20-45, and places Kujula Kadphises' rule in Gandhara, Taxila and the surrounding region, into the slot created by the king "Kushan" inscriptions, i.e. *c*. AD 64-78, coinciding with the period of Gondopharnes' successors Abdagases and Sasan." Cribb (1999).

There has been considerable speculation in the past as to why the Chapter on the Western Regions of the *Hou Hanshu* only mentions the first two of the "Great Kushans" by name. As we now know from the Rabatak Inscription, these must refer to Kajula Kadphises and his son Wima Taktu. There is no mention Wima Kadphises or Kanishka.

I think it may at last be possible to say why this is so. We are told by the compiler of the *Hou Hanshu* himself, Fan Ye, about his main sources for the 'Chapter on the Western Regions' in his Commentary at the end of the chapter:

"Now, the events of the *jianwu* period (25-55 CE) onward have been revised for this Section on the Western Regions, using those that differ from earlier records, as reported by Ban Yong at the end of the reign of Emperor An (107-125 CE)."

That is, Ban Yong made a report to the Chinese Emperor on the Western Regions about 125 CE. Ban Yong had previously only made one brief and unsuccessful foray into the "Western Regions" in 107 CE, and had only managed to reach Dunhuang. The "Western Regions" are said to have been out of touch with China for a further 10 years.

It is likely that effective communication by China across this region to the Da Yuezhi had been cut sometime before 107.

The first section of the Chapter on the Western regions tells us: "Following the death of Emperor Xiaohe [near the end of 105 CE], the Western Regions rebelled. In the first *yongchu* year [107 CE], of the reign of Emperor An, the Protectors General Ren Shang and Duan Xi, and others, were surrounded and attacked several times. The Imperial Government proclaimed that the post of Protector General should be abolished because these regions were remote, difficult, and dangerous to reach."

Ban Yong did not enter the Western Regions beyond Dunhuang until 126 CE – see Chavannes (1906), pp. 246 and 253. I assume that he got most of the details for his report to the Emperor from what he had been told, and (almost certainly) the notes of his famous father, General Ban Chao, who had re-established Chinese power in the region in 73 CE (*ibid*. p. 218) and did not retire to the capital Loyang until the 8th month [31st August to 29th September] of 102 CE (*ibid*., p. 243). Ban Chao, sadly, died the very next month at the age of 71 (or 70, by "Western" reckoning).

Wima Kadphises and Kanishka are probably not mentioned in this chapter because they had not yet come to power before Ban Chao left the Western Regions in 102 CE (and quite possibly not before the Western Regions rebelled in late 106 CE – see note 1.43). Following this there was a general breaking-off of relations with China and constant unrest with reports that the Xiongnu were vying for power in the region and that, during the *yuanchu* reign period, that is, sometime between 114 and 120 CE, Yuezhi troops put Chen Pan (who had been a hostage with them) on the throne of Kashgar.

Joe Cribb in his 1999 article makes several very important points on the dating of the Kushan kings based on the finds of Kushan coins and copies of Kushan coins in Khotan. Notes in square brackets are mine.

"On the basis of the suggested linkage between the first two Kushan kings in the Rabatak inscription and the first two Kushans in the Chinese source, it can be proposed that Vima I Tak[to] had been occupying the Kushan throne long enough before AD 107 and perhaps even before AD 90 [when a Kushan army unsuccessfully invaded the Tarim Basin] to "conquer India". This is clearly an important consideration for any understanding of Kushan chronology and its implications for Kushan history

Khotanese Connections

The above references to Ban Chao's campaigns suggest that there was a close link between Chinese Turkestan and the early Kushans. This is given a concrete dimension by the discovery of coins of the first four Kushan kings at the ancient site of Khotan, Ban Chao's military base AD 73-107 [actually Ban Chao returned to China in 102]. Hermaeus imitations attributed to Kujula Kadphises were used as blanks for overstriking by a Khotanese king. Kujula Kadphises' bull and camel coin design was copied by another Khotanese king on his coins. A bull and camel coin of Vima I Tak[to] and a few regular copper coins of Vima II Kadphises have been found at Khotan. More than twenty small copper coins of Kanishka I have been found in the vicinity of the site, some together with coins of the Khotanese kings. One Khotanese king copies the denomination system of these small Kanishka I coins. The Khotanese kings associated through their coins with Kujula Kadphises should be dated before Ban Chao's occupation of Khotan AD 73-107 [actually 73-102 – see above], and the coins associated with Kanishka I after it (Cribb 1984-5)."

Chinese control of the Tarim Basin was not re-established until 127 CE, about two years after Ban Yong had made his report to the Emperor. Therefore it is possible that Wima Kadphises did not take power before 102 CE (and, perhaps, not before 107, when the Chinese lost all communications with the region). It seems almost certain to me that, if there had been a new Kushan king before 102, Ban Chao would have quickly become aware of it and there would have been some record of this fact in Ban Yong's report.

Additional Considerations

It is possible that the Śaka Era was not inaugurated, as so many scholars in the past have suggested, to mark Kanishka's first year on the throne, or his first conquests in India but, far more likely, it was to commemorate the gains made by Wima Taktu ("Soter Megas" – "The Great Saviour" – entitled in Chinese, *Gaozhen* 高珍 – which translates as something like: "Precious Benefactor"). He possibly earned these exalted titles when he expanded Kujula's conquests of Jibin and western Gandhara, right across the Punjab plains at least as far as Mathura, well to the southeast of modern Delhi.

It seems likely, therefore, that we have here at last, the real explanation for the evocatively named "Saka Era" of 78/79 CE, which is still in common use in India today. This era began on the first moon day of the month of Caitra in 78 CE, which was about the month of March by our calendar – see Jain (1964), pp. 66 and 80.

"To reduce Śaka dates (elapsed years) to dates AD, 78 must be added for a date within the period ending with day equivalent to December 31 and 79 for a later date. For Śaka current years the numbers to be added are 77 and 78. The official Śaka year is the elapsed year, starting from the day following the vernal equinox. A normal year consists of 365 days, while the leap year has 366. The first month is Chaitra, with 30 days in a normal year and 31 in a leap year; the five following months have 31 days, the others 30." *NEB*, 4, p. 574.

Secondly, I would like to repeat the possibility that "Kanishka's Era", which now seems we can confidently state began in 127 CE – see Falk (2001), may not reflect the date when he actually took the throne. It does take time to raise and organise a large military campaign (not to mention the time taken up by mourning and installation

ceremonies). It seems unlikely that Kanishka would have been ready to launch such a project immediately upon his assumption of his reign.

In fact, it seems more likely that the era was inaugurated to commemorate Kanishka's extensive conquests of the central Ganges region (and probably further east, perhaps as far as the Bay of Bengal). The Rabatak Inscription dated in year one of this era describes these conquests, and three inscriptions mention his name from the Central Ganges region in the very early years of the era (one from Kosam or Kauśambī in year 2, and two from Sarnath in year 3).

It is likely also that Kanishka extended his power over the lower Indus or Sind region about this time, but he may have been satisfied with receiving the voluntary submission of the rulers of this region.

So what does all this indicate? Only that it is possible that Kanishka was on the throne for some time before he set out on his conquests of Eastern India in 127 CE, and that his era was established after his return, to commemorate his great victories.

It is just possible that there is some truth to the legend repeated by Xuanxang. It could be that a "Chinese hostage or hostages" of whom Kanishka had become very fond, was based on the story reported in the *Hou Hanshu* that a Kushan ruler held the Kashgar prince Chen Pan as a hostage, then sent troops to place him on the throne of Kashgar (during the *yuanchu* period, sometime between 114 and early 120 CE, and that Kanishka was directly involved.

It is, perhaps, worth noting here that later Buddhist documents indicate that, after his conquests in Eastern India (i.e. sometime not very long after 127 CE), Kanishka defeated the king of Parthia killing 900,000 Parthians altogether. This conquest is said to have led to remorse and Kanishka's conversion to Buddhism. See Zürcher (1968), pp. 386-387.

Unfortunately, so little is known about this period of Parthian history that I have been unable to find any evidence for or against this tradition. I would be grateful if anyone could provide information which might relate to this reported Kushan invasion.

Appendix F: Comments on the Names and Titles of Qiujiu Que 丘就卻 (Kujula Kadphises) and his son Yan Gaozhen 閻高珍 (Wema Taktu).

These comments are about aspects of some names and titles associated with Kajula and his son. I have not discussed such commonly accepted titles as Maharaja ("Great King"), Rajatiraja ("King of Kings"), and Devaputra ("Son of Heaven"), nor is the list comprehensive.

The Chinese name Qiujiu Que 丘就卻 = Kujula Kadphises

Sims-Williams points out in his appendix on "The names of Kujula Kaphises and Vima Taktu in Chinese" – Sims-Williams (1998), p. 89: "Qiu-jiu-que should derive from k^huw-*dzuw-kh¹ak*." As can be easily seen, the first two syllables *Qiujiu* provide a quite acceptable transcription of the first two syllables of *Kuju(la)*. Pulleyblank offers a possible substitution of another character for the final *que* 卻, which I find unconvincing – see Sims-Williams, *ibid.*, but I have no better argument to offer.

The name 'Kujula' and the title 'yavuga'

The name Kujula appears to be a personal name and not a title. Its origins are not clear but it is of great interest to find it was used the early Sakas who first invaded northwestern India in the second century BCE.
        On his earliest coins, before he took on the exalted titles of *Maharayasa Rayarayasa* and *Maharajasa*

Rajatirajasa, we find 'Kujula' using various forms of the title *yavuga* (later yabgu < Chinese *xihou*). This is of great interest, for both the name and the title were used by the earlier Saka rulers in India:

> "The Taxila copper-plate of the year 78 [probably of the Azes/Vikrama era, and thus = 21 CE] mentions Liaka Kusuluka, who is characterized as a *kshaharata* and as kshatrapa of Chukhsa, i.e. probably present Chachh, immediately west of Taxila.
>
> The designation *kshaharāta* is well known from a different part of India. It is used about some members of another Saka dynasty, the so-called Western Kshatrapas of Kāṭhiāwār and Mālava. In a Nāsik inscription of the 19th year of Siri Puḷumāyi a *Khakharātavasa*, i.e. evidently *Kshaharātavaṁśa*, is mentioned, and it is perhaps most probable that *kshaharāta* was the name of a family or clan.
>
> The term *kusuluka* is also known from other sources. Liaka Kusuluka is evidently the same person who has issued coins with the legend ·ΛΙΑΚΟ ΚΟΖΟΥΛΟ. These coins are imitations of those of Eucratides, but we are more justified to draw chronological conclusions from this fact than in the case of Maues.
>
> The Greek spelling shows that the actual sound was *kuzūla*, and this *kuzūla* is possibly the name of a family, as suggested by Professor Lüders, in which case the Kuzūlas must have belonged to the larger group of the Kshaharātas.
>
> We shall see later on that the same designation *κοζουλο* [= Kujula] is used about the oldest of the Kushāṇas, who came to India not via the Indus country, but form the north-west. It is therefore probable that Liaka was descended from the ancient Saka rulers of Ki-pin, and that his family had not come to India from Seistān.
>
> There is another detail which seems to point in the same direction. Liaka had a son, Patika, who seems to be spoken of in the copper-plate as a *jaüva*, and this *jaüva* is most probably the same title which is used by the early Kushāṇa ruler designated *Κοζουλο* in the forms *ζαοος*, *yavuga*. We learn from Chinese sources that this title was used in a series of principalities extending from Wakhān and towards Kābul, i.e. in, and in the neighbourhood of, Ki-pin." Konow (1929), pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

As we now know, this title, *yavuga*, probably derives ultimately from the Chinese and eventually found its way into Turkish:

> "*ιαβγο*, title of Kushan kings (= Pkt. *yavuga-*, *yaüa-*, Gk. Ζαοου) < 翁侯 *xihou* 'allied prince' (EMC *xip-ɣəw*); Toch. B *yabko*, Turkish *yabɣu* etc." Sims-Williams (2002), p. 229, Table 3.

It was used to denote a semi-independent ruler, usually in some sort of confederation, and is also recorded (in its Chinese form, *xihou*) as being employed by the Wusun and Kangju peoples.

Kujulas' titles: '*Īśvara*' and '*Mahiśvara*'

> "… in the case of the concerned Kuṣāṇa monarch [Kujula Kadphises] these ["*Īśvara*" and "*Mahiśvara*"] are two different titles as admitted on all hands and speak of the issuer as "the lord (and) a devotee of the god Maheśvara [= Śiva]".[193]
>
> 193. The correct Sanskrit renderings would be *Īśvarasya* and *Māheśvarasya* respectively."

Shastri (1999), p. 58 and note 193.

Kujulas' titles: '*Dharmathida*' and '*Sachadharmathida*'

Baldev Kumar (1973), p. 33 finds evidence in Kujula's titles that he had, "adopted Buddhism as his religion." He gives as evidence: "The title "Dharmathida" (Skt. Dharmasthita = stead-fast in faith) and "Sachadharmathida" (Skt. *Satyadharmasthita* = steadfast in true faith) are essentially Buddhist epithets." I am

not sure how to reconcile these titles with the clearly Śaivite titles *Īśvara* and *Mahiśvara* described in the paragraph above. It seems to me that they could have been either Hindu or Buddhist titles.

     Kumar also believes that Kujula's conversion to Buddhism is corroborated by the story of the Yuezhi envoy giving oral teachings on the Buddhist sutras to a student at the Chinese capital in 2 BCE.

     However, I suggest that, from the evidence we have available, it is most unlikely that Kujula was ruling at that time.

Kajula's title, or name, "Kara": For the argument that the title *Kara* or *Gara* as used by Kujula referred to his descent from the Gara people = the Yuezhi, see note 13.1.

The name 閻 *Yan* = Wima or Vima

The first name of the two Wimas (Wema, Ooeemo, etc.), Wima Kadphises and Wima Taktu, possibly derives from that of Yima, who was "...in ancient Iranian religion, the first man, progenitor of the human race, son of the Sun" (*NEB*, Vol. X, (1976), p. 820). This suggestion finds support in the following quote:

> "On a unique coin of the Kushan king Huvishka, an eagle (or hawk) is carried on the right hand of Yima or Yama (Iamsho), the primordial king of the Iranians, (p. 31, fig. 67). The eagle (or hawk) symbolises the legitimacy of kingship. This symbol of Verethragna was also attached to the head of Pharro, the god of treasure, in Kushan coin designs (p. 53, fig. 76). The same motif was also introduced in Gandharan Buddhist sculpture and became the model of Vaisravana, guardian of the North, one of the four Buddhist *Lokapalas* (p. 33, fig. 68). Therefore, the design of a bird used in the decoration of the crown of Vaisravana in Japan, like the image of the king from Hatra, originated in Gandhara." Tanabe (1993), pp. 78-79

According to a "Glossary of Zoroastrian terms" on the Internet (http://www.avesta.org/zyglos.html - downloaded on 20th June 2003), Yima's full name was "Yima Khshaeta' who, in mediaeval times was known as "Jamshid."

     My hypothesis is backed up by the first character of the Chinese version of the name: *Yan* 閻 in Yan Gaozhen 閻高珍 (Wema Taktu), as Yan is not only commonly used to represent the Sanskrit sound *yam*, but specifically refers to the name of Yáma, the King of the Underworld who, in earlier texts such as the Rig-Veda: "is regarded as the first of men and born from Vivasvat, 'the Sun,' and his wife Saraṇyū...." Monier-Williams (1899), p. 846.

     In addition: "…Pulleyblank (1962, p. 105) has argued that the Old Chinese form [of the character 閻 *Yan*] may have been something like *îwēm, giving an excellent match…." see Sims-Williams (1998), p. 90.

     This remarkable conjunction of transcriptions and early Indo-Iranian mythology possibly indicates the original derivation of the name Wima (Vima).

(Wima) Taktu (and Takshama?)

There is, as yet, no satisfactory explanation of the names or titles: "Taktu" and "Takshama," nor can we be sure they refer to the same king, although it seems likely. All that one can say is that they are reminiscent of the name of the important city and kingdom of Taxila (ancient forms: Takshasīlā, Takkasīlā; Takṣaśilā), and *Ta-kṣa-ka* (Skt. *Takṣaka*), the name of a *nāga*-king mentioned in the Khotanese Buddhist "history", the so-called, 'Prophecy of the Li Country' – see Emmerick (1967), pp. 39 and 96, or 'The Annals of the Li Country' – see Thomas (1935), p. 113.

The Chinese name Yan Gaozhen 閻高珍 for Wema Taktu

I have pointed out above that the character Yan 閻 = EMC jiam, is possibly derived from 'Yima' or 'Yama', who was "...in ancient Iranian religion, the first man, progenitor of the human race, son of the Sun," He is also known in early Indian texts as Yáma, in an identical role. This would seem to be the Kushan king's personal name, and

it is of great interest that it was also given to his son, Wima Kadphises.

The rest of the Chinese "name," *Gaozhen*, appears to be a translation of a foreign title:

Gao 高 has, as its primary meaning, 'tall; high,' but it is also used to translate: 'superior; excellent; eminent; sublime; noble; to honour; to respect." *GR* No. 5891. Karlgren 1129a reconstructs its pronunciation as: *kog / kâu and Pulleyblank gives the EMC as: kaw.

Zhen 珍 means: 'precious, excellent; perfect; rare.' The phonetic reconstructions are: K453i *ti̯en / t'i̯ĕn; EMC trin.

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MILITARY

Further Reading

19th Century Developments

The wars which followed during the nineteenth century were generally religious rebellions. Under the Manchu dynasty a long-continued system of repression and outrage drove the Moslems of the far west, probably men of a more heroic cast than the traders of the southeast, to revolt and retaliation. In 1817, as a result of official injustice, intolerance, and murder, the oppressed Mohammedans in the west took up arms against their tormentors, and were driven by the Imperialist troops into the fastnesses of the savage tribes on the frontier, with the loss of many of their number. Nearly a hundred thousand people fled over the mountains (or died while trying), in order to join their kindred people in West Turkestan.

The first attempt to expel the Chinese was made in 1822 by Jahangir, who was repulsed and retreated to the country south of Issik Kul, where he defeated a Chinese expedition. In 1825 misgovernment again drove the people of Turkestan to rebellion under Jehangir ; he overran the whole country. In 1826 he again tried to win Kashgar, and this time with success. Enormous forces were organized for its recovery, and after a trial by champions, in which a Kalmuk archer defeated a Khokandian armed with a musket, the Chinese won the day, and Jahangir was captured and put to death. Confiscations and executions followed, and 12,000 Moslem families were deported to Hi and settled as serfs under the name of Tarantchis. Forts, too, were built at all important centers and Chinese authority seemed to be stronger than ever.

In 1846, the result of the British operations against China and the weakness of that empire becoming known, the sons of Jahangir attempted another expedition. Kashgar was captured by treachery ; but the tyranny of the victors alienated the province, and the Chinese garrison at Yarkand was strong enough to expel the motley gathering of Kirghiz and Khokandi adventurers, in whose wake some 20,000 families left their homes and crossed the Terek Dawan in mid-winter. At Mong-Mien another outbreak was induced by the slaughter of

more than 16,000 men, women and children, who were murdered like sheep at the instance of the Chinese officials.

The Taiping rebellion, which raged from 1850 to 1864, had laid waste the richest provinces of China. In 1855, apart from this convulsion, a fierce Moslem insurrection broke out in Yunnan. The rebellion in Yunnan was stimulated by a fearful massacre of Mohammedans, following on a petty quarrel, and was continued for some eighteen years. After a government led massacre of the Muslim population of the provincial capital Kunming, a Chinese Muslim scholar started a rebellion and in 1856 established an independent Islamic state centered in northwest Yunnan. The state survived for almost 16 years. Following the quelling of other major rebellions, the Chinese Emperor ordered his troops to concentrate their efforts on Yunnan; the massacres that ensued wiped out the majority of Muslims in the region. Estimates of the percentage killed range from 60 to 85%.

In 1862 there was a rebellion among the Moslems of Shensi and Kansu, which gradually spread across the desert. The Provinces of Kansu and Shensi were by far richer, and more populous in the early 19th Century than at the end of the century. The reason is because they were overrun and laid waste by a twofold rebellion. The first, that of the Taipings, affected especially the Yangtze region, in the South. The second, by some accounts still more disastrous, devastated the whole of the North. This was the Mahomedon revolt, which broke out there in 1861, and was completely put down only in 1878, after the taking of Khotan, the last stronghold of the rebels. The number of those who were then hilled in the two Provinces, is estimated to be about 10,000,000.

The Tunann revolt broke out in Kansu in 1861, and was caused by the Moslem aspiration to restore the Khoja dynasty. The rebellion spread Westward, and extended to Hi and Eastern Turkestan or Kashgaria. Wali Khan Khoja occupied Kashgar in 1867 and massacred the Chinese. Surrounding himself with fanatical Khokaudis, he ill-treated and oppressed the population, enforcing five daily attendances at the mosques, by means of cruel punishments, and forbidding the time-honored custom of plaiting the hair. Thanks to his unpopularity the Chinese army which attacked the usurper met with no resistance, and the Khoja fled back to Andijan, followed, it is said, by some fifteen thousand families. But probably all these numbers are exaggerated.

In the revolt of 1863, the Uygurs were successful in expelling the Manchus. The revolt of the Daranes or Dungenes, Mohammedan inhabitants of mixed Tartar and Chinese descent, which broke out in 1863, and was followed by a rising of the Kirghiz Tartars, resulted in a few years in the expulsion of the Chinese, and the subjection of all the revolted provinces to Mohammed Yakub Beg [Yakoob Beg], a military chief from Khokan. Turkestan (Kashgaria) remained in nominal subjection during the course of the Taiping rebellion ; but in 1864 its people again threw off the Chinese yoke. A third center of rebellion, the Dungani tribe, established its power over the eastern part of the Sinkiang, and overran the whole of Kansu, its forces penetrating as far as Shensi and even into Hupeh. In 1866, an unconnected rising in Ili placed that country under an independent Mohammedan government.

In Turkestan, south of the Tien Shan, the rebellion was followed by a confused swelter of contending factions, from which, in 1866, Yakub Beg emerged as conqueror and ruler of the western part of the territory, comprising the khanates of Kashgar and Yarkand. The kingdom was recognized by the Ottoman Empire, the Tsarist Russia, and the Great Britain. Beg gradually consolidated his dominion, the area of which in 1874 was estimated at 570,000 square miles, with a population of about 1,000,000. The establishment of a new state in Central Asia naturally attracted to a high degree the attention of the Governments of Great Britain and Russia, and active negotiations were carried on by both with Yakub Beg, who at first assumed the title of Attalik-Ghaza (Head of the Warriors). His bloody exploits were known even to the European world, and his sudden elevation to regal power was the theme of much admiring comment. His government was based on the Moslem law, and was very onerous. But his glory was short.

The imperial power was at a low ebb as a result of the Taiping rebellion and the subsequent disorders in several parts of the empire ; but as soon as men and money could be provided, the Mohammedan ulcer was dealt with, and in 1867 Tso Tsung-tang was charged with the task. A man of rugged simplicity, sober and frugal in his habits, a strict disciplinarian and much beloved of his soldiers, he combined consummate generalship with a policy of punishing rebellious cities by wholesale massacres and treacherous atrocities. He had learned his terrible lesson in the Taiping rebellion - "If I destroy them not, if I leave root or branch, they may destroy me"; and his duty was to his emperor and the empire.

Back came the Chinese and down went Yakoob Beg, his sun setting in a sea of blood. Being afraid of the Tsarist expansion into the Eastern Turkestan, Great Britain persuaded the Manchus to conquer Eastern Turkestan. The money for the Manchu invasion was granted by the British Banks. Tso Tsung-tang's campaign began in 1867 at Siangyangfu in Hupeh. Thence he advanced on Sianfu, which he took, and drove the rebel forces from Shensi. Then he entered Kansu, reconquering city after city, and driving the enemy before him, until, in 1870, he came before the walls of Suchow. Here he was stayed and began a siege which lasted nearly three years, during which he subsisted his troops by making them grow their own food. Having obtained foreign siege-guns, he captured the city in October, 1873, reducing it to a heap of ruins, and killing men, women and children indiscriminately. This was the last rebel stronghold in Kansu. He then advanced on Barkul and Hami, which he took, putting the entire population to the sword ; and he adopted the same measure of pacification at the taking of Manas in November 1876.

Large forces attacked the Eastern Turkestan in 1876. The Chinese Government, having restored order at home, was preparing a formidable force for the reconquest of its lost possessions beyond the Gobi. The task was very difficult, owing to the width of the desert, estimated at about 1200 miles, but the Chinese army was well disciplined, well equipped, and well led, the difficulty as to supplies being successfully overcome in a very simple manner. The advanced guard sowed crops in one of the rare oases, and an abundant harvest was thus provided in the following autumn. As soon as this was gathered in, an army 50,000 strong advanced without encountering any serious opposition. In 1872, the Chinese General Tso Tsungt'ang at the head of the Impérialiste, attacked the rebels, and took successively their strongholds, at Kami, Urumtsi, Yarkand and Kashgar. In the spring of 1876 it reached the neighbourhood of Urumchi. The capture of this town in August 1876, followed by that of Manas, fully re-established Chinese authority to the north of the Tian Shan.

By the capture of Manas the Dungani forces had been eliminated from the scene, and he had come in conflict with Yakub Beg. Over him he gained a victory at Turfan, and a second at Korla; soon after, in May, 1877, Yakub Beg died, either by poison or from disease. The Chinese commander, after Korla, captured in succession Kashgar, Yarkand, and, Khotan. The revolt was finally crushed by the taking of Khotan, 03 January 1878. By these victories Kashgaria was restored to the imperial rule, with such of its inhabitants as had survived. After this splendid campaign, which may be compared with the most brilliant efforts of Western commanders, Tso was ennobled as Marquis. The Celestials showed moderation in the hour of victory. They deprived the population of their horses, to prevent a fresh rising, but they appointed Moslem headmen and also recognized the religious law of Islam.

In 1884, Turkestan was incorporated into the Mandchu Empire. The Chinese-Manchu capturers gave to the Eastern Turkestan the name Xinjiang which meant "new territory", New border" or "New Dominion". This Chinese dependency, under the Empire, was placed under the general jurisdictional oversight of the Viceroy of Kansu and Shensi.

ASIA-PACIFIC

CHINA | MUSLIM | US

Uighurs slam Chinese 'occupation' at Paris congress

By Jan van der Made (/auteur/jan-van-der-made/)   Issued on 12-07-2016 • Modified 20-07-2016 to 11:38

Paramilitary police officers outside a shopping mall in Hotan, Xinjiang in 2015

AFP

Uighurs from China's Xinjiang province accused Beijing of stepping up repression in the majority-Muslim region and vowed to end the Chinese "occupation" when they met near Paris this week. But not everybody present was convinced that the World Uighur Congress (WUC) is equipped to lead the Uighur minority.

Some 150 Chinese Uighurs met at the fifth WUC near Paris on 11-13 July.

Currently some 20 million Uighurs live in the western Chinese Xinjiang region.

They are tightly controlled by Beijing, which sees the area as a source of separatism, potential terrorism and general unrest.

The fifth WUC (http://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/) meeting started on Monday, lasting for three days, the current chairperson is exiled former businesswoman Rabyia Kadeer.

The meeting was held in a hotel near Charles de Gaulle Airport, after being moved away from its original venue at the French Senate in the centre of the French capital.

But the distance does not affect the spirit of activism.

"We are looking at our nation's independence and full freedom," says Ilshat Hassan Kokbore, a WUC vice-president. "We did have already two independent modern republics, the first one was founded in 1933, on 12 November, the second in 1944, on 12 November as well.

"This is our dream and our forefathers already created the foundation for us, and we need just to revitalise it and make it happen again."

In an effort to strengthen their position, exiled Uighurs try to link up with other separatist groups, such as the Tibetans and the Inner Mongolians, but also with Chinese dissidents, all people Beijing sees as "enemies of the state".

There have been some unsuccessful attempts at dialogue with the Chinese state. And the situation deteriorated after the 9-11 attacks by Islamists on the US.

"The Chinese utilised the 9-11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Towers as an excuse to put more pressure on the Uighurs and also try to convince the international community to put pressure on the Uighur independence movement," Kokbore says. "This created some difficulties."

In total 21 Uighurs were detained in the US's Guantanamo Bay detention centre on suspicion of taking part in terrorist activities. They were later released. They now live in exile in remote places such as the Pacific island of Palau.

"We are very grateful to the US government and the Western countries," says Kokbore.

"They differentiate between our movement and terrorism. Because of our Muslim background, sometimes people blindly believe some prejudice, saying that Islam promotes violence.

"But Uighur people are different. Yes we are Muslim but we are very peaceful."

Maybe outside China, people see the difference between what Kokbore calls the "Uighur issue" and terrorism but the Chinese state has toughened its stance.

"Uighurs' daily life is also threatened by the Chinese government," says Dolkun Isa, the WUC general secretary. "So is private life. Police can just knock the door and ask why a relative is visiting you. And tell him or her to register. This is a private issue!

"You can't even grow a beard!"

And during the last Ramadan, police were harassing people who abstained from taking food at daytime, the activists say.

"That's why sometimes people get feelings of revenge, because they don't have any opportunity to enjoy their freedoms. They don't have any chance. That's why sometimes they turn to violence."

There was animated discussion at the meeting.

But there was also speculation that there might be no contest for the leadership if sitting president, Rabyia Kadeer, decided to stand again.

"This reveals the weakness of the WUC," says Enver Tohti Bughda, a Uighur surgeon living in exile in London and a fierce critic of the congress. In spite of his criticism he was invited to come, but he lingered in the corridors without listening to the discussions going on inside.

"I joined the WUC and at the beginning I was really excited. But the same excitement faded away when the first one, second one, the third one and produced no change. They were always talking the same language, there was no improvement, there's no new agenda."

He accuses WUC leaders of being reluctant to adopt democracy.

"They are coming from that communist system they have never met democracy," he comments. "Democracy can be implanted if the mind is ready. This is not the case. Our mind is still living in the 18th century."

Unfulfilled Promises

Published 📅 *Sun, 05/16/2004 - 12:00*
Mao Tse-tung
ON COALITION GOVERNMENT
April 24, 1945
From the
Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,
Foreign Languages Press
Peking 1967

pages 256-7
9. The Problem of the Minority Nationalities
The anti-popular clique of the Kuomintang denies that many nationalities exist
in China, and labels all excepting the Han nationality as "tribes". It has
taken over the reactionary policy of the governments of the Ching Dynasty and
of the Northern warlords in relation to the minority nationalities, oppressing
and exploiting them in every possible way. Clear cases in point are the
massacre of Mongolians of the Ikhchao League in 1943, the armed suppression of
the minority nationalities in Sinkiang since 1944 and the massacres of the Hui
people in Kansu Province in recent years. These are manifestations of a wrong
Han-chauvinistic ideology and policy.

In 1924 Dr. Sun Yat-sen wrote in the Manifesto of the First National
Congress of the Kuomintang that "the Kuomintang's Principle of Nationalism
has a twofold meaning, first, the liberation of the Chinese nation, and
second, the equality of all the nationalities in China" and that "the
Kuomintang solemnly declares that it recognizes the right to
self-determination of all the nationalities in China and that a free and
united republic of China (a free union of all the nationalities) will be
established when the anti-imperialist and anti-warlord revolution is
victorious".

The Communist Party of China is in full agreement with Dr. Sun's policy on
nationalities as stated here. Communists must actively help the people of all
the minority nationalities to fight for it, and help them, including all their
leaders who have ties with the masses, to fight for their political, economic
and cultural emancipation and development and to establish their own armies
which will safeguard the people's interests. Their spoken and written
languages, their manners and customs and their religious beliefs must be
respected.
****
Mao Tse-tung
SMASH CHIANG KAI-SHEK'S OFFENSIVE BY A WAR OF SELF-DEFENCE
July 20, 1946
From the
Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,
Foreign Languages Press
Peking 1969
page 95
(4) Agreement on the Draft Constitution. This agreement provided for the
establishment of a review committee to revise the draft constitution prepared
by the Kuomintang and laid down the principles for revision. In addition to
prescribing the principles governing the duties and powers of the National
Assembly and government organizations, special provisions were made regarding
"local government" and "the rights and duties of the people". With respect to
"local government", it provided that "the province shall be the highest unit
of local self-government"; that "the powers of the provincial government in
relation to those of the central government shall be defined according to the
principle of a fair distribution of powers"; that "the provincial governor
shall be elected by the people"; and that "the province may have a provincial
constitution which, however, must not contravene the provisions of the
national constitution". With respect to "the rights and duties of the people",
it provided that "all freedoms and rights which are generally enjoyed by the
people of a democratic country shall be protected by the constitution against
illegal violation"; that "if any provision is made by law regarding the

freedom of the people, it shall be aimed at the protection of such freedom and
not at its restriction"; that "drafting of labour may be provided for in local
laws, but not in the national constitution"; and that "the right of
self-government shall be guaranteed to minority nationalities who live
together in specific communities".

***

Mao Tse-tung
SPEECHES AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA(March 1955
)

From the
Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,
Foreign Languages Press
Peking 1977
page 170
..
In passing, a few words about minority nationality work. We must combat
Han chauvinism. Don't get the idea that it is the Han nationality that has
been helping the minority nationalities. In fact, the minority nationalities
have been helping the Han nationality a great deal. Some comrades like to brag
about the help given to the minority nationalities, but they don't realize
that we can't do without the minority nationalities. Who is it that inhabits
50 to 60 per cent of our territory, the Hans or the other nationalities? The
minority nationalities. Rich resources and hidden wealth abound in these
areas. Till now we have given the minority nationalities little help and in
some places no help at all, whereas the minority nationalities have rendered
help to the Hans. Some minority nationalities, however, must have our help
first before they can help us. Politically the minority nationalities have
given the Han nationality big help; their participation in the community of
the Chinese nation constitutes political help to the Han nationality. The
people of the whole country are pleased that the minority nationalities and
the Hans are united. So the minority nationalities have been a great help
politically, economically and in national defence to the whole country, the
whole Chinese nation. It is wrong to think that only the Hans have helped the
minority nationalities while the minority nationalities have not helped the
Hans, or to swell with pride over the little help given to the minority
nationalities.

*****

Mao Tse-tung
MANIFESTO OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY(October 1947)
From the
Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,
Foreign Languages Press
Peking 1969

page 151
(7) Recognize the right to equality and autonomy of the minority
nationalities within the borders of China.

****

Mao Tse-tung
ON THE TEN MAJOR RELATIONSHIPS
April 25, 1956
From the
Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,
Foreign Languages Press
Peking 1977

page 296
VI. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HAN NATIONALITY AND THE MINORITY
NATIONALITIES
Comparatively speaking, our policy on the relationship between the Han
nationality and the minority nationalities is sound and has won the favour of
the minority nationalities. We put the emphasis on opposing Han chauvinism.
Local-nationality chauvinism must be opposed too, but generally that is not
where our emphasis lies.

The population of the minority nationalities in our country is small, but the area they inhabit is large. The Han people comprise 94 per cent of the total population, an overwhelming majority. If they practised Han chauvinism and discriminated against the minority peoples, that would be very bad. And who has more land? The minority nationalities, who occupy so to 60 per cent of the territory. We say China is a country vast in territory, rich in resources and large in population; as a matter of fact, it is the Han nationality whose population is large and the minority nationalities whose territory is vast and whose resources are rich, or at least in all probability their resources under the soil are rich.

****

Mao Tse-tung
BE ACTIVISTS IN PROMOTING THE REVOLUTION (October 9, 1957)

From the
Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung,
Foreign Languages Press
Peking 1977
page 489
There should also be a ten-year programme for family planning. However, it should not be promoted in the minority nationality areas or in sparsely populated regions. Even in densely populated regions it is necessary to try it out in selected places and then spread it step by step until family planning gradually becomes universal. Family planning requires open education, which simply means airing views freely and holding great debates. As far as procreation is concerned, the human race has been in a state of total anarchy and has failed to exercise control. The complete realization of family planning in the future will be out of the question without the weight of society as a whole behind it, that is, without general consent and joint effort.

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UNPO Announces Berlin Conference on Uyghur Refugees

The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO), in cooperation with the World Uyghur Congress and the Society for Threatened Peoples, will be convening a conference entitled 'The Rights of Uyghur Refugees: Past and Present Challenges'. The event will take place over two days in Berlin, Germany, on 25-26 April 2016.

In recent years, an increasing number of Uyghurs have been forced to flee East Turkestan as a result of the ongoing repression of the community by the Chinese state. Following an outbreak of violence in 2009, the state mounted a violent crackdown, arresting thousands, with many others forcibly disappeared. Since then, the brutal repression has continued with severe restrictions on the practice of Uyghur religion and culture, justified as "security measures". In 2014 alone, 27,000 Uyghur were arrested for allegedly endangering state security.

As these refugees are crossing the border into neighbouring countries, including Cambodia, Malaysia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Kyrgyzstan, they are met with mistreatment and forced deportations, for example in 2015 the forced return of 109 Uyghurs held at a Thai immigration detention facility. Such actions by the surrounding states constitute serious violations of international law, in particular the 1951 Refugee Convention. As a consequence of these failures to respect international law, Uyghurs find themselves with few options, endangered both within the Chinese state and when they attempt to seek asylum abroad.

This conference will provide a forum in which members of the Uyghur diaspora, academic experts, government officials and international human rights defenders will be brought together to discuss and analyze the crisis and its roots. What's more, it will seek to provide strategies to help remedy, and ultimately resolve, the crisis on both a short and long-term basis.

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Uyghur Identity

Contestation and Construction of Identity in a Conflict Setting

ABSTRACT

This study explores and discusses the dynamics of identity in conflict through examining Uyghur collective identity in the specific context of China as an emerging power. Particular attention is paid to how this identity is constructed and contested by different actors of the Xinjiang Conflict. The Xinjiang Conflict is a multifaceted conflict, consisting of both direct and structural violence. These dynamics of identity are based on different understandings of what it means to be a Uyghur, which is in line with existing research on contemporary conflicts that considers identity as a driving force of violence. Through a text analysis, this study sets out to assess *how Uyghur identity is constructed and contested in the context of the Xinjiang Conflict*, by primary actors; the Chinese government, Uyghur diaspora and the local Uyghur population in Xinjiang. As the Uyghurs' identity has been contested, and discontent is cultivated among the Uyghur community, the conflict between Uyghurs and the Chinese government (dominated by the majority ethnic group Han Chinese) has escalated since the mid-1990s. The findings advanced in this research conclude that Uyghur identity, in the context of conflict, is contested within different areas, such as language, culture, territory, religion and even time. This paper suggests that within these areas, identity is contested though the different processes of negotiation, resistance, boundary-making and emphasis on certain features of ones identity.

Key words: Xinjiang Conflict, China, Uyghur, Identity, and Text Analysis

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

CCP – Chinese Communist Party

ETIM – East Turkestan Islamic Movement

ETPRP – East Turkestan People's Revolutionary Party

ETR – East Turkestan Republic

PRC – People's Republic of China

TIP – Turkestan Islamic Party

UAA – Uyghur American Association

UHRP – Uyghur Human Rights Project

WUC – World Uyghur Congress

XUAR – Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

MAP OF CHINA[1]

[1] Lineback, Neil. *Maps101 News.* Accessed 9 May 2015
<http://demo.maps101.com/index.php?option=com_flexicontent&view=items&id=558:chinas-wild-west>

INTRODUCTION

PATTERNS OF CONFLICT AND IDENTITY

In June 2009, a decade long struggle in the northwest province of Xinjiang, People's Republic of China (PRC) reached unprecedented levels of violence when Uyghur protestors clashed with the Han Chinese population and the police in the provincial capital Urumqi. This violence followed the 'Strike Hard' punitive campaign executed by the Chinese government. This campaign included surveillances, raids and imprisonment of people engaging in 'terrorism, separatism, and extremism' – labelled the three evils, and had been an official policy since 1996 (Millward 2007:32). The state have since then used both public and private internal and external channels to place the blame for the increase in violence on extreme Islamist insurgency, and more specifically on alleged Uyghur terrorist groups wanting to split the motherland' and calling for their own Islamic state, East Turkestan (Xinhua 2014). Others have claimed that the protest started as peaceful[2]. Foreign media, for example, argue that, based on Uyghur narratives, it was the Chinese police force who attacked the demonstrators which in turn lead to violent reactions (The Economist 2009).

China has, during the past 20 years, emerged as a superpower with its influence reaching into all continents of the world (Watts 2012). Despite this interconnectedness with the outside world, until 2009, mainstream global media directed little attention towards the conflict between the Chinese state and the minority population Uyghurs. In the past 6 years, there has been a growing interest in the situation in northwestern China, where Xinjiang is situated. The region is rich in natural resources and comprises one-sixth of the territory of China, thus making it of great national interest. This wealth of natural resources has, according to many scholars, been the reason for the PRC's tight control in the region (Millward 2007, Han 2010, Holdstock 2010). Investment levels have increased dramatically during the past 20 years and so has the population, mostly due to Han migration from other provinces. By establishing the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR[3]) in 1955, the Chinese state acknowledged the territorial boundaries of the region and the identity of the group or groups exercising autonomy, in this case the Uyghur people. The Uyghurs are a Turkic-Muslim minority who speak Uyghur, a Turkic language closely related to Uzbek, currently written in Arabic script (Bovingdon 2010:xvi). In 2010 the Chinese authorities estimated 10 million Uyghurs living in XUAR, out of a population of 22 million. Out of the remaining 12 million, 8.6 million were Han Chinese and the rest minorities such as Hui and Kazak (SBX 2010)[4].

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[2] Allegedly, they protested against discrimination of Uyghurs in the south province of Guangdong. On this specific occasion it started as a demonstration calling on the Xinjiang's governor to come out and talk about the accusation against Uyghurs for rape in Guangdong, and murders of two Uyghurs (The Economist 2009).

[3] The abbreviation XUAR and the name Xinjiang will be used interchangeably throughout the paper.

[4] Finley (2006) discusses the discrepancies with official statistics of demographic distribution between Han and minorities in XUAR.

The conflict that has ravaged Xinjiang since late the 1980s has transformed into, what some consider, a possibly destabilising force for the Chinese government (Shichor 2005). The potential threat of this conflict to the PRC, as a secure and united state, has been researched by international scholars who mainly focus on exploring the causes of the conflict[5]. The conclusions from this research have been fairly similar. In opposition to the Chinese government's official explanation, research has argued for political issues of lack of political representation from Uyghurs, socio-economic disadvantages for Uyghurs in rural areas, and repression of religious and cultural practices as potential causes for the conflict. Despite the interest of international scholars and to some extent news media, foreign humanitarian intervention, from governments and non-governmental organisations, has not been overt or brought up as pressing concern (Finley 2013:20).

The Uyghur diaspora continues to clamour for an increase in international assistance. They have become politically engaged in the conflict and have sought to mobilise in order to lobby for greater global attention to be paid to the situation for the Uyghurs in Xinjiang. Strong opinions have been expressed by the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), the largest transnational Uyghur diaspora organisation, who claim that the implementation of internal Chinese economic and political campaigns have lead to a process of cultural genocide against the Uyghurs (WUC 2013). The Chinese state has responded by accusing the WUC of having hostile intentions and wanting to spread evil in China (Yan 2006). However, the perception of discrimination has maintained and is believed to have fuelled and strengthened the feeling of a threat against Uyghur identity, both in- and outside China (Han 2010, Holdstock 2010).

The Xinjiang Conflict is interesting due to its many different aspects, among them the collision between the discontent over marginalisation and inequality felt by the Uyghurs and the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) fight against terrorism. This contestation over the causes of the increased violence is at the heart of the conflict, and it is also what has placed significance of the Uyghurs and their collective identity at the centre of the battleground. The Uyghurs' identity as a culturally different, Muslim minority, different from the majority Han Chinese population has become what Hall argues "a matter of considerable political significance" (Hall 1996:29). It is in cases where an identity becomes salient, for example seen as overarching, natural and unique; that violent conflict becomes more likely (Sen 2006:xv), as it reinforces the idea of the 'self' and the 'other'. The relationship between conflict and identity has been defined as the centre of contemporary conflicts, where identity, involving strong attention to roots, beliefs and history serves as the basis for the polarisation between groups and thus is the driving force of conflicts (Kaldor 2013a,

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[5] See for example: Gladney (1990), Dillion (2004), Shichor (2007), Han (2010) and Holdstock (2010).

2013b). This contrast conflicts in the past where inter-state wars dominated in practice and literature (Kaldor 2013a:336). Today, identity is constructed in many violent conflicts as the struggle over the right to power and resources in the name of a specific group with a specific identity (Kaldor 2013b:5). These instances are particularly prevalent in "situations where sovereignty is weakened [...] [as opportunities are opened up] for new attempts to establish [...] collective identities" (Kaldor 2013a:344). Identity in this understanding can be seen as both the cause as well as the effect of a conflict.

What makes the Xinjiang Conflict unique is that China is widely considered a strong sovereign state. This contradicts Kaldor's argument that identity conflicts prevail through new 'friend-enemy' distinctions primarily in weakened state (*ibid.*). Further, the construction of identity is highly relevant in the case of the Xinjiang Conflict. The Uyghur identity is not only salient but also contested and it has been argued that the polarisation of Uyghur identity is both the cause (Dillion 2004) and the effect (Bovingdon 2010) of the conflict with the Chinese state. This paper argues that contestation of Uyghur identity has fuelled the conflict, and may have prolonged it to a point of intractability. This research utilises the idea of the boundary of collective identity and how different actors' presentation and articulation of identity markers may influence the construction and reconstruction of identity. This study also sets out to assess these dynamics of Uyghur identity[6] in the context of the Xinjiang Conflict, and thus contribute to future academic discussion and development of identity dynamics in asymmetrical conflict settings, which is something of great concern for the area of global studies, as it highlights the continued importance and essentiality of contemporary conflicts. It also provides a discussion of China's internal structures, which, in turn, can help to form an understanding of China's role in global issues and development.

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[6] For the purpose of this study Uyghur 'identity' will be used in singular, however it must be acknowledged that an Uyhur's identity is dynamic and pluralistic and the terminology 'identities' may be equally as valid.

AIM AND RESEACH QUESTIONS

This study aims to explore and discuss the dynamics of identity in conflict, through examining the Uyghur collective identity, how it is constructed and contested by different actors of the Xinjiang Conflict. This study seeks to draw conclusions about how identity is constructed, contested and manifested in contemporary conflicts, in the specific context of China as an emerging power.

The research question for this thesis is:
How is Uyghur identity constructed and contested in the context of the Xinjiang Conflict?

This main question will be guided by these sub-questions:
→ Within what areas is Uyghur identity contested?
→ How are identity markers and boundaries of Uyghur identity contested and negotiated?
→ How do the Chinese government, Uyghur diaspora groups and the Uyghur population present and articulate Uyghur identity?

The study examines the contestation of Uyghur identity from the perspective of different actors in the conflict, through the process of text analysis. When examining the dynamics of the Xinjiang Conflict three groups could be detected: the Chinese government, the Uyghur diaspora, and the Uyghur population in Xinjiang. The Chinese government, led by the Chinese Communist Party, is a main actor in the conflict. With a 'loud voice' the party has maintained a firm opinion on matters of the conflict. According to them it is not issues of grievances and identity, but of purposeful destruction of the Chinese state that has instigated violence in the region. It is also clear that the Uyghur diaspora had an influence on international public opinion about the Uyghurs as well as being a main actor in the conflict, and could therefore bring a global aspect of identity in conflict into the discussion. The last actor identified was the 'people', the Uyghurs who live in Xinjiang and who face the issues of the conflict on an everyday basis.

DELIMITATION

Conducting a study of a conflict by examining Uyghur identity in the context of the Xinjiang Conflict, allowed me to get a deeper understanding of the contestation of identity in a conflict setting. Whereas a field study could provide a broader understanding, it would require significant time and resources. This is also true for a comparative study. A comparative study of the Chinese state's relationship to other minority groups may provide a deeper understanding of how identity is contracted and contested in China. Central to the discussion of Uyghur-Han relations is for example the relationship between the Muslim

minority group Hui[7] and the Han Chinese, however this will not be in the centre of this study. In addition, this study will to not, apart from the background chapter, include a discussion of Uyghur identity before the 1990s and will instead focus on the past 20 years of the Xinjiang Conflict.

This paper acknowledges the existence of armed groups such as the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) and the Turkestan Islamic Party (TIP), which are active in the conflict between the Uyghurs and the Chinese state. The East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) has been labelled a terrorist group by the United States and the United Nations, and are frequently mentioned in most public statements from the CCP about the violence in XUAR (Tiezzi 2013 & Hua 2014). The Turkestan Islamic Party (TIP) is an armed group that took responsibility for the terror attack at Tiananmen Square in October 2013 (Holdstock 2010:6), claiming that it was a 'jihadi attack' on Chinese authorities. Strangely, the government in Beijing accused the ETIM and "uncultured youths", for the same attack (Hua 2014.). The size and the cohesion of these two groups has been questioned, with both organisations and their leadership maintaining low profiles and are thought to be hiding in Pakistan[8] (Mehsud & Golovnina 2014). Due to the limited data on these two groups, and the nature of this study being a text analysis, while discussing their influence on the conflict, I will instead focuses on a more influential and conspicuous actor, the World Uyghur Congress (WUC); a transnational diaspora organisation.

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[7] The "The Huis have been an integral part of the political map of China and Xinjiang since the mid-nineteenth century and form an intermediary position between Han and Uyghurs" (Rudelson & Jankowiak 2004:311).
[8] The Chinese states determination to eradicate terrorism has on a national level resulted in high securitisation of the Xinjiang region and it has now stretched to international cooperation. As of April 2015, the Chinese government has entered into a $46 billion transport and infrastructure plan together with the Pakistani government. The plan also includes cooperation to battle terrorist groups such as EITM and TIP (Tharoor 2015).

METHODOLOGY

To understand how identity, and in this specific case Uyghur identity, is constructed and contested in conflict, an interpretive approach has be used to seek to explore implicit social meanings and to describe a situation rather than explaining it. This study begins with the premise of a socially constructed reality, where meanings, ideas and practices are being scrutinised. As the analysis is from such a perspective the methodology chosen also starts from the position that the researcher's knowledge of reality is a social construction. In order to create interpretive analytical space this study is a qualitative study using text analysis. The collected texts have been interpreted in order to explore and develop an understanding of the construction and contestation of the Uyghur identity in the Xinjiang Conflict. The idea of using texts to study identity dynamics is to give room for the complexities of identity politics in contemporary conflicts.

The PRC, and specifically Xinjiang has been chosen for the study, because it is an interesting case in its own right regarding Chinas increased influence on the world stage and their relationship to the Uyghur minority people, but also because it illustrates more broadly the struggle between a strong authoritarian state and a terrorist threat or minority group civil right activists over questions of autonomy and identity. Further, it is also interesting in comparison to other patterns of minority nationalism and identity formation around the world (Lecours & Nootens 2009).

During the process of initial research, the book *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang* by the historian James Millward (2007) together with the book *The Art of Symbolic Resistance: Uyghur Identities and Uyghur-Han relations in Contemporary Xinjiang* by anthropologist Joanne N. Smith Finley (2013), served as a basis for identifying key actors in the Xinjiang Conflict. The three perspectives of the analysis that is the Chinese government, Uyghur diaspora and the Uyghur population, were selected due to their different connections to the conflict. During this processes of reading several markers of Uyghur identity were detected, such as clothing, territory and language. These factors later came to serve as a guiding tool when the research questions were constructed and the search for other sources began.

To answer the research question; *how is Uyghur identity constructed and contested in the context of the Xinjiang Conflict?*, multiple sources were scanned to find key statements and texts that were linked to the identity of the Uyghurs. A starting point was to build a theoretical understanding of identity construction, and its relation to conflict and violence. Many of the existing theories and research on identity, as expected, provide discussions on constructivist theory, of the idea of identity as subjective or objective as well as arguments for the importance of studying hybrid or pluralistic identities in a multicultural world. A

broad range of literature was examined and finally a selection of authors[9], on the basis of constructivist identity theory, was chosen. As the theoretical discussion of identity took shape, concepts such as boundary-making, negotiation, identity markers and resistance became visible – these were used as a guiding tool when conducting the research.

The sampling of data was not based on predetermined categories but was instead selected based on initial reading of the topic and themes that prevailed during background research (this is true for all three type of sources discussed below). These themes contributed to the chosen structure of investigation into theory and empirical data later in the research. For example the discussion of clothing and appearance was noticeable in the academic sources that research Uyghur identity and Uyghur-Han relations, as well as in governmental sources and in material from the World Uyghur Congress. This meant that the themes of investigation guided the results (the areas of contestation) and the analysis.

Further, questions such as; 'what does Uyghur identity entail?', 'which state-policies concerns these markers?', 'how does the Uyghur diaspora engage in the conflict?', were explored in order to reduce the material to answer the research question. These questions were therefore of assistance when deciding what material should be used and it also allowed me to shape the three sub-research questions. The process, which followed, included identification and organisation of key material and later, analysis of texts from key actors' perspectives concerning features of Uyghur identity, categorised as areas of contestation.

DATA COLLECTION AND SOURCES
The selected data has been collected from different primary and secondary sources. Primary sources of interest include press releases, publications and news items produced by the CCP. Academic work and journalistic sources have been used to explore Uyghur cultural, traditional, and religious identity (including Rudelson 1997, Yee 2003/2005, Bovingdon 2010, Finley 2013). Other articles, media statements, publications and conference reports from the diaspora umbrella organisation the World Uyghur Congress have provided useful information to further frame the views of the Uyghur diaspora. In order to fill the gap on some of the areas research, articles from international news agencies have also been utilised, this is due to their ability to present an overall picture of the conflict. The purpose of using different types of sources is to create an overall picture and a foundation for the analysis, which allows for different perspectives (Höglund & Öberg 2011:118) of what is being said about the Uyghur identity.

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[9] For example: Barth (1969), Eriksen (1993), Nagel (1994), Hall (1996), Sen (2006) and Kaldor (2013).

The following sections will critically examine the sources, focusing on how well the material is able to reflect the perspectives of the different actors: the Chinese government, the Uyghur diaspora and the Uyghur population in Xinjiang.

GOVERNMENT SOURCES

The information from the Chinese government[10] has been retrieved from several different sources, for example the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' homepage, the CCP homepage and several state-run news agencies. A major problem that was encountered during the research process was the censorship from the Chinese government. This obstacle has been discussed in many other academic works (Finley 2006, Millward 2007, Yee 2005). The CCP closely monitors activities of local and foreign journalists, which results in limited independent sources of news from the region (BBC 2009). Censorship by authoritarian states, both as a limitation of freedom of speech in social media and of researchers, is not unique to China, but happens in countries like Iran, Belarus, Egypt and Cuba as well. The outcome of this research was not that surprising, yet the extent of the states own limited information output was interestingly ominous, and intertwined with the subject of this thesis, and does therefore require further discussion.

When searching on the Foreign Ministry's homepage using search words such as 'Xinjiang', 'Uyghur', 'Ethnic' there were less than five hits. Instead different spellings of 'Uyghur', 'Uygur', 'Uighur' were used as search words as well as 'Conflict' and 'Culture', but there was a notice translated [by the author] into "Error retrieving the key words, the key words contained illegal words" (*Jiansuo chucuo, jiansuo ci zhong hanyou feifa ciyu*).

Another problem that became visible during the research was that many of the "issues" concerning the ethnic tensions in Xinjiang are not present on the central government's pages at all and when there is information it is very formal and lacks any greater detail. As the government's national and local pages did not give enough information for an in-depth study it became necessary to turn to state-run news agencies such as China Daily, Boxun, Qaramay Daily, Global Times and the main news agency Xinhua. What was noticeable was that much of the news, presented on the English version of Xinhua, is standardised news articles, which could be found on many of the other news sites. Further, almost all news agencies, both state-run and independent once refer to the state-run news agency Xinhua, which clearly shows that the government controls most media or at least is the main source of information.

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[10] The Chinese government, the Chinese state and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) will be used interchangeably throughout the paper. This decision was taken because the PRC is a one-party state, and, thus the CCP represents the whole state and the government,

Data collected via these sources could be interpreted as a form of propaganda by the state, promoting CCP policies (Finley 2006:132), which may prove an obstacle for the research. However, it is important to move beyond the limited information to instead assess what it means that the government have chosen not to, for example, include the larger minorities as a search word on their homepage. This will be discussed in the results section. What can be said about the sources used is that they reflect a public 'official' perspective of the CCP, and it is how they present news, policies and debates that serve as a base for the analysis of this paper.

DISAPORA SROUCES
The main sources used for this part of the study comes from the World Uyghur Congress homepage where they publish press releases, news letters and interviews with their spokesmen and the organisation's president Rabiyä Qadir. Chen (2011) concludes that the WUC are central to the social networks of the Uyghur diaspora and their political mobilisation. Concerning scholarly work on the Uyghur diaspora community, much of the research has focused on the used of social media and online networks by Uyghur to uphold and strengthen Uyghur identity outside the PRC (Vergani & Zeuv 2011, Chen 2011). The second part of data on Uyghur diaspora chosen for this study has mainly been collected from a study made by Guang and Debata between 2004 and 2008, where they conducted anthropological research of the Uyghur diaspora community in the United States.

ACADEMIC SOURCES
Due to the nature of this study, that is text analysis rather than fieldwork and interviews, I chose to focus on existing anthropological research on Uyghurs and their attachment to the Chinese state, their own identity and the conflict.

Fieldwork from Xinjiang is limited, especially on "politically sensitive subjects" (Finley 2006:147). Researchers have been subject to censorship or totally denied access to inquired areas by local authorities. For instance Herbert Yee writes that Uyghur-Han relations were not "suitable for survey research" (Yee 2003:35). When conducting his pilot research in 2000 on Uyghur-Han relations it was considered a sensitive subject, but he and his team still had more access and fewer restrictions on the questionnaires than when he conducted the extended version of the research in 2001. In the extended research 40 per cent of those contacted declined interviews, the sampling was limited to approved areas, and the research team were constantly under pressure from local official advising them to not conduct research on ethnic relations and conflict (Yee 2003). Despite such difficulties some conclusions can be drawn from the survey research, as the findings could be considered less biased than the extended research made in 2001, when the local authorities limited the scope of the research area and objects.

The central source in this part of the study comes from an expert in Uyghur studies, Joanne N. Smith Finley. She has conducted anthropological research on Uyghurs in Xinjiang during 1995-1996 and in 2004, with focus on contemporary relations between Han and Uyghur. Her research was chosen specifically because it is the vastest and most recent study of Uyghur identity. Her findings are combined together with two studies made by Herbert Yee (2003, 2005) as well as findings from Justin Rudelson's fieldwork made in Xinjiang in the late 1980's. In order to get a broader view of Han and Uyghur relations the book *The Uyghurs: Strangers in Their Own Land* (2010) by Gardner Bovingdon has been used as an additional source. Bovingdon presents a systematic approach to the conflict between Uyghurs and the Chinese state, seeking to scrutinise how and why a significant proportion of the Uyghurs have for the past 60 years resisted incorporation into the Chinese state. The extensive data is collected from interviews with mostly educated urban youth to middle-aged Uyghur and Han informants together with information from Chinese printed and broadcasted media, as well as Uyghur literature and music. Similarly to Finley, Bovingdon's research was conducted in between 1994 and 2005.

The fieldwork utilised to analyse identity markers and boundaries making by the Uyghurs is, though valid and fruitful, unfortunately based on research that was conducted in 1990s and early 2000s. More recent fieldwork research on the Uyghur identity and the Xinjiang Conflict is limited or non-existent; this might depend on the increased state control in the region and that it is a sensitive subject as the conflict has escalated. As scholars acknowledge in their work (Yee 2003, Bovingdon 2010, Finley 2013) many local Uyghur people fear prosecution and the international community does not know grassroots civil rights movements. Further, this study refrains, due to the scope and time limit of the thesis, to discuss the broader areas of prejudgment and mistrust, both among Uyghurs and Han Chinese and its influence on the conflict and construction of the Uyghur identity.

ANALYSIS

The theory presented in the study is not used as a model to explain reality, but rather to serve as a guiding tool for asking questions about the selected texts and analysis of these empirical observations. As the process of analysis moved forward in this research, ideas of identity evolved which changed the initial theoretical discussion, so called theory development (Yin 2003, 28-29). This paper presents several central theoretical concepts of identity and identity construction, these, among others, are boundary-making, negotiation and identity markers. The concepts are discussed in relation to conflict and actors within conflict in order to create a foundation for the result of the study.

When analysing identification processes, in this case contestation and construction of Uyghur identity, I have looked at how the different agents in the conflict express themselves and act in relation to identity issues (for example what identity markers they emphasised and how they positioned themselves in relation to the 'other' as well as to collective identity). The statements were then organised by areas of contestation as defined in the theory section, which have been analysed through the perspective of the key actors (CCP, Uyghur diaspora, Uyghurs in Xinjiang). When collecting and later analysing the data, key markers of identification processes became visible. These are territory, autonomy, religion, clothing, traditions and language. Intragroup dynamics is also included in the analysis as the findings of the research showed that it was not only areas of contestation that produced boundary-making between the actors of the conflict, but at the construction and contestation of identity also happened from within a group.

REFLECTIONS

In conflict research, available primary information from the conflict area depends on the press freedom and openness in the country. As mentioned previously, due to the existing censorship by the CCP, it is very difficult to "establish what is going on between the Uyghur in Xinjiang and the Chinese government" (Höglund & Öberg 2011:55). This specifically affects this study, as local Uyghur sources are almost non-existent (Millward 2007). Reporters Without Borders writes that 85 per cent of the Uyghur-based sources (in Uyghur, Mandarin and English) are inaccessible "both to Internet users based in Xinjiang and those abroad" (Reporters Without Borders 2009). This creates the problem of not being able to ascertain details of the conflict. Yet, it is through researchers that have been given access to the Xinjiang region, and Uyghur diaspora communities with local contacts that this study has been able to, to some extent, examine Uyghurs' contestation and construction of their identity.

A potential bias in the selection of data is that it is limited to predominately English sources. However, since I understand some Mandarin, and this was complimented with the help of a dictionary and the Pleco application, I was able to use to also use Chinese news agencies and the CCPs Chinese homepages, which opened up for more interesting material. Nevertheless, the translation of the material from English to Mandarin used in this study has been doubled checked with two Chinese friends[11] via email correspondence and WeChat.

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[11] They are He Wei and Yinrun Li. They are both Han Chinese, students at a University in Chengdu and they are not members of the CCP. The communication took place between the 20-26 of March 2015.

This author acknowledges that by choosing to interpret actions of a state, and its people, there is a risk of limiting the idea of identity to nationalism. However, as will be discussed in the study, the discourse of a nation-state is an important part of the identity both for the Han Chinese but also for the Uyghurs. Hence, while the disputed idea of Xinjiang and 'Uyghur-land' is taken into consideration in the analysis, a more nuanced understanding of identity is also used. Another general consideration that needs to be taken into account is that academic work that is scrutinised in this study, tells the narrative of Uyghurs in Xinjiang, and it is therefore important to have that in mind when presenting the data. The opinions expressed in the selected texts are from a small group of Uyghurs, and does not reveal knowledge about what a large proportion of the Uyghurs identify with these perceptions. However, the study does include perceptions of collective identity both from people of different areas, gender and class.

BACKGROUND

THE XINJIANG CONFLICT AND UYGHUR HISTORY

This section will not provide an in-depth account for the reasons why the Xinjiang Conflict has occurred, or possible peace attempts to the conflict.[12] It will instead present a background of the conflict with focus on the key actors' role in historical patterns. This section also investigates Uyghur history in order to provide an understanding of who the Uyghurs are. This section is divided into three parts, *A New Autonomous Region, Political and Cultural Polarisation,* and *Ethnic Unrest and Migration.*

A NEW AUTONOMOUS REGION

The Xinjiang province[13] borders Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. It is China's largest region, measuring double the size of Turkey. The translation of Xinjiang is *new border,* and it received its official name Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in 1955, six years after the Peoples Liberation Army, under the leadership of the CCP, defeated the Guomindang and came into power. Since the 18th century the region had been an unstable part of the Manchu Qing Empire, which in 1912 was inherited by the People's Republic of China (PRC) that succeeded the Qing dynasty (Millward 2007). The central government promised prosperity, self-rule and cultural and religious freedom to the region, assuring the Uyghurs that they would enjoy employment and access to the natural resources of the region. At this time the region's population was fairly homogenous consisting of approximately 86 per cent Uyghurs, less than five per cent Han Chinese and the remaining population consisting of Uzbeks, Kazaks and Huis (Millward 2007:245). Today the demographic comprises around 46 per cent Uyghur and 40 per cent Han Chinese (SBX 2010). The majority of the Uyghurs live in the southern region, the Tarim Basin and the Han Chinese in the northern more developed region, Dzungharia.

Scholars present multiple accounts and histories concerning where the Uyghurs are from and if they have always been a 'united' group. Some argue that the Chinese government formalised the Uyghur identity through a classification system in the 1930s. This system grouped the Turkic speaking oasis[14] dwellers, who subscribed to a broader *musulman* identity, together, giving them minority nationality status, with particular political rights, and thus separating them from other groups such as Kazaks, Uzbeks and Han Chinese (Rudelson 1997:7 & Gladney 1990:4).

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[12] For example Forbes (1986), Han (2010) and Holdstock (2014).

[13] See map of Xinjiang in appendix 1.

[14] An oasis refers to a village characterised by being an isolated area of vegetation in a desert, with a water resources from for example a spring.

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POLITICAL AND CULTURAL POLARISATION

The history of the East Turkestan Republic (ETR) aids an understanding of the strands of independence and nationalism that seem to run through Xinjiang today and which have given rise to violent situations. In the declarations of the two years of independence in 1933-4, ETR representatives stated that the republic would create a moderate Islamic and liberal democratic state. The second attempt of succession, from the Qing Empire, in 1940's was instead highlighted by Soviet interests and was of a secular nature (Millward 2007:281-2). However, according to Chinese historians, these political entities were local governing bodies under the control of the central government and full independence was never realised (Yang Faren in Nabijan 2008:97). This meant that the Uyghurs were and are solely Chinese citizens. Many Uyghurs however strongly desire the creation of an independent 'Uyghur state', or East Turkestan.

There are different understandings of what 'Uyghur' entails, which might be one of the roots of the Xinjiang Conflict, or at least seen as a tension between Uyghurs and the Chinese government. Nevertheless, there are more obvious issues in modern Chinese history that have influenced the Uyghur population. For instance, the Cultural Revolution (1966-1971), as it did for the majority of the Chinese population, brought many long hard years for the Uyghur people. Chauvinistic attacks on Uyghurs, and other non-Han citizens, for being traitors and accusing their culture of being "backward, feudal [and] bourgeois" (Millward 2007:271) were actively encouraged by the central government. Traditional costumes, which still exist today, trading goods in bazaars, Uyghur music, instruments and dance, native dressing, central elements of marriages, circumcision parties, and other traditional rituals were all forbidden during the years of the revolution (Millward 2007:274).

During the revolution, although limited, there are accounts of the East Turkestan People's Revolutionary Party (ETPRP) being active, trying to organise Turkic people in the Xinjiang region to fight for independence. During two years from 1968 they sought to again create an independent ETR that was communist, secular, and pro-Soviet (Dillion 2004). This confirms that the driving forces behind the ETR stretched beyond fundamentalist Islam. As Millward concludes, there is therefore not a clear connection to the Uyghur movement in the late 1980's, which called for an Islamic republic. Yet, inspiration might have come from the global Islamic movement during the 1980s, which was associated with progress and liberation of Muslim people. Turmoil in Xinjiang during this time, with heavy in-migration of Han Chinese to the region, as well as birth control policies, provided the context in which a greater desire for the promised autonomy was fought (Millward 2007:282). There were also remaining grievances from the Cultural Revolution that might have increased the Uyghurs concern for the survival of their culture, of which Islam is a big part. These are all allegations of which respective Chinese governments have frequently explained away as non-substantial or even wrongful misconceptions (Xinhua 2003).

MIGRATION AND ETHNIC UNREST

The Uyghurs have emigrated in waves since the establishment of XUAR. They started to migrate to developed countries in Europe and the United States in the early 1990s. Before then many had settled in India, Soviet Union and Turkey in three waves of migration. The first wave occurred after the CCP took over the leadership in 1949, the second was during the hardship related to the Great Leap Forward in the early 1960s, and the third during the time of the Open Door Policy introduced by Deng Xiaoping after the death of Mao Zedong in the late 1970s (Guang & Debata 2010:65). During this time many Uyghurs chose to leave China due to lack of work opportunities for Uyghurs. Many of the Uyghurs who emigrated in the 1990's settled in the United States, are seen as political refugees fearing prosecution for their activism (*ibid.* 69).

Currently, there are approximately 11.5 million Uyghurs in the world, and among these almost 500 000 live outside the PRC (Joshua Project 2010). The largest Uyghur diaspora organisation is the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), established in 2004 when the East Turkestan National Congress and the World Uyghur Youth Congress merged. The president, Rabiyä Qadir[15] who also founded the Uyghur Human Rights and Democracy Foundation is currently living in exile. The WUC is an umbrella organisation that claims to represent the "collective interest of the Uyghur people both in East Turkestan and abroad" by "promoting the right of the Uyghur people to use peaceful, nonviolent, and democratic means to determine the political future of East Turkestan" (WUC 2015a).

The Uyghurs that stayed in China continued to protest against marginalisation of Uyghurs. After disturbances in Ghulja (Yining) in 1997 when several hundred people, enraged by increasingly acute restrictions on religion and the execution of ten or twenty alleged separatists and high number of Uyghur arrests, came out in protest on the streets, the situation in the region radically changed. Nearly 400 people died and hundreds were wounded in clashes with the police and the military (Dillion 2004:93-6). The result was heavy restrictions on freedom of speech through a 'Three-No" policy, which included *'No questions about the turmoil, No telling outsiders the true story and No visiting relatives that had been imprisoned after the events'*. In an official explanation published by Xinjiang authorities in 1999, the events were allegedly planned years in advance by forces that wanted to split the motherland (*ibid.* 96-7). From the terror attacks of 11th September 2001, most expression of discontent with the government in Xinjiang has been labelled as 'separatism' or 'terrorism' – in keeping with a grown global fear of terror.

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[15] Rabiyä Qadir, a Xinjiang born Uyghur, multimillionaire business women and activist was in 2000 sentenced to seven years in Chinese prison accused of "revealing state secrets by sending clippings from local Xinjiang newspapers to her husband in the United States". She was released three years early and fled to the United States to reunite with her husband and children (Millward 2007:360).

During the 21st century, the Uyghurs have staged thousands of protests expressing their grievances concerning what they perceive as discriminatory actions by the government. These practices include land grabs, housing demolitions, environmental destruction, unfavourable language policies, restrictions on religion, discrimination in the job market and the flow of immigration of Han Chinese to the region (HIIK 2013:103 and Kuo 2014). The increased polarisation culminated in intense clashes in Urumqi in 2009, between Han Chinese, Uyghurs and the police. The clashes resulted in almost 200 deaths and around 1700 injured. It was the most deadly episode of turmoil in Xinjiang's history (HIIK 2013:104). Subsequently, the CCP further increased security measures with special police forces in the region and for the coming four years there were less reports on disturbances in the region.

Today, western and Uyghur human rights groups are actively lobbying for civil rights of the Uyghur people. Yet, little official information concerning actions within Xinjiang and the Chinese borders concerning civil rights movements, separatist movements and implementation of minority policies, is avaliable. The Chinese government frequently reports on illegal actions by terrorist and separatist groups in the Xinjiang region, but fails to address the relationship between the state and the Uyghur, and instead rejects it as evil forces that must be dealt with, with an iron fist (Zhang et all 2014). The violence has, since 2013, also spread outside Xinjiang for example by an alleged suicide attacks by Uyghurs in Beijing, Kunming and Guangzhou.

A THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

This chapter will explore the theoretical background for this thesis and how the theorists' discussions connect with each other and how that discussion relates to this study. To serve the purposes of this paper, this section discusses constructivist identity theory at a general level before explaining the related field of identity construction in a conflict setting and how different actors (government, diaspora and local population) of a conflict can shape, construct and negotiate identity.

WHAT IS IDENTITY?

Constructivist theory begins from a premise that identity (either individual or group) is a result of the environment; meaning that one's surroundings shape the idea of the 'self'. This could be one's immediate family, community or society as a whole. Barth argued that identity is the outcome of perceived differences between groups of people and that such divides are created through social interaction (Barth, 1969:10). Further, people construct and apply meanings to these differences primarily to order individuals and groups into communities. Identities can therefore be defined in relation to that which they are not (Eriksen, 1993:35). Additionally, a person's sense of affinity and unity with the identified group is sustained as long as the group has distinct features by which it is recognised (Kaldor 2013a:338).

This process of self-ascription is based mainly on indicators such as language, beliefs, traditions, gender, class, territory and history and it can be personal, social, cultural and collective at the same time (Barth, 1969:10). Particularly in ones formative years, one consciously and unconsciously begins to choose markers that serve as the foundation for one's personal identity and group belonging, and the features are regarded as significant to the individual (Barth in Finley 2013:7). The in-group cultural characteristics change continuously over time and space, as they are dependent on the context of specific historical and institutional sites. Barth therefore concluded that identity is transformative, not primordial and fixed, but something that can be deconstructed and reconstructed (Barth, 1969:12). Such dynamics are on-going and the meaning of any particular identity is thus open to contestation.

ETHNIC IDENTITY

A dominant axis within identity theory (assumed as a social construction) is the concept of ethnicity and ethnic identity. These identities are seen as collective and may extend across state borders. Smith defines an ethnic group as a named human population, which shares ancestry myths, histories and cultures and has an association with a specific territory which together hold a uniform sense of solidarity (Smith, 1986:16). Extensive research has, since Smith's definition in the mid-1980s, explained the dichotomous nature of ethnicity, as

something both achieved and ascribed (Eriksen, 1993:55-6) In addition to this dichotomy, ethnic identity is "an aspect of relationship, not a cultural property of a group" (*ibid.* 34), meaning that it is the cultural differences that are communicated between groups in societies.

More recent studies (Eriksen 2001, Brubaker & Cooper 2004 and Pieterse 2007) have considered the limitations of the current ethnicity and ethnic identity discourse. On the one hand, current discourse concerns itself with the scope of ethnicity and what it entails. On the other, the empirical evidence of identity is presented as fluid, and individuals often obtain and maintain hybrid identities. This means that, while categorising certain groups as belonging to a certain 'ethnicity', in order to "organise and justify collective action along certain lines" (Brubaker & Cooper 2004:5), one risks ignoring features as hybridity. It does not serve the purpose of this paper to label the Uyghur people as only an ethnic identity but reflection instead upon the areas of identity, which are salient in the conflict, is suitable and required. Further, this means that it is beneficial to not only consider the ethnic identity of warring actors, but rather to explore how these different agents understand and utilise different identity markers, and more specifically how boundaries are maintained and negotiated in the conflicts.

IDENTITY IN CONFLICT

The 'margin', or the boundary between identities of which identity markers' uphold (Hall 1996:18), is what constructs identities and it is the enactment of these boundary mechanisms that is the focus of this study. These identity markers, such as religion, language, clothing, traditions and values define a group and how they can be understood in the symbolic and social sense of the term. Tajfel (1979) posited relational identities as something latent in human beings and argued for the significance of understanding why, when and how a particular identity is salient or not salient. Here, more recent researchers have, for example, claimed that ethnic identity is salient in new contemporary conflict[16] as it can be seen as a symbolic tool in political struggles, especially over rights and resources (Nagel 1994, Eriksen 2001, Kaldor 2013a). The identity markers in these instances function as parts in a 'tool-kit', made up of symbols chosen from the cultural characteristics available to them (Barth in Finley 2013:7). This forms part of the collective identity which individuals have recognised themselves with.

In some cases, when social and personal identities become more salient, states face challenges of coping with the political exploitation of these identities, not only by governments themselves but also by other groups. For example, a religious identity can be

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[16] A conflict is seen as a process that evolves over time that has multiple levels and factors, which constantly change and alternate, and defined as incapability of goal between groups (Kriesberg 2003).

considered to be significant for different people, adding value to an individual or a group (Barth 1969:14 and Eriksen 1993:46). This is not because "the self is infinitely multifaceted" but because experiences and relationships that make up the 'self' and the 'other' can be expanded symbolically in conflicting ways (Eriksen 2001:65). In turn, such symbolic contestations create friction between other groups in society who view their own people, and their religious identity, as the right one, and indirectly the other identity is flawed or even threatening. At this stage, parties in a conflict "make a difference" in interaction, and their cultural differences (Eriksen 1993:38) make a more salient, and maybe stronger, boundary between the groups.

Finley orders the process of identity construction and boundary-making into three parts: social, spatial and symbolic. The first, the social boundary, includes an increased reluctance of groups wanting to spend time together. The second, the spatial boundary, includes separate residence and different consumption patterns. The third boundary includes symbolic meanings in patterns of interaction between groups, for example endogamy and language differences (Finley 2013:134-35). This articulation of 'self' and 'other' (or 'Us' and 'Them') is in many ways a conscious choice to separate ones own identity from another.

By developing Barth's and Finley's argument of the subjectivity of identity, Eriksen adds that identity formation is not always a process of mutually exclusive self-ascription but that the 'other' also contributes to the identity formation process (Eriksen 2001). In societies when identities 'clash', polarisation between different groups increases and different 'others' may influence the identity of the warring groups. Such 'others' might be the government, local leaders, civil rights groups or even diaspora. How these actors think about who they are and, who and what the antagonists are, "profoundly influences the course of any conflict between them" (Kriesberg 2003). Contemporary conflicts are, in this way, sustained by a sense of threat to collective identity that may result in a protective response. This response may manifest itself differently among different groups; in many cases this results in the construction of distance between the 'self' and the threat (Finley 2013:149). This self-understanding can also lead to an ignorance of the "relevance of all other affiliation and association and [redefines] the demands of the 'sole' identity in a particularly belligerent form" (Sen 2006:176), which violence in turn emanates from.

This rationale behind outbreaks of violence and conflict can, according to Sen, be a matter of conceptual confusion. In a world of multidimensional identities, the illusion of a single identity, for example being solely Hutu during the genocide in Rwanda in the 1990's and the instrumental use of that identification, is what spurs violence (*ibid.* 174-5). This defence mechanism prompts a tendency for hostile acts, rejections and criticism of the other party, prolonging the conflict beyond an "easy resolution". Such a process, when boundary-making cultivates violence, is often described as an intractable conflict, when intra- and intergroup

"cooperation" instead pushes the conflict "beyond an escalatory stage to a stage in which the conflict itself becomes defined as self" (Northrup 1989:75). The process towards intractability of a conflict is thus "skilfully cultivated and fomented" by actors who use the basic instinct of self-preservation to justify violent defence of themselves and those they consider share their identity (Sen 2006:175). The idea that different actors in conflicts have the ability to influence the conflict and reconstruct identities will be discussed in the next section as three perspectives on the contestation and construction of identity are presented.

ACTORS AND IDENTITY

GOVERNMENTS AND IDENTITY CONTESTATION

In conflict settings, identity markers may come to be objects of contestation in the political sphere. In many conflicts, it is the voice of the government that is the loudest. The government has the power to influence the views of the country and even larger regions. Eriksen argues that powerful actors sometimes force a group to fill a certain space and, in doing so, obtain a certain identity, an identity which they might not be comfortable or associate with (Eriksen 1993:85). An example of this is a national register of the population conducted by states. People are then placed within given categories of "nationality", "race", "ethnicity", and "gender" in order for the state to compile useful statistical data for administrative needs. Historically, there have been several examples of governments' instrumental initiative of ethnic and racial classification systems established by centralised colonial state administrations, where they not only want to distinguish groups from each other, and from the majority, for statistical purposes, but also do so to maintain power and to exercise control (Anderson 2006:166-8).

Today, identities of nationhood created by states remain salient and do not necessarily reflect local self-understanding (*ibid.* 165). This give rise to problems as some groups are not considered acceptable and are therefore not acknowledged by the state as a citizens that are entitled to certain legal rights, such as voting in the national elections. The Myanmar government has enforced this on the Muslim minority group Rohingya, who they deny full citizenship. However, if Rohingyas accept themselves as part of the category Bengali (immigrants from Bangladesh) they may sustain immigrant status and certain legal rights (Perlez 2014). This type of enforced categorisation, including no fractions, can take different more defuse shapes. In the face of "battle against terrorism", the single understanding of the Muslim community as being affiliated with politicised Islam and extremism reveals an approach that categorise people based on what their "alleged religious leaders declare as spokesmen for their 'flock'" (Sen 2006:76). The outcome is patronisation of human identity according to Sen (*ibid.* 178). By ignoring the plurality or hybridity of any identity, by excluding or forcing assimilation a state actively construct the identities of their citizens.

A way of assimilation, that may be a root to polarisation and later violent conflict, is the use of power by the government to regulate the exercise of cultural or religious traditions. In an attempt to weaken or limit group identities, governments may even conduct "wholesale campaigns of assimilation" (Dickson 2010:4). An example is the state campaign in Turkey that aimed to construct a new, secular Turkish national identity, by banning headscarves and other Muslim identity markers (McGoldrick 2006 in Dickson 2010:5). This policy exercises exclusion and negotiation of an ethnic or religious social identity, by the government, and may influence the identity of that group. By telling a group of people that their way of life, the traditions they hold, are not legal may cause the group to negotiate the boundaries of their identity by 1) self-censorship of markers which represent their identity or by 2) expressing grievances over such policy, through both peaceful and violent actions.

A government may also use policies to internally prevent or reduce conflict. For instance, by implementing economic and social polices, that aim to integrate an excluded group or to reduce grievances felt by a particular group or community, peaceful relationships can be formed (Kaldor 2013a:337). According to Nagel, land resources and civil rights are what often constitute the bases of these grievances and the control of territory often gives rise to conflict (Nagel 1994:159). The establishment of an autonomous region means that resources are allotted to help protect "the distinct identity of the titular group. In doing so, the government both strengthens group solidarity and sanctions a territorial frame for that group's political aspirations" (Bovingdon 2010:30). However, these policies that aim to incorporate certain groups may be experiences by the 'other' as discriminatory and unfair practices, that results in creation of new boundaries or the strengthening of existing ones (Nagel 1994:157). Within a state, identities are constantly negotiated between state and the population, as well as among the local population itself. The population that emigrates also influences the negotiation and construction of an identity. In the next section the idea if long-distance identities are explored.

DIASPORA AND LONG-DISTANCE IDENTITIES
This study explores the idea of diaspora identities and how they influence and utilise the identity of the homeland in conflicts. Today's society exists in an era of globalisation, and the use of fast communication and heightened mobility, can allow first, second and even third generations of migrants to sustain a strong connection to the homeland. Similar to ethnic identity, the diasporic identity is relational and on-going, and hence is perpetually constructed and reconstructed in a process of boundary-making both in the host-land and in the homeland (Eriksen 1993, Hall 1996, Pieterse 2007). In many cases, "Home" is a source of pride and a romanticised place to which one wishes to return to, this can also mean that a political struggle for the rights of that "Home" may become a central part of the

identity (Orjuela 2011). This politicised diaspora, both peaceful and armed, will be discussed in this paper. However, it is important to remember that diaspora communities do not act as one solid unit, and that identities and identification with the homeland varies among the group members.

It has been recognised that diaspora, by the fact that they are removed from the violent conflict, often develop more hard-line positions in conflicts in their homeland, through maintaining and fuelling "long-distance nationalism" (Anderson, 1992:12). For example they may engage in propaganda work that might fuel the conflict. Extensive research has provided evidence that it is the continued identification with the homeland and "the people" that motivates diaspora mobilisation and commitment to struggles over the homeland (Anderson 1992, Lindholm Schulz 2003, Orjuela 2004, Baser & Swain 2009). The diaspora may consider the policies of the government or the conflict in itself as a threat to the security and survival of the homeland and its people, their people. The interesting idea here is that the articulation of homeland identity in the diaspora thus takes place in spaces that "bypass official state discourses and hegemonic constructions of identity" (Adamson 2002:160 in Orjuela 2011). And in much the same way as the population in the homeland, the diaspora contest different identity areas in order to influence, or even stoke the tensions in the conflict.

THE LOCAL POPULATION

This study will not only examine diaspora identities and state hegemony but also the identity of the local population 'on the ground', which interacts with the state and engages in conflict on a day-to-day basis. A significant characteristic of identity, especially in conflict, is the degree to which people hold their collective identity integrated with the sense that they have generally been victims of repression and domination by others. This can occur on the basis of current events or from past experiences of others that belong to the same (perceived) identity. Such conceptions tend to make people feel threatened and distrustful (Kreisberg 2003), which in turn may result in actions that aim to prevent 'attacks' and secure the survival of their identity. As the collective identity hardens, various group members may then engage in representational politics in order to unite against external pressure and internal conflict. Boundaries between groups may in these instances turn into significant markers and form symbolic resistance to the 'other', that becomes the centre for the tensions in a conflict (Vasquez & Wetzel 2009 in Finley 2013:12).

Harrell (1995) applies the idea of achieved identities, and presents an idea that treats the utilisation of identities, particularly ethnic identity. Following Eriksen's argument of 'othering', Harrell subscribes to the belief that the consciousness of ethnic minorities might already exist, but that "it will be sharpened, focused, perhaps intensified" (Harrell 1995:27)

when interfacing with the other groups. This, what can be described as confrontation, can include attempts from a group to rule another and the territory they inhabit. Such a process may also contain attempt to 'civilise' the local population by defining and educating them with the aim to enforce a particular understanding of themselves and their identity in relation to the ruler (Harrell 1995:27-9).

This process can be seen as a 'power game' that becomes evident when new contemporary conflict manifests itself in different ways. Policies of specific rights for minority groups together with labelling of such groups is an example of where the state enforces a hegemonic discourse that steers and shapes the perception of certain groups. As mentioned, there is interesting material on the salience of ethnicity as an outcome of these 'power games' (Barth 1969, Tajfel 1979), and as product of the marking of differences and modes of exclusion by majority groups (Hall 1996:17). Nevertheless, some researchers argue that it is also the attribution of capacities and needs of groups that have become the basis of current policies and that those are characteristic of "modern social transformation" (Anthias 1999:162). In this way, "social divisions permeate the society" (*ibid.*) and become something constantly present not only in conflict, but in daily social structures as well.

CONCLUDING REMARK

The scope of identity-related conflicts, and the dynamics of contestation in these conflicts, is far ranging. While it may entail the specification of a collective's norms and values, it may also involve the condition, which makes up the boundaries between groups. These boundaries tell us; who belongs and counts as a group member, as well as the nature of the group's interests. All of the factors discussed in this section concern different perspectives of a conflict, be it the Chinese government, the local population in Xinjiang or the Uyghur diaspora, and the way in which they contest areas of identity. The central idea, negotiation and boundary-making of identity both passive and active, both conscious and unconscious, will affect the continued understanding and the construction and moulding of a perceived groups identity. This can therefore assist in answering the question of how Uyghur identity is contested and constructed.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The significance of identity in the Xinjiang Conflict has led it to be labelled an "ethnic conflict" by international media and scholars. However, this label can be misleading if it creates the impression that ethnic differences themselves have caused animosity, which, in turn have resulted in violence. Instead, the Xinjiang Conflict can be more usefully understood as partly a failure of the centralised, Han-dominated state to respond effectively to minority aspirations and to successfully integrate the Uyghur people. This understanding is important as it can help to broaden the explanation for the, on the one hand, high number of protests and imprisonment of dissident activists in XUAR, and, on the other, the violent attacks and clashes during the past 20 years. These have often been sporadic and executed by single individuals or by small groups of people. Local Imams as well as the WUC have condemned all violence committed by Uyghurs.

PERSPECTIVES

It is important to stress that the most powerful actor, for example the government, does not solely decide the construction of identity. This study seeks to discuss the identity contestation and construction from a Uyghur perspective as well – both when it comes to the local population of Xinjiang and also to the Uyghur diaspora community. In order to understand and scrutinise the construction of Uyghur identity it is essential to understand different perspectives and relations between different actors of the conflict.

THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT

A central actor in the Xinjiang Conflict is the Chinese government. It is evident that the Chinese state has played an influential role in the construction of perceived Uyghur identity of both sides. According to the government's official history of China, the Xinjiang region became the Western Region Frontier Command in 60 C.E under the western Han central government, which officially belonged to the Western Han Dynasty territory, and has since been "an inseparable part of the unitary multi-ethnic Chinese" (Xinhua 2003). The Chinese government's viewpoint has gained the upper hand in contemporary China, and there are even threats of legal repercussions against "politically incorrect interpretations of history" (Nabijan 2008:99). Since Deng Xiaoping was president, the CCP has continuously claimed that they have done nothing but bring prosperity and development to the region through economic and social reforms, and that the violence that has ravaged the region is due to insurgence of hostile sources from outside the Chinese borders (Xinhua 2003).

The government have, for example, officially implemented preferential policies for minorities within education and family planning. All minority people are allowed to have more children than the Han Chinese and Uyghur teenagers who take the entry exam to university are given more credits than their Han counterparts. However, some assert that

these actions have contributed to rigid interethnic group tension (Nagel 1994:157) between the majority Han Chinese and minority Uyghur, with many Hans viewing the policies as unequal and unjust (Han 2010:246-247).

UYGHUR DIASPORA

The diaspora organisation the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) seeks to preserve a collective Uyghur identity through the promotion of culture and language, as well as nationhood. Rabiyä Qadir, who has become the symbol for Uyghur activism, being called "the mother of Uyghurs" has individually met great resistance from the CCP in her struggle for Uyghur rights. She has been accused of having been involved in planning the riots in Urumqi in 2009 and of colluding with separatists and extremists in order to destroy the peace and stability of Chinese society (Yan 2006). There is however, little evidence for Qadir's and the WUC's influence on the Uyghur population in Xinjiang.

LOCAL UYGHUR POPULATION IN XINJIANG

Western historians believe that the Uyghur people converted from Buddhism to Islam between the 14th and the 16th century (Rudelson 1997:6 and Millward 2007:85), and have since then practiced the Islamic faith. The majority of the Uyghurs are today Sunni Muslims (Rudelson 1997:81). In contrast to the CCP's history of Xinjiang, the prominent Uyghur researcher, Turgan Alams (whose work has been forbidden in the PRC, due to its sensitive political nature) claims that Uyghur people have inhabited Central Asia for over 6400 years. His research points towards the discovery of Tarmin (Turkic tribe, the ancestors of Uyghurs) mummies dating from this period in Xinjiang (Almas in Tursun, 2008:93). Many Uyghurs adhere to this idea of the Xinjiang region, or East Turkestan, as their historic homeland, which they are entitled to inhabit, or even to rule. In the Xinjiang region, Islam and Uyghur traditions are viewed as a central part of contemporary Uyghur identity. However, it is foremost the discontent over discriminatory policies which is the expressed main cause for concern for the Uyghur people.

AREAS OF CONTESTATION

While much research on the subject of identity construction and conflict has focused on identity markers, this study shows that it is not only clear symbols that become salient in a conflict setting (and in everyday life). Instead, it also includes different dynamics of identity and group belonging that come under scrutiny by actors in the conflict. Areas that are contested by the selected actors in the Xinjiang Conflict have been identified as: *Territory*, *National Unity and Autonomy, Culture and Religion, Language* and *Intragroup Dynamics.*

TERRITORY

Rabiyä Qadir, and the Uyghur diaspora community with her, constantly stresses that the territory of Xinjiang is not Chinese; that the Chinese are invaders of the Uyghur land, what is called East Turkestan. Qadir describes her childhood in Xinjiang by saying that "when I grew up I did not see any Chinese. My parents used to tell me tales of the Chinese foreigners. They only came when they were adults, where were they when they were children?" (Forced Migration 2007). While the number of Uyghurs seeking pure political independence increased during the 1990's (Finley 2000:197), most have never participated in any direct violent action to achieve this end. In contrast, many Uyghurs believe that they should concentrate on the pursuit of full equality for Uyghurs within the Chinese political system. This stance has arguably been the dominant subject of debate within Uyghur society (Finley 2013:21-3) and will be discussed further in this section.

The Chinese state and official Chinese scholars portray Xinjiang as an integral part of China and have actively disregarded any claim for independence of East Turkestan. For instance, in a text published by the state's Information Office, religious extremists are said to have "politicized the unstandardized geographical term 'East Turkistan', and fabricated an 'ideological and theoretical system' on the so-called 'independence of East Turkistan' on the basis of the allegation cooked up by the old colonialists[17]" (Xinhua 2003). The government has taken a firm stand against such a fabrication, announcing that any strife for a separate nation is a "vain wish" (*ibid.*). Further, the CCP repeatedly emphasise the protection of citizens and the importance of rule of law in their press releases and during press conferences in response to questions about instability in Xinjiang (Hua 2014).

The government has described the Uyghur diaspora as a small group of separatists that fled abroad, looking for opportunities to carry out sabotage activities with the support of "international anti-China forces" (Xinhua 2003). They are said to have plotted and organised a number of bloody incidents of terror and violence in the mid-1990s that seriously jeopardised the "lives, property and security of the Chinese people of various ethnic groups" (*ibid.*). The CCP goes further and explain that religious extremists and separatists abroad (referring to the diaspora) have during the 21st century raised the banner of:

> *[...] 'human rights,' 'freedom of religion' and 'interests of ethnic minorities,' and fabricated claims that 'the Chinese government is using every opportunity to oppress ethnic minorities,' to mislead the public and deceive world opinion in order to escape blows dealt by the international struggle against terrorism (Xinhua 2003).*

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[17] The term "old colonialists" refers to a small number of Turkic separatists and religious extremists, who in the view of the Chinese government have historically colonised the Xinjiang region, which is Chinese.

This statement demeans the struggle of Uyghur rights, and contests what can be viewed as an integral part of the contemporary Uyghur identity. Following Nagel's theoretical understanding of identity being the culmination of boundary maintenance, the contestation of what it means to be a Uyghur leads to a process of negotiation and reinforcement of the boundary between the Uyghurs and the Chinese government (Nagel 1994:161). This is because, the government, by presenting themselves as an "enemy", an actor who indirectly associate Uyghurs with terrorism, may create an 'other' to which the Uyghurs can define their 'self' by. Such an "enemy" distinction, has lead some Uyghurs to resist party initiatives, and to unite against the CCP (Bovingdon 2010:15). In addition, as identities are fluid, the fact that the government treats Uyghurs like an "enemy" may also produce a self fulfilling prophecy, potentially causing them to behave as such.

In some ways, "East Turkestan" has become a rallying point for Uyghur nationalism and activism among the diaspora (Rudelson & Jankowiak 2004:303). On the WUC's website, Xinjiang is not mentioned as a territory within the Chinese borders but instead referred to as East Turkestan or the Eastern Turkestan Republic. In a report by the Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP), the connection to the homeland, for the diaspora, is described as the fundamental part of their identity. The city of Kashgar and the Silk Road is "the spiritual heart of the Uyghur culture" (UHRP 2012). As mentioned, many Uyghur in Xinjiang adhere to this stance, viewing the region as their homeland to which "they have been indigenous for thousands of years" (Klimeš 2012:211).

The quote below is from one of the key leadership persons of the Uyghur American Association (UAA) and the spokesman for the WUC, Alim Seytoff. It summarises the central struggle and frustration among the more hard-lined Uyghur diaspora[18]:

> *We realise that there is no hope for the Uyghur people if we do not fight for our own right to be independent from China. We have the right to have our own nation-state. The Chinese are Chinese, and the Uyghurs are Uyghurs, they are two different [...] nations, why should they be bonded together? The Chinese authorities should realise that a friendly separate Uyghur nation-state will be beneficial to China in [the] long run.* (Guang & Debata 2010:72)

The Uyghur diaspora have, through different organisations and associations around the world managed to place the issue of East Turkestan independence on the international agenda using "advanced communications media, petitions, demonstrations and personal activism" (Shichor 2007:118). Yet, the attempts to establish their own republic have been

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[18] It is necessary to underline, as mentioned, that the diasporic community differs in stance and attitude towards the homeland.

limited by great resistance by the Chinese government and many Uyghur diaspora have instead sought a compromise: democracy, self-determination, and increased autonomy (Bovingdon 2010:Chapter 5). The CCP have, in addition to imposing heightened security measures in Xinjiang, sought to prosecute individuals, for example Qadir, rather than groups, who they perceive as stoking the tension and fuelling the conflict[19].

Related to the contestation of the territory a noteworthy difference between the Han and the Uyghurs can be seen in communication and the difference in telling time. Most Uyghurs use "Xinjiang time", that is the local time according to the global time set up. What is known as "Beijing time" used by most Han Chinese in Xinjiang, is a two-hour delayed time imposed by the state in order to have the whole of China within the same time zone. Uyghurs, among other groups from the same region such as Kazaks and Uzbeks, use the local time as a form of "indigeneity to the territory" (Finley 2013:140). Finley's respondents explained that those Uyghurs who now use "Beijing time" are Uyghurs *minkaohan* (Uyghurs educated in Mandarin) as it goes well together with them speaking Chinese and working in state-run institutions together with Hans (*ibid.* 352). Thus, the issue of time becomes another boundary that separates the Uyghurs from the state and the majority people.

NATIONAL UNITY AND AUTONOMY

In addition to contradictory views of the Xinjiang territory the Chinese government has continued to promote national unity and minority uniqueness among all the 56 officially recognised ethnic groups. However, there are certain issues about whether the current law of the autonomy in Xinjiang is ratified or not, what rights the ethnic people who live in Xinjiang have, as well as what is necessary, according to the CCP, for the integration and assimilation of the the Uyghurs. These issues will be developed further in this section.

During a conference on ethnic issues and national unity in Xinjiang in 2014 the president Xi Jinping spoke of the importance of the ethnic minorities correctly understanding the culture of the nation and for all to respect differences, practice inclusiveness and to celebrate diversity in 'the big family' that is the Chinese nation. The president also emphasised the significance of guiding all people of all nationalities to firmly establish a correct outlook on the motherland and its national history (Ding 2014). These "spiritual issues" must be resolved, through minority educational campaigns, which shall "plant the seed of loving China deep within each child's heart", and at the same time party members must "clearly oppose every type of wrong thought and ideas" (Tiezzi 2014). The president also added that it is crucial for the country to use the law to protect this national identity, to enhance the

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[19] The WUC has since its creation placed a lot of effort into pressuring the Chinese government to release individual political prisoners. A recent example is the teacher and high-profile champion of Uyghur rights, Ilham Tohti, who was sentenced to life in prison on charges of separatism in 2014 (Liu 2014).

legal awareness of the masses of all ethnic groups, and finally to consciously safeguard the highest interests of the country (Ding 2014). This is one of many examples of the CCP's rhetoric concerning China's inviolability, but it also show how important the issues of identity in Xinjiang are to the party.

This stance of a united nation and a central government has lead to a tense relationship between the diaspora group and the CCP, as many Uyghurs believe that, they do not possess any political autonomy within the current system (Finley 2013:20). As Xinjiang is a autonomous region it falls under the China's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law which states that governance in such regions should display "the state's full respect for and guarantee of ethnic minorities' right to administer their internal affairs and its adherence to the principle of equality, unity and common prosperity for all nationalities" (Xinhua 2014). This legal policy of autonomy does not appear in many state statements about the unrest in Xinjiang. The WUC, on the other hand, frequently argue that violence in the region is a direct result of the Chinese regime not ratifying the law and in turn, repressing the Uyghur peoples' rights (Tiezzi 2013). This has also been the cause of many protests among Uyghur activists who express discontent over the principle of hegemony exercised by the state (Bovingdon 2010:40-1).

The central government in Beijing has, since the 1990s, primarily approached instability in XUAR with extensive economic reforms and investments. While standards of living for some Uyghurs have risen, mainly in the cities, there is a broad perception that Uyghurs enjoy less access to economic opportunities than Han. An example is Uyghur unemployment, which runs high despite the booming Xinjiang economy (Adams 2012). The unequal economic status between the Han and the Uyghurs, together with the absence of the right to self-determination, has resulted in a protective response by Uyghurs, to defend their identity. Defence of the identity, by making sure that the land that represents the self, the religion and the meaning of the identity (Northrup 1989:68), has in the case of Xinjiang become violent. Seytoff predicts that because "China is unwilling to change its repressive policies in East Turkestan the bloody incidents that have plagued the region in recent years will continue, and even get worse" (Tiezzi 2013). The WUC, have in several statements condemned any violence exercised by Uyghurs, yet Seytoff's statement points to a strong frustration over the continuation of contestation over autonomy.

CULTURE AND RELIGION
The Chinese state is a self-proclaimed atheist state that constitutionally "respects all religions and promotes religious freedom" (Millward 2007:342). However, what is often added to the CCP's statements is that it is only "normal" religious activities that are acceptable (Hua 2014). What is considered normal is not explicitly developed, yet one can

infer certain attitudes through policies such as the prohibition of children under the age of 18 attending mosques. This impacts Uyghurs who, as Muslims, have practiced their faith for hundreds of years – making it the central part of Uyghur identity. This section will examine the contestation of religion and culture. The discussion is divided into three parts: *Religious Prayer, Clothing and Appearances*, and *Food and Traditions*.

RELIGIOUS PRAYER
The CCP express strong disagreement with accusations from Uyghurs and the international media of oppression of religion and disadvantaged minorities. However there are recent examples of religious discrimination in Xinjiang state-run organisations. For instance when searching for new law enforcement in the city of Kashgar people with "strong religious" ideas were not eligible for a job as a police officer (Palmer 2014). Another example is a notice released by the Shayar County government that detailed rewards up to 50,000 Yuan for notifying authorities of suspicious conduct of 18 different religious activities, among them customary practices, such as wearing "bizarre religious clothing" (WUC 2014b). The contested area of clothing will be discussed in a separate section, as it has become a central feature of the conflict. Further, regulations on the use of Internet, mobile devices or digital publishing to disseminate religiously motivated material deemed to undermine national unity and social stability in included (WUC 2014a).

Many of Finley's respondents said that even though law forbids them to attend the mosque, as they are under-aged, they do. The findings from Finley's research also show that those students, who are forbidden to pray in school, chose to pray at their family home or if they are alone in their dorms at school. In accordance with Dillion (2004), Finley argues that there is a revival of Islam among the Uyghurs, a renewal that embodies a search for religious and cultural purity as well as the mosque as a "Han-free" environment, where Uyghur can build trust between each other (Finley 2013:279). A respondent explains,

> *I think it's because they [Han Chinese] control us in all other spheres of our lives. You know, we are not allowed to have religion, to pray, in our working lives or at school. [The mosque is] the place where we can breathe a sigh of relief [and] we feel over-joyed to see each other (ibid.)*

The mosque is a crucial place for Uyghur identity, and many express a concern with the surveillance of their religious activities and they view Islam as "the sole remaining certainty in a society which allows them no space" (Finley 2013:281).

The diaspora community argue that the Chinese state consistently stretches the definition of religious extremism to cover typical religious practices and thus dilute Uyghur culture (WUC 2014). For them, the solidarity to Islam is what, in many ways, ties the Uyghur

community together and connects them to the rest of the Muslim world (Forced Migration 2007). As Millward notes, there are different strains of Islam among the Uyghur. For some it is a secularised cultural identity, for others it a Sunni Muslim tradition and a small group still engage in a traditional Sufi[20] practice that involves shrine pilgrimages, music, and chanting (Millward 2007). In many ways, this is an example of the intractability of the conflict, as the government continues to put restrictions on a central part of Uyghur identity, Uyghurs as a group, in turn, feel threatened and enforce their religious identity.

CLOTHING AND APPEARANCES

One of the salient identity makers in the conflict is clothing and appearance. In this section, the more recent restrictions of this area of identity imposed by the government will be presented and discussed from a Uyghur perspective.

Finley observed an increase of women wearing full veils or headscarves tied beneath the chin in the early 2000s, which is confirmed by her respondents who claim that it is mostly younger women who adhere to a more Islamic interpretation of the Qur'an (Finley 2013:242). Conversations that Finley has had with dozens of young Uyghur men and women make clear that only a tiny minority of the Uyghurs are turning to radical interpretations of Islam. On the contrary, women (as well as men) attach a range of different meanings to head and body coverings.

> *For some young women, the veil is a sign of membership in a modern, transnational Muslim community, while others see it as primarily a fashion statement or symbol of Uyghur identity. For many, the decision to veil is a personal matter that often follows marriage and conforms to Islamic injunctions for female modesty. Other Uyghur refuse to cover their heads and consider "imported" styles perversions of Uyghur culture and tradition. In short, although a significant number of Uyghur have embraced more formulaic Islamic practices, the community continues to debate the boundaries of its identity just like other Muslim communities across the globe.* (Grose & Leibold 2015)

Local authorities banned 'Five People'[21] from going on public transport in 2014 in north Xinjiang. The restriction included women wearing veils, jilbab or hijab, men with long beards, and even clothing with a crescent moon and stars on them (features of the East Turkestan flag). The reason for such a ban was the strengthening of public transport safety and "to ensure overall social and political stability and the safety of life and property of the people of all ethnic groups" (*ibid.*). This statement came from local authorities in Qaramay city, and Ghulja, in August 2014 and the ban is said to have been lifted in September. The

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[20] Sufism is a direction within Islam that refers to mystical beliefs and practices of different Sufi orders.
[21] See picture of the poster for the restrictions in appendix 2.

statement came to the attention of the international community through a leaked propaganda directive from the central government "where news websites where instructed to play down this story" (Aljazeera 2015). In addition, there were "proud reports" during 2014 from local police stations, reporting on confiscations of large amount of hijabs and jilbabs (Ying 2014).

The temporary prohibition of 'extremist religious clothing' was not the end of the authorities' initiative to constrain Muslims in Xinjiang. The latest policy that places restrictions on the practise of Islam is a total ban of the use of full-faced Islamic veil and body covering from all public spaces in the provincial capital, Urumqi. The act came into force on the 1st of February 2015, with a fine of 2000-5000 Yuan (the average monthly wage in Xinjiang being around 1310 Yuan[22]) if the restriction is not followed. Again, the policy implemented due to security reasons: the government claim that the clothes hinder security personnel from identifying individuals. A statement by the regional government also concluded that full-face veils and full-body coverings are associated with religious extremism. The definition in the regulation of the forbidden conduct is *mengmian zhaopa*, which translate to "to mask the face (and/or cover the body) with a robe" (Wang 2015 & Urumqi Government 2015). The new regulation also prohibits the populations from wearing clothing, emblems, objects, memorabilia, logos, or symbols that propagate religious extremism (Grose & Leibold 2015). In this way the new policy fails to accept the nuanced symbols of Uyghur culture and the Islamic faith in Xinjiang, where there is a variety of veiling practices, by creating vague and imprecise regulations. This governmental policy, like many others, contests and discredits significance of religious symbols and instead presents it as a fashion choice.

The restrictions on certain clothing are not new in XUAR. Uyghur students and workers in state-run companies have long complained that Muslims are discouraged from wearing traditional religious clothing during working hours. Over the past three years, there has been an increase in reporting of protests against these restrictions. In 2013 high school students in western Xinjiang took to the streets to protest the ban of girls wearing traditional headscarves in school (Mundel 2013). In spring 2014 local officials confirmed that at least two protesters had been shot dead. A township in the Aksu prefecture witnessed 100 Uyghurs protesting against the detention of women and middle school girls for wearing headscarves. Another case was in Kucha were police were said to have fired on protesters as they threatened to storm a government building in Alaqagha township following the detention of 25 Uyghur women and girls who had refused government instructions to uncover their faces partly covered by their headscarves (Finney 2014). This

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[22] The salary is an average among all sub-regions in Xinjiang. The average for urban areas where predominately Uyghurs live is lower around 1240 Yuan/month (Zito, Yao and Chen 2014). The calculations do not include rural areas.

is yet another factor which gives the Uyghurs a reason to show resistance to the Chinese way of ruling.

In 2012 a Uyghur of the Xinjiang delegation, which attended the 18th National Congress[23], said that there has never been a ban on Islamic clothing but that "we are now in a civilised society and we hope to use modern culture to guide a somehow backward culture. It is something not to be forced, but something to be achieved through guidance" (Li 2012). This is representative of the rhetoric presented by the CCP over the past 20 years – that is; there is religious freedom under Chinese rule, but this freedom is also restricted a push towards modernisation and civilisation. Further, such statements of Uyghur culture being regressive again demean their identity and their way of life, and in turn fuel the conflict between the state and the Uyghurs.

The authorities have justified restrictions on clothing and appearance as a way of "keeping the region stable" but also by claiming that Islamic clothing is "abnormal" attire. Government-linked experts have said that wearing veils, black robes and even growing beards has not been part of the religious or cultural traditions of Uyghur people. They perceive it is a relatively new local phenomenon, claiming that the numbers of individuals wearing veils and long beards has grown rampantly following the ethnic clashes in Urumqi in 2009 (Li 2012). These new patterns of expression of identity, are said to be planned by extremist and terrorist who wish to split the Chinese state and to incite ethnic unrest (Aljazeera 2015). The WUC have responded by expressing great concern over the Chinese way of dealing with religion, saying that their actions are "excessive intrusions into personal religious lives" (WUC 2014b). Regardless of the reasons, if what several sources have argued is true and there has been an increase in veiling practise among Uyghurs (Bovingdon 2010, Li 2012, Finley 2013), then it could be considered an example of how representation of identity can change fairly quickly in response to outside influence as a defence of ones identity.

Policies not only include restrictions, but also encouragements on how do dress. A clear example is the five-year, $8 million "Beauty Project" that was launched in Xinjiang in 2011. It is a state-run campaign that aspires to promote ethnic beauty and celebrate the diversity of cultures in Xinjiang (Zhu 2011). The project involves fashion shows, pageants, and lectures where ethnic women display the traditional clothing, and the beauty of their minority culture, which has also involved development of the fashion and cosmetic industry in Xinjiang. The campaign's main aim is to educate minority women with leading messages such as patriotism, cultural development and getting rid of "old ideas" by "making their beautiful hair float, and expose their pretty faces" (Tianshan Wang 2012). At the same time

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[23] The National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party is held every 5 years; it is the highest body within the party.

local authorities have put up notice boards including "encouraging" phrases for women, some examples are "Get rid of head scarves; change ugly customs", "Let a pretty face be exposed to beautiful hair; take off the veil, change customs" and "Ladies please unveil your headscarves, please don't affect a modern civilized society" (Boxun Xinwen Wang 2012). In opposition to the aim of the "Beauty Project" these messages clearly aspire not to celebrate the culture and beauty of minority women but to fit the cultures with in certain norms.

FOOD AND TRADITIONS
An important part of Uyghur identity is the local cuisine that also has made an impact on mainstream culture in Xinjiang. Despite this impact, the questions of food and Uyghur traditions have become a contested area in the conflict.

Food is a salient boundary of Uyghur identity as Halal prepared food is the acceptable diet, which means that most Uyghurs do not eat in Han managed restaurants (Rudelson 1997:62) – though Finley found that these, what she calls, spatial boundaries constantly were negotiated and that Uyghurs often ate in Han managed restaurant that served Halal prepared food (Finley 2013:152-3). Further, Rudelson speculates that Han, in general, are not used to the taste of mutton, which is the staple meat eaten by Uyghurs, and Han rarely eat in Uyghur restaurants as they believe that "they are not clean" (Rudelson 1997:63). A clear marker between the two groups and the boundary of Uyghur identity is the choice of eating or not eating pork. One respondent told Finley "a Uyghur will not eat pork, although the Han do. If a Uyghur ate pork, he would no longer be a Uyghur" (Finley 2013:153).

Apart from a Halal diet, Ramadan, and other religious festivals, are seen as a central part of Uyghur culture (WUC 2011). A severe breach of trust between the government and the Uyghurs came, in 2008, when the regional government in Xinjiang implemented limitations on Ramadan by banning fasting at the workplace during Ramadan, meaning Uyghurs were forced to eat during work hours and enforcing "food check-ups" in cafeterias. Workers also had to sign a written pledge that they would not fast with local authorities demanding demanded that local Halal restaurants remain open during Ramadan. The same ban was enforced in 2009 and the CCP then offered food and drinks at schools and other local institutions (Martina 2014) with the rationale of maintaining stability during the holy month.

In 2014, there were again several reports from different cities in Xinjiang that local cadres, teachers and students were forbidden to fast. The reason given this time was that civil

servants, students, and CCP members were not allowed to take part in religious activities[24]. A number of local governments and school websites posted notices saying that students and workers were not allowed to take part in fasting and that they should "guide family members and friends to act in line with the law and fight against illegal religious activities" (Jie 2014). It was noted that in several of the articles related to Ramadan and the restrictions on the fasting, the words "enemy" and "extremism" were also mentioned (Wen 2010). The WUC frequently address issues of connecting religious practices with extremism and have condemned the Chinese government for treating Uyghur culture as being of wrongful nature (WUC 2014a, 2015b).

Beijing's explanation of the ban presents little understanding of how they view Uyghur culture. Contradicting statements by the state's official English news media Xinhua claim that they encourage teachers, civil servants and students to eat properly for studying and work purposes, but that they do not force anyone to eat who does not want to. Additionally, Xinhua's Chinese version has published several articles discussing the negative consequences of fasting (Tang 2014). These articles suggest that far from a religious aspect, the Chinese government only wants Chinese citizens to be healthy and achieve their potential. At the same time, such statements neglect to respect any cultural aspect of food and the importance of Ramadan to the Uyghur people.

Music is one of the areas, apart from food, where Uyghurs have a positive reputation in wider Chinese culture. Uyghur music is one of the corner stones in Uyghur culture as shown by a common Uyghur expression "'when a child can walk, he can dance. When a child can speak, he can sing'" (Finley 2013:187). Music comes across as almost an innate ability of the Uyghur and a central part of identity. In addition, music has, according to Bovingdon, also become a source of resistance for the Uyghur people, by including political lyrics of discontent. However, since a few years back the government require Uyghur artists to submit their lyrics for censorship before publicly preforming or recording the songs (Bovingdon 2010:95). Another centre point of Uyghur identity is traditional gatherings, which according to Uyghurs have been a part of Uyghur culture since ancient times. For example the traditional gathering called *mäshräp*[25], usually includes story telling, music making and feasts. Though the government banned "illicit" traditional male *mäshräp* in the mid-late 1990s, as it sometimes was conducted to maintain a Uyghur national culture (Millward 2007:16-7). When prohibiting male Uyghurs from partaking in such rituals, the CCP actively try to stop any indication of Uyghur nationalism.

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[24] Such restriction on CCP members part-taking in religious activities was introduced in the mid-90s, as the two sides of freedom, presented in the religion section of this paper, dose not include party members – their right is "to not believe in religion" (Millward 2007:342).
[25] *Mäshräp* is on UNESCO's list of "Intangible Cultural Heritage"(Palmer 2015).

Uyghur diaspora aside from the WUC, focus on strengthening the collective Uyghur identity than political autonomy. Social media is increasingly used to connect with Uyghurs all over the world. There is not any specialised social networking site for Uyghurs, but the online community is vast. Folklore, music and dancing are some of the main themes posted on YouTube by Uyghur diaspora, both in English and in Uyghur, as a way of communicating a positive image of the Uyghurs to a global audience. The use of social media has lead to kinship among Uyghur diaspora both concerning human rights, but also solidarity through Islam (Vergani & Zuev 2011:228). It is also believed that Uyghur youths in Xinjiang are influenced by the diaspora movement, in terms of both pan-Turkic identity and the preservation of Uyghur traditions and language, but that since the Internet is still very restricted, by the government, their contact is limited (Finley 2013:xxvii).

LANGUAGE

Uyghurs, in Xinjiang, have in several studies and news articles demonstrating the preference for their mother tongue over speaking Mandarin. They have done this "by making clear distinctions between the domestic and external environment", and emphasising the times when they spoke Uyghur willingly in their homes and times when they had to speak Mandarin in public (Yee 2005 in Finley 2013:135). Finley defines language as a symbolic boundary of Uyghurs identity (*ibid.* 146). The Uyghur language becomes a powerful symbolic boundary, both as a connection to a wider pan-Turkic identity, as Uyghur is a Turkic language, and to a narrower symbol of Uyghur identity (Yee 2005:452). Yee's research showed that 55 per cent of the Uyghur respondents stated that the policies aimed to promote Uyghur language had not been successfully implemented in the region (Yee 2003:48). This section treats the area of language, both by discussing the Uyghurs use of their mother tongue and the CCP's strife for a bilingual[26] minority population.

Since the 1950's, the CCP has permitted and even encouraged education in Uyghur in Xinjiang. In order to eliminate illiteracy and during almost 50 years, Uyghur-language education was available from primary school up to university. In connection to the first 'Strike Hard' campaign in 1996, aimed to catch criminals who were threatening the unity of the Chinese nation, the CCP's Central Committee published what is known as the "Document No. 7". Apart from addressing issues of extremists and separatists and international influence[27], the document treats the issue of the lack of control over Uyghur-language education. The document includes warnings of teachers and textbooks that "inspire

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[26] Bilingual, in this case, refers to a minority that fluently speaks both Mandarin (*Putonghua*) and a native minority language.
[27] For example, it included recommendation on security from the Politiburo Standard Committee on how to deal with "'illegal religious activities' aided by 'international counter-revolutionary forced led by the United States of America'" (Millward 2007:342).

national separatism and publicise religious ideas" (Millward 2007:331,342). The security policies have prolonged since its implementation and the WUC has frequently cited the language restrictions as a chief grievance for the Uyghurs (Guang & Debata 2010:76, WUC 2015b).

Although the Uyghurs retain autonomy, the Uyghur language has to "share space and resources with Standard Chinese in the domains of government administration, the courts, education, and the media" (Dwyer 2005:2). Language policies in the 21st century within education have evidently placed restrictions on Uyghur language. Most textbooks are now only offered in Chinese, even though the constitution of autonomous law states that classes with students of minority nationalities shall "use textbooks in their own languages, and use their languages as the media of instruction". Further, in 2002, Xinjiang University in Urumqi, decided to stop offering courses in Uyghur (*ibid* 35). Thus, many Uyghurs express discontent over such policies, as it is seen as an assault on their culture (*ibid.* 2).

The CCP have frequently stressed the importance of bilingual education for minority children, as it will contribute more to national unity (Zhang H. 2014). For example the document *Opinions on Strengthening and Improving Ethnic Work in New Situations*, released by the central government in 2014, called on ethnic minority officials to master Mandarin Chinese. The document also urged Han officials to learn the local dialects of the areas where they work; encouraging and allowing experienced Han officials to help govern "ethnically-diverse regions" (Xinhua 2014). The essence of guidelines are that Beijing wants to increase feelings of inclusion and participation among ethnic minorities, yet it seems that this is not the case if it means sacrificing central control. However, there are reports suggesting that this increased mandarin-focused bilingual education in Xinjiang has had a negative effect on ethnic minority languages, as students are not encouraged to speak their native tongue (CECC 2010). For example, in the spring of 2013 southern Xinjiang experienced student protests against the lack of signs and instruction in Uyghur at their school (Mundle 2013).

Finley notes that many Uyghurs feel forced to master Chinese in order to compete with the Han on the job market, especially Uyghurs in the southern part of Xinjiang, who rarely interact with Han Chinese (Finley 2013:139). While Uyghurs in XUAR are struggling with accepting the law of bilingual education the diaspora community also face the challenge as they strive to pass on the mother language to the second generations migrants. There is a notable awareness among Uyghurs, both in and outside of XUAR, as they find it crucial to preserve their native language (Vergani & Zuev 2011:207). The WUC engage with different human rights organisations to spread their message. An example is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the 'International Mother Language Day', who published a report on mother language-based education. As a response, WUC calls for "increased inclusiveness for minority and indigenous languages so that

cultures may continue to thrive within their own space" and aim to raise awareness about the current linguistic injustice of China's "'bilingual'" policy (WUC 2015b).

INTRAGROUP DYNAMICS

The purpose of this next section is to explore the internal differences and boundary-making between the Uyghurs in the context of the Xinjiang Conflict.

In an interview with Aljazeera, the WUC spokesman Seytoff answers the question "who are the Uyghurs?" by saying that "number one we, Uyghurs, are not Chinese historically, [...] we do not look like them, [...] we are a 'minority' under Han rule and we have no autonomy at all" (Aljazeera 2015). The quote emphasises the strong feeling, among both the Uyghur diaspora and the local Uyghurs, that Uyghur identity is in strong contrast to the dominant group Han Chinese. The leaders of the CCP have, on the other hand, since the creation of the republic spent much effort in "transforming the heterogeneous peoples and lands previously governed by the Qing Empire into a unified nation-state" (Bovingdon 2010:159). This section will examine the possibility of 'self'-'other' divide within a group and seek to explore the intragroup dynamics of the Uyghur identity.

Finley expresses a concern regarding the claim that the Chinese government 'created' Uyghur identity through classification in the 1930s. Finley argues that by focusing on the boundary between the Chinese state and Uyghurs one disregards any possibility of a coherent Uyghur identity prior to incorporation of Xinjiang into the PRC (Finley 2013:3). In line with Eriksen (1993), Finley considers identity as "selected by group members themselves" (Finley 2013:7) and is therefore constructed from within the group. Her research points to a strong intragroup identity among the Uyghurs that emphasises the Uyghur identity as more than the ethnonym created by the Chinese hegemonic discourse. Uyghur identity is, according to Finley, based on the shared history, common cultural assumptions, religious practice and an attachment to the land that over the 500 years have shaped, focused and intensified the Uyghur identity, following the conversion to Islam (*ibid.* 6-7).

Another scholar who has examined the intragroup dynamics of Uyghur identity is Rudelson. Rudelson's research separates the Uyghur identity into geographically placed groups, and explains that the social groups within the Uyghur community are divided based on "occupation not family type, decent, or pan-oasis[28] solidarity" (Rudelson 1997:168). The identity markers are therefore constructed in relation to other Uyghurs rather than the Han or the Kazaks. Rudelson's finding suggests a divisions of three groups; intellectuals, merchants and peasants. According to his study, the middle-income and poor peasants

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[28] The idea of a pan-oasis identity is defined as and identity that is shared between different oasis.

identify strongly with Islam while the merchants, and wealthier peasants, who might travel the country, are more likely to identify themselves as citizens of the Chinese state. The third group named intellectuals identify themselves as a part of (and the idea of) a multicultural citizenship of the PRC, with ties to the Turkic world of the Central Asia and Turkey. While the Xinjiang Conflict has prolonged, some Uyghurs "have gravitated to Islamist ideology that condemns Sufism and condones political violence" (Millward 2014), and they have strengthened the identification with other Islamic movements around the world.

This internal negotiation of identity does not necessarily divide the Uyghur community but it shows the hybridity of Uyghur identity. The dynamics of the Uyghur identity are more than an imposed classification of a minority people, with a particular language, costumes and appearance. Further, Rudelson's research indicated that the three groups all have ties to their home community/village, which they return to for social gatherings and cultural events. In fact, he writes that his respondents were more likely to identify themselves as Turpanlik[29] rather than Uyghur or Turk (Rudelson 1997:117-8). This identification with 'Home', is according to Finley a selected spatial boundary that has also spread to urban cities where "old towns" are dominated by Uyghurs and the newly build areas, referred to as "new towns", are dominated by Han (Finley 2013:147).

Finley's research also presents evidence for hybrid Uyghur identity, but that has been constructed in relation to the dominant Han Chinese society. At the same time as many Uyghurs emphasise a strict orthodox Islamic practise other Uyghurs are "unskilled in their mother tongue or culture". Finley distinguishes two distinct groups, the *minkaohan*, Uyghurs educated in Mandarin, and the *minkaomin*, Uyghurs educated in their own language[30] (Finley 2013:Chapter 7). According to Palmer, this divide has created intragroup polarisation because "*minkaomin* education is not taken seriously by non-Uyghur employers, and not speaking Mandarin shuts *minkaomin* graduates out of jobs. In turn, they often resent *minkaohan* students as opportunistic and unfaithful to their own heritage" (Palmer 2014).

These intragroup differences construct contemporary Uyghur identity, and as in many multicultural societies, the negotiation of such hybrid identities is on-going. In contrast to these social identities there is little information about political diversification and organised political engagement by Uyghurs. As mentioned, no research has been found on the subject of grassroots organisations that aims to promote Uyghur civil and political rights (Chinese and Western media mainly report on individual cases of activists). The reason for this can only be speculated on, but this paper believes that due to the extensive control of political

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[29] Turpanlik is an oasis identity based on the Turpan prefecture in east Xinjiang (Rudelson 1997:117).
[30] Similar distinctions are also made for other minority groups. *Minkaohan* denotes a minority individual who revived a Mandarin-medium education and whose first language is Mandarin (Finley 2013:xxvi).

organisations, as well as on independent grassroots organisations, many refrain from expressing political views or action, or may do it in quiet, "behind closed doors". The result of self-censorship may contribute to intragroup tensions when some choose an out-spoken political identity that may consider direct actions the only way to sustain their identity, and those who prefer discussing in private and maybe 'surviving' within the system.

In diasporic communities, political non-violent engagement is common (Orjuela 2011), and this is also the case for much of the Uyghur diaspora. During an assembly of a group of Uyghurs in Washington DC in 2004, the Easter Turkestan Government in Exile (ETGIE) was formed. With an elaborate leadership structure their mission was to protect the rights of the people of Eastern Turkestan Republic until they were liberated from the imperial rule of the Chinese Communist Party and the republic could be established. However, the organisation has not received any official recognition by the United States or internationally. Their work has since then involved demonstrations, issuing news reports and writing letters to politicians and international bodies on behalf of the Uyghur people (Bovingdon 2010:151-2), which is similar to the work of the transnational diaspora organisation the World Uyghur Congress. The Uyghur diaspora community is quite small and the contact with the local Uyghurs is more restricted now, mostly due to increased control of the Internet and the Chinese borders. In addition, moving back to the homeland is not on the agenda of the overwhelming majority of Uyghur diaspora (Forced migration 2007). The gap between, the Uyghur diasporas, with their access to avenues for international political engagement and the increased advocacy for a symbolical solution of a separate state, and the day-to-day endeavours in the homeland to survive in circumstances of current Chinese rule seems futile.

The Chinese government also adds to the intragroup dynamics of Uyghur identity. For example, the state-run television network CCTV, on behalf of local authorities, has sought to involve the Uyghur population in the fight against extremism. By encouraging tip-offs, the authorities hope to include all groups to bring stability to the region. The encouragements include Uyghurs giving tips to the police about criminal and terrorist activities, claiming that information from the Uyghur public are instrumental in the manhunt of the three evils "terrorists, separatists and extremists". To further promote this call, CCTV also interviewed several Uyghur (their identities being protected) who described how they helped surround suspects, in order for the police to make arrests (Zhang N. 2014). These pleas to the Uyghurs to assist the government in the battle against violent groups might be understood as a tactic by the government to divide the Uyghur community rather than promoting inclusion. Such a tactic could backfire and instead bring Uyghurs further from identifying themselves with the CCP and the Chinese nation.

FINAL DISCUSSION

This section presents a discussion on how the Uyghur identity has been contested and constructed in the Xinjiang Conflict, based on the result of the text analysis.

Before discussing the areas of contestation it is important to consider the access to and control of information, which the Chinese government has. During the course of this research it became evident that the CCP has monopoly on what is said in national, and to some extent international media, as well as of the scope of which researchers may access problematic areas. This has given the CCP the upper hand in the debate and also allowed the party to shape the mainstream debate of the issues in the conflict. The 'illegality' of spreading propaganda against the Chinese state, has in many ways affected the negotiation of Uyghur identity, as it allows the government to shape the perception of Uyghurs and therefore also their identity.

Several researchers (Dillion 2004, Bovingdon 2010, Finley 2013) have encountered a strong emphasis on the uniqueness and distinctiveness of Uyghur identity by Uyghurs, especially in comparison to the Han Chinese. The focus of many Uyghurs lie upon the cultural features that separate the two groups, and the emphasis is often on the superiority of these markers, for example the Uyghurs' ability to dance, sing and socialise. The Uyghur and the WUC have as well continuously emphasised their strong relationship to the land, making it a clear boundary to the Han Chinese who are viewed as colonisers. This paper recognises that the Uyghurs in Xinjiang have emphasised features of their identity, such as their Halal diet and celebration of Ramadan, and used these to separate themselves from, or build a boundary against, the Han Chinese. As such, one can conclude that there has been an increasing emphasis on religious features of the Uyghur identity. Similar to Finley's discussion on the three-part process of boundary-making and negotiation (symbolic, spatial and social in 2013:Chapter 3) between Han and Uyghurs, the results of this study suggest that the boundary-making and negotiation between the Chinese state and the Uyghurs is manifested in various areas of contestation.

In line with much of the existing research on diaspora, this study has suggested a political agenda of diaspora groups. In coherence with Chen's findings (2011) this paper has seen a construction of a political identity of the Uyghur diaspora that has been a unifying force for their mobilisation. Even though some concerns of the diminished use of the mother tongue and other cultural traits is expressed by Uyghur diaspora, most of the activism of the WUC is political. The WUC has engaged with the international community, through lobbying for the release of Uyghur prisoners, writing articles about the injustices they perceive exist against the Uyghurs, and engaging in debates with representatives of the Chinese state. Much of the literature published by the WUC does not focus on defining Uyghur diaspora in a context of the host country, but rather, on maintaining and strengthening the boundary of

Uyghur identity in China. It seems, from this study, that the diaspora has constructed an identity that is strongly connected to the myth of the homeland and, similar to the collective identity of Uyghurs in China, an identity in opposition to the Han majority.

As the conflict in Xinjiang has continued, state news items about unrest or new policies in Xinjiang have ceased to include the word 'Uyghur'. Items instead speak of 'people of Xinjiang' and continuously stress the significance of unity and stability. At the same time, the Uyghurs are described as nomads that have inhabited different areas (Xinhua 2003) articulating a perception of the Uyghurs as somewhat rootless without the Chinese united identity. The CPP has negotiated and exerted a dichotomous boundary-making of Uyghur identity by, on the one hand, saying that they accept all minority cultures, which exercise "normal" religious activities, such as Ramadan, but at the same time encouraging workers and students to eat healthily and placing restrictions on fasting during working hours.

Another area of contestation is language. The CCP has focused on the importance of bilingualism, especially with concern to Uyghurs learning Mandarin. The issue here is whether language is negotiated with the aim of integration and inclusion or assimilation. If the laws prohibits Uyghur from being spoken in state-run institutions, but at the same time promotes bilingual education for primary Uyghur students and Han officials, a paradox arises regarding boundary-making. One can at least reveal yet another contradiction – if children are encouraged to speak their mother tongue in schools but later are forced to only speak the dominate language at work or university – which is worthy of further investigation to determine how the negotiation of the individual, and communities identity changes.

While the CCP intensely focuses on economic development as the sole development project in XUAR, it neglects the Uyghurs' fight for religious and cultural rights. This is because the rhetoric of the Chinese state displays great interest in raising the cultural and civilizational level of the Uyghur people by promising equality and power sharing within a "big Chinese family" (Harrell 1995:35). However, this is not showing in practise. An example is the heavy emphasis on economic development during China's Central Committee Conference on Ethnic Affairs, in 2014. Rather than focusing on ethnic relations and minority rights the state again demonstrated a continuous focus on stability incorporated in economic reforms in XUAR. The CCP therefore, contest Uyghur identity by ignoring the Uyghurs' call for equality and assume economic reforms will solve the instability in the region. Here, the Han seeing themselves as a superior group with economic and political power, where the CCP leadership may help the under-developed Uyghurs to advance and become a more developed people, constructs a boundary between the Uyghurs and the Han.

While the CCP has officially denied any marginalisation of the Uyghurs, it seems as if their concerns of instability in the region are directed "less against any *actual* harmful and 'subversive' consequences, marginal at best, of the Uyghurs' actions and more against their symbolic context" (Shichor 2003:304). The findings of this study have indeed indicated that the conflict is played out in a wide range of areas where the Chinese state has contested Uyghur identity. Through policies and laws which restrict religion, culture and traditions the CCP has, "sought not only to classify and regulate ethnic diversity, but define its very content: with clothing, textbooks, and even play cards prescribing 'standard' and 'normal' customs, habits, and costumes" (Grose & Leibold 2015). This shows that the construction of Uyghur identity, by the Chinese state, in many ways could be seen as a deliberate attempt to shape the boundary of what it means to be Uyghur.

Elements of what is happening in Xinjiang can be defined as a process of 'friend-enemy' categorisation. Sen writes that people and states have failed to distinguish between "(1) [...] various affiliations and loyalties a person who happens to be a Muslim has, and (2) his or her Islamic identity in particular" (Sen 2006:61). The distinction between such varying Muslim identities becomes, according to Sen, important in a world in which Islamic fundamentalism has become more powerful, and, in which, for example the Chinese state (and Western states) "opposition to them is often combined with significant, if vaguely formulated, suspicion of Muslim people in general" (*ibid.*). The CCP's way of placing a single label of the issues in the region on 'terrorism' or that the cultural differences is due to 'Islamism' only fuel violence and hatred. This labelling process of classifying religious and cultural practices as abnormal, and associating them with acts of violence, constructs an association of the Uyghur identity with terrorism. This process has therefore influenced the construction of perceived Uyghur identity. By emphasising a 'friend-enemy' category, the CCP and the state consciously or unconsciously constructs an idea of them being the "friend", who protects the interests of the Chinese people, and the Uyghur are then perceived as the "enemy", who trying to provoke and create violence and instability. However, such a categorisation is reverse from a Uyghur perspective, as the CCP and the Han are the "enemy" which invaded their land, or which denied them rights to religious and cultural expression.

So far, this discussion has focused on prohibition, which the Chinese government has imposed on various areas of Uyghur identity. The type of 'negative labelling' as indicating that fasting is wrong, that children are not allowed to have religion, or that veiling is abnormal and not a part of Uyghur culture has limited the dynamics of what it means to be Uyghur and it has also placed 'negative attachment' to Uyghur identity. Yet, the CCP does also practise more 'positive labelling' for example by promoting minority women and their culture attire in form of the "Beauty Project" and the emphasis on bilingual education for

children. This indicates that Uyghur identity is not only constructed through what they are not allowed to do, but also based on what they are allowed to do.

Symbols of boundary-making between the Uyghurs and the Han have been emphasised by the relatively new demographic structure of XUAR. But the boundary-making might also be because these symbols have become a way in which Uyghurs protect their identity from the threat of policies, discussed in this paper, that are directed towards limiting or controlling Uyghur culture. The invalidation of the core constructs of Uyghur identity is threatening since it destroys the meaning of that very identity. However, the speculations of correlation between actions and the construction of identity are of course difficult to prove. Finley argues that the Uyghurs have actively deployed these boundaries as a means to distinguish themselves from the Han Chinese (and indirectly from the Chinese state) in "linguistic, religio-cultural and territorial terms" (Finley 2013:167). This process of boundary-making is a form of resistance, a resistance that according to Finley has, for some Uyghurs, made Islam more important and for other Uyghurs resulted in advocacy for the creation of East Turkestan (*ibid.* 263). In this case it becomes important to distinguish between direct or indirect resistance. The findings of this paper, suggest that Uyghurs and the WUC condemn violent protests and illegal activities by Uyghurs, but the violence is none the less real. This form of direct resistance toward CCP policies stands in contrast to more indirect resistance (Finley refers to this as symbolic resistance), for example the suggested revival of Islam. As a respondent said to Finley, "I suppose Islam is stronger now because the government is trying to block religious activities. If the government tries to block or limit Islam, then people's faith only becomes stronger" (*ibid.* 165).

Thus, a conclusion of this paper is that the identity of Uyghurs seems to be the effect rather than the cause of the conflict. The results suggest that all actors have contributed to this new formulation of what it means to be a Uyghur. When negotiating one's identity, in the form of resistance, the process might not necessarily be perceived as resistance, but when the practice, for example faith, is being categorised as illegal the potential for the resistance arises. The contestation of Uyghur identity markers has both led to negotiations of what they entail, but also to violent reactions in defence of that very identity. In this way the collective Uyghur identity has been constructed and reconstructed during the past 20 years. It is a product of the dynamics of the conflict.

CONCLUSION

The exploration of the Xinjiang Conflict has shown that identity can be constructed around threatened identities, historical suffering and a struggle to safeguard and protect one's identity, but that is also constructed along political or economic lines. In the conflict setting, the importance of boundaries and identity markers are brought to the fore and re-emphasised by the different actors. The analysis advanced in this paper suggests that it is important to think of grievances not so much as pristine starting points of violent conflict, detached from the wider systems of meanings in which they are embedded, but rather as areas in which wider contestation over identity are played out.

In response to the main research question 'How is Uyghur identity constructed and contested in the context of the Xinjiang Conflict?' it can be said that Uyghur identity is negotiated by the Chinese state and the Uyghur diaspora as well as among Uyghurs in Xinjiang. The process of negotiation includes resistance, boundary-making and outright conflict. This paper has presented five areas where Uyghur identity is contested, these are: (1) *Territory*, (2) *National Unity and Autonomy*, (3) *Culture and Religion*, (4) *Language*, and (5) *Intragroup Dynamics*.

The Uyghur diaspora, with the World Uyghur Congress as a representative, have negotiated their identity and constructed a political identity linked to their advocacy for civil rights for Uyghurs, and an independent East Turkestan. As mentioned, the CCP has basically discarded these claims as "vain wishes", untrue accusations and acts of terrorism and separatism. The Chinese government have restricted the expressions of Uyghur culture, and the constant emphasis on national unity appears to be a way of negotiating Uyghur identity in order for Uyghurs to abandon their attachments to their culture and later assimilate with the dominant Han Chinese culture. This study has discussed the fact that issues of marginalisation, be it restriction on clothing and food or access to the job market, influence the way in which the Uyghurs relate to the dominant Han population, and to the Chinese state. The argument here is that they all have different understandings of their identity and the identity of the others. While the constructivist approach helps to understand and explain how the identity comes into existence and why there are disagreements about seemingly primordial markers such as homeland, it is necessary to also see how the actors engaged in the conflict view identity as primordial and innate to explain why conflict continues. A more pragmatic approach, which takes both a constructivist theory and an acknowledgement that primordialism is driving the conflict, is required to obtain a more rounded understanding not only of how identity is constructed and contest but also why.

An unexpected identity marker was also identified. Earlier research has identified markers such as, language, territory and traditional rituals, which this study has recognised as well.

In the Uyghurs' case, the findings suggest that *Time* can be considered as a part of identity construction and thus a part of the boundary-making between groups. The Uyghurs negotiate and create a boundary of their identity, which separates them from the Han Chinese as they do not adhere to the Chinese states enforced time zone, whereas other Uyghurs choose to use 'Beijing time' do integrate with the Han.

A key discovery of this research is the importance of access to and control of information in the construction of perceived identities. A question raised in this research is whether and to what extent the CCP's perceived identity of the Uyghur people influences the felt identity of the Uyghurs. Investigation into the correlation between information and identity formation could provide a better understanding of how conflicts become intractable. The distorted relation between Han and Uyghur involves issues of power at a political, cultural and representational level, particularly felt through the Xinjiang Conflict. The mistrust and prejudice among the Uyghurs and Han requires further research, including the way in which the strengthening of Uyghur identity influences the construction of other identities; both of Han and local minorities. One branch of research could involve exploration as to whether Finley observations of Uyghurs seeking "a conscious segregation [...] in the home, on the streets and in most social situations apart from work-related interaction" (Finley 2013:149), are applicable to other minority groups in the region.

In sum, this paper can conclude that in the Xinjiang Conflict the idea of group identity, and the "Us against Them"-thinking is clearly visible. The findings of this paper support the idea that identity is a battleground for the Xinjiang Conflict. It is therefore the contestation of specific areas of identity that are interesting rather than only considering a specific label, such as ethnicity. This paper has discussed identity in the context of the Xinjiang Conflict, from the perspective of different actors, and has therefore looked beyond a mere description of the conflict (including punishment of a group, the battle against terrorism, the lobbying for rights to territory, and the protests against discriminatory laws). It has instead connected these issues to the contestation and construction of Uyghur identity. The different actors in the Xinjiang Conflict were chosen to give different perspectives to areas where Uyghur identity is contested, such as clothing, language, autonomy and food that indirectly affect a collective group. This study has shown that it can be beneficial for identity research, as well as the study of contemporary conflicts, to not only consider the ethnic identity of warring actors, but rather to explore how these different actors understand and utilise different identity markers, and how boundaries are negotiated and maintained in the conflict.

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APPENDIX

1. MAP OF XINJIANG[1]

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OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

Warsaw, 24 September – 5 October 2007

Uyghur situation in Central Asia countries
(In Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan)

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Uyghur Human Rights situation in Central Asia countries (in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan)

Mr. Chairman, first of all, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Central Asia countries as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan are home to Uyghur minorities. According to the official information from those counties, there are about 250 thousand Uyghurs in Kazakhstan, 50 thousand Uyghurs in Kyrgyzstan and 40 thousand Uyghurs in Uzbekistan. However, many Uyghur activists say the real number is much higher. We believe the population is at least about 1 million Uyghurs in those countries.

Uyghur minorities in Central Asia suffer living under unequal political, cultural and economic policies in their own land.

The situation has been strengthened in recent years under the auspices of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which groups China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Because of this, the politic activities of the Uyghur people in Central Asia have been greatly suppressed in all these countries.

The leader of Uyghuristan liberation movement based in Kazakhstan, Mr.Hashir Vahidi was in 1997 murdered with brutal methods by unknown people at his home, Kazakhstan.

The chairman of the Uyghur Association of the Kyrgyzstan Republic based in Bishkek, Mr.Nighmet Bosakup was shot to death in Kyrgyzstan by unknown people on March 28, 2000,

The chairman of Uzbekistan Uyghur writers association, the well-known writer Eminjan Osmanuv was murdered in Uzbekistan by unknown people in March, 2001.

The Chairwoman of "Nuzugum Foundation" in Kazakhstan, Ms. Dilbirim Samsakova was murdered by unknown people in July, 2001, in Kazakhstan.

This has negative impact on the lives of Uyghur people. They feel that their life is under threat. Therefore, individual Uyghurs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, especially those who are involved in political activities, were forced to escape to democratic countries for their personal safety.

The authorities have also become increasingly more alarmed because of the strength of the declaration of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In addition, even today the Uyghur refugees are still under investigation by the members of the securities services, like former KGB from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Uyghur asylum seekers in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan face an ever-present risk of being detained by the police as "illegal immigrants", which puts them in greater danger of being forcibly returned to China. An Amnesty International report said that Kazakhstan may have returned around 20 Uyghurs, and Kyrgyzstan around 50 Uyghurs in recent years, but the exact number is impossible to determine.

In 1999, after the Kazakhstan authorities sent the political individuals: Hemit Memet, Kasim Mehpir, Ilyas Zordon, Zulikar Memet, Seydehmet Memet and others back to the Chinese; these people were executed on the 3rd of October 2000.

On 23 May 2002, two Uyghur activists, **Memet Sadik (or Mamet Sadyk)** and **Memet Yasin (or Mamet Yasyn)** were reportedly handed over to China by the Kyrgyz authorities (ETIC report 2003, 5 Sept 2003, p.13, quoting Kyrgyz news agency.)

On 31 March 2004, it was reported in the official Chinese media that two men, **Rahmutulla Islayil** and **Arken Yakuf** had been executed after being transferred to China from Kyrgyzstan in July 2002. (Xinhua, 30 March 2004.)

In March 12, 2001, three Uyghurs, namely Ahmet Günen, Berhamjan Elimov, and Esker Tohti, were sentenced to death penalty and another Uyghur, Ali Mesum, was sentenced to 25 years long term imprisonment by the supreme court of Kyrgyzstan.

On 31 December 2002 in the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek, three Uyghurs, **Ablimit, Tohti Niyaz** and **Kayser Jalal**, were reportedly sentenced to 16, 17 and 25 years in prison respectively for forming an "unlawful East Turkistan organization".

In April or May 2003, **Abdukakhar Idris**, a Uighur asylum seeker reportedly "disappeared" in Almaty, Kazakhstan. We believe he was detained and forcibly returned to China.

In late 2001, two Uighurs, **Ahat Memet** (aged 21) and **Turgan Abbas** (aged 27), religious students, went missing in Kazakhstan and we believe they have been forcibly returned to China. They had fled from East Turkistan in August 1999.

In May 2006, International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights said Yusuf Kadir Tohti and Abdulkadir Sidik went missing in Kazakhstan. Amnesty International reported on June 27, 2006 that Yusuf Kadir Tohti and Abdukadir Sidik were returned from Kazakhstan on May 10, 2006. The two men are at risk of serious human rights violations and possibly the death penalty.

On May 11, 2007, Uzbekistan authority arrested Uyghur millionaire Rehmetjan Ehmet suspected of "supporting Uyghur's human rights". 30 years old Rehmetjan Ehmet was successful businessman, temporary living in Uzbekistan for his business affairs. According to the news he was immediately after his arrest sent to China where he is unquestionably to face torture even execution.

In March 2006, Uzbek authorities arrested Canadian citizen and ethnic Uyghur Huseyin Celil, during a visit to Uzbekistan, at the request of the Chinese government, and later handed over him to China to face charges of "terrorism." The Chinese government reportedly in April 2007 sentenced Husen Celil to life imprisonment. According to Celil's mother, he was tortured to force him to make and sign a confession that had already been prepared by the Chinese authorities. The Canadian government has expressed great concern about his case. Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper raised Celil's case directly with Chinese President Hu Jintao on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation meeting last November in Vietnam. However, in spite of the direct intervention by Prime Minister Harper, the Chinese government continues to deny Canadian consular access as required by international law, and to hold Celil as a "terrorist."

Under the pressure and request of Chinese government, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are not only violating the human rights of the Uyghur who are living in those countries but also discriminate Uyghur people in the fields of education and economics.

Although the Uyghur population is one of the largest minorities among those countries, nevertheless, numbers of the Uyghurs who hold positions among government officials and legitimate organs are extremely few.

In recent years, the cultural and educational rights of the Uyghur people have also worsened gradually.   During the time of the Soviet Union, there were around 60 Uyghur school but in recently years some of those schools were dissolved and some of them were changed to Uyghur classrooms within Russian or Kazakh schools. Currently, there are only 13 Uyghur schools in Central Asia.

Some of the Uyghur newspapers, Radio, TV and theatres were demolished completely.

The Uyghur Voice newspaper was published 5 times a week for a long time, however, now it is published only once a week. The New Life newspaper was forcefully shut down in January 2005. The Uyghur radio which broadcasted one hour daily, now broadcast for 30 minutes per week. Uyghur TV used to televise one hour five times a week, right now it is only one 20 minutes program a week.

The Uyghur research institute, a branch from Kazakhstan scientific academy was an important research center with full research staff of 80 to 90 peoples until 1991. Today this centre has been reformed and minimized to a Uyghur service from East Study institute. Many research staff from the original Uyghur research institute were laid off from their jobs. Today, only 15 staff work in this Uyghur service.

In 2002, the main trade center of the Uyghur in Bishkek was burned down by unknown arsonists. This "bazaar" had a trade volume of 150 million dollars annually. Chinese were accusing the Uyghur traders in the bazaar for financing anti-Chinese activities.

As of November 2003, Kyrgyzstan has allowed Chinese secret police to keep a close eye on Uyghur dissidents in that country. Since then several Uyghur have disappeared without leaving any trace. Uyghur believe that they have been abducted by the Chinese secret police.

These are just some example of Uyghurs being prosecuted. For more information please contact us.

UYGHURS AND UYGHUR IDENTITY

DOLKUN KAMBERI, PH. D
WASHINGTON D. C.

"Without Uyghur History there can be no Central Asian History;
Without Central Asian History there can be no Asian History;
And without Asian History there can be no True History of the World"

Uyghurs and Uyghur Identity

Dolkun Kamberi, Ph. D

Radio Free Asia

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Introduction

Great politicians will pass from the earth, and the strongest imperial states will collapse and disappear from a new generation's memory, but wisdom, civilization, and cultural heritage will continue to play a significant role among human beings as long as there is human history.

The land of the Uyghurs today consists of the Tarim, Junghar, and Turpan basins, situated in the center of Asia. This region has had great importance since early times because of its favored geographic location on the ancient trade routes between the East and the West, connecting the Greco-Roman civilization with Indian Buddhist culture and Central and East Asian traditions. Burgeoning trade, commerce, and cultural exchange gave the Uyghurs' land a cosmopolitan character, marked by linguistic, racial, and religious tolerance. The Uyghurs' culture and art developed not only on the basis of the inheritance and preservation of their traditional culture, but also through cultural exchanges with others in the East and the West.

"Uyghur-land" in this article denotes a geographical location rather than a geopolitical entity. It is situated in the eastern part of Central Asia and measures at its maximum 2,000 kilometers from east to west and 1,650 kilometers from north to south. Uyghur-land comprises about one sixth of China's territory; it is now the largest Autonomous Region of China. The Uyghur region includes a great portion of Central Asia, from the northeast to the southwest; it borders Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tibet, and India.

Not only is Uyghur-land situated in a strategic position on a vital communication line in Central Asia, among three large imperial states, China, India, and Russia—it also has a unique geographic environment, rich natural resources, and a special climate. Its arid climate has helped to preserve ancient tombs, mummies, petroglyphs, city sites, Buddhist caves, innumerable cultural relics, and underground antiquities and treasures. Twenty-four different scripts, used for writing seventeen ancient languages, have been unearthed from the Tarim and Turpan basin oasis cities and are well known to scholars.[1]

In Chinese sources, at various periods, this land has been called the "Western Region" or the "Western Countries." In non–Chinese sources, it was known as "Uyghuristan," "East Turkistan," "Chinese Turkistan," or "Chinese Central Asia." The term "Uyghur Äli," found in a medieval Uyghur manuscript, means "The Country of the Uyghurs." In 1884, the Qing Dynasty of China began to call the region "Xinjiang," which means "new territory." After 1955, the name "Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region" was given to it by the government of the Peoples' Republic of China.

According to the July 1, 1990, official Chinese census, the Uyghur-speaking population was at that time 7.2495 million and comprised more than 60% of the region's population. The Han Chinese population was 5.7466 million, comprising about 30% of the 15 million total population of the Uyghur homeland. A decade later, the Chinese official census of 2000 indicated that the population of Uyghur-speakers was near 9 million, but independent sources claim that the Uyghur population is currently about 16 million. In the past ten years, the Han Chinese population in the region increased almost 32 percent. By contrast, in 1949, Uyghurs accounted for more than 90 percent of the region's population, while the Han Chinese accounted for only 5 percent of the roughly 5 million people in the Uyghur homeland at that time. Thus the Chinese population had increased 500 percent in the last half of the twentieth century.

The Uyghurs historically formed the largest population group in the Central Asian region. They possessed a rich literary art and music as well as a strong economy and military. They had the ability to conduct state affairs, even to help other groups solve their problems as well. They showed generosity: the abundant hospitality that they offered was recorded in detail both in Chinese history and in the excavated Uyghur manuscripts of various periods.

The Uyghurs and their ancestors established their reign under the rule of the Huns (second century B.C.E. to second century C.E.), the Jurjan (third century to fifth century C.E.), and the Turkish empires (522 to 744 C.E.). The Uyghurs also established their own states throughout history; these included the Uyghur Äli (744 to 840 C.E.), the Ïdïqut Uyghur (605-840 to 1250), the Uyghur Qarakhan (tenth to thirteenth century), the Uyghur Chaghatay (thirteenth to sixteenth centuy), the Yärkänt Uyghur Khanate (1514-1678), the Qumul and Turpan Uyghur Baks (from the end of the seventeenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century), and finally the Yakup Bak (1820-1877), which lasted until the Qing invasion. The Uyghurs reclaimed Uyghur-land as the Republic of Eastern Turkistan in 1933 and as the Eastern Turkistan Republic in 1944-1949.

The last Uyghur republic, established in 1944, was strongly supported by the Soviet Union. In the early 1940s, the Stalin regime sent a Soviet Army political commissar to every unit of the Eastern Turkistan Republic army, to control and monitor the situation of the latter. These Russian commissars fed information about the political views of the main leaders of the Eastern Turkistan Republic directly to Moscow. The Chinese Communist Party also closely monitored the political situation in Uyghur-land. The Eastern Turkistan leadership made a strong demand for independence from both Russia and China. Joseph Stalin endorsed the decision for the Uyghur people made at the secret conference with Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt at Yalta in 1945. He firmly believed that the Chinese Communist Party would agree to build a new China following the USSR's ideological doctrine. Stalin immediately called Alihan Tore, the Soviet-supported President of Eastern Turkistan, to Russia in 1946; Tore lived in Tashkent until 1976.

Alihan Tore's successor, Ahmatjan Qasim (1914-1949), Eastern Turkistan Army Chief General Isaqbeg (1902-1949), Deputy Army Chief General Dalilkan Sugurbayev (1902-1949), and a member of Eastern Turkistan Central Government, Abdukerim Abbasov (1921-1949), all died in a mysterious plane crash on August 22, 1949, on their way to Beijing to participate in the first Chinese Communist Party Central Committee meetings that would decide the political fate of the Uyghurs and the Eastern Turkistan Republic.

From 1946 to 1949, Russia and China attempted many governmental structural reforms in Uyghur-land. During these reforms, both Russian and Chinese government representatives promised the Uyghurs again and again that the presence of the Chinese army in Uyghur-land was intended to promote democratization, free elections, and greater autonomy, to help build the new Xinjiang, even to provide for the eventual independence of the Uyghur lands.[2] The content of those promises is similar to Zhang Zhizhong's promise at the summit of Chinese Nationalists, Communists, and Uyghurs in Urumchi in 1946. After 1950, "the communist revolutionary moment" in China touched almost every aspect of traditional culture, especially during the Cultural Revolution. The revolutionaries found that every aspect of culture in Uyghur-land was different from that of China. This included languages, writing system, arts, literature, ideas, values, attitudes, history, religion, customs, music, dance, songs, and thought, even the personal features of the people, including their clothes, style of house decoration, and food. All of these differences were attacked by the Chinese government in an attempt to change them.

The government, for example, has twice changed the writing system of the Uyghurs, Kazaks, and Kirghiz, and it has punished all levels of educated intellectuals for political reasons four times in fifty years. Furthermore, the politicians reorganized and merged the Eastern Turkistan troops into Chinese Army units. After 1966, it caused the army units of former Eastern Turkistan—as well as their generals and high-ranking commanders—to disappear.

One goal of this publication is to offer the evidence needed for the world to have a better understanding of the distinctiveness of Uyghur identity.

[1] Dolkun Kamberi, "Xinjiang Yeqinqi Zaman Arheologiyisi wä Qeziwelinghan Qädimqi Yeziqlarni Qisqichä Tonushturush [Brief Introduction of Xinjiang Contemporary Archology and Unearthed Various Ancient Scripts]," *Xinjiang Ijtima-i Pänlär Tätqiqati*, 1 (1984): 60-70.

[2] Zhang Zhizhong, *Cong Dihua Huitan Dao Xinjiang Heping Jiefang* [From Urumchi Summit to Peaceful

Liberation of Xinjiang] (Urumchi: Xinjiang Renming Chubanshe, 1987), pp. 166–67.

The Uyghurs

Archaeological excavations and historical records show that Uyghur-land is the most important repository of Uyghur and Central Asian treasures.

Many centuries ago, when a famous medieval Uyghur king mounted the throne, he made an ambitious proposal for his kingdom's future. He said to his courtiers and people, in verse:

män sänlärgä boldum Qaghan, alaling ya taqï qalqan.

tamgha bolsun bizgä buyan, kök börä bolsunghïl uran.

tömür yïdalar bol orman, aw yärdä yürüsün qulan.

taqï taluy taqï müärn, kün tugh bolghïl, kök qurqan….

I became a king for you. Pick up your bows and shields! Let the symbol become our good fortune, make the blue wolf a totem. Let our arms and armor be like [a thick] forest. Let wild horses speed on our hunting ground. Let rivers and streams run in our land. May the sun be our [royal] emblem, the blue sky our banner….

And then the king wrote a declaration, which was sent in all four directions by his order. It said: "uyghurnïng qakhanï bolamän kim yärning tört bulungïnïng qakhanï bolsam keräk turur…." "I am a Uyghur king; the globe needs me; and I should be king of the world's Four Corners…." [1]

The basic meaning of the name Uyghur is "Unite," but it may also be translated as "union," "coalition," or "federation." The name first appeared in the Orkhun Kok Turk inscriptions and in early Uyghur. Later forms of the name can be found in medieval Uyghur, Manichaean, and Sogdian scripts, and in the Arabic script of the Uyghur Qarakhanid and Chaghatay periods. Apart from these Central Asian forms, the name can be found in different periods and diverse texts in Chinese, appearing in more than one hundred translations.[2]

The Uyghurs and their forebears are an ancient people who have lived in Central Asia since the first millennium B.C. Their ancestors can be traced in Chinese historical sources, as the "Di," "Chidi," "Xiongnu," "Dingling," and "Gaoche" peoples who lived north of the Heavenly Mountain (Tängri Tagh) and along the Selenga and Orkhun rivers. The territory later became known as the Uyghur Empire. The Uyghurs have left historical traces along the ancient Silk Road and also in Chinese historiography.

The Uyghurs, earlier than other prairie peoples, began to settle and build cities. Certain kinds of evidence from both archaeological excavations and historical records show that, in an important period, many Uyghurs lived a settled urban life and embraced Buddhist and Manichaean culture. Uyghur manuscripts that describe the religious and cultural interaction of medieval Uyghurs with the peoples of neighboring countries, during the period from the eighth to the eleventh centuries, show that this cultural experience contributed to the medieval Uyghur culture. An important part of Uyghur literature is devoted to the translation of Buddhist works from non-Turkic languages. That is one reason why so many loan words from different languages appear in medieval Uyghur literature.

Regarding the early medieval Uyghur culture and its kingdom, Professor Denis Sinor writes: "The kingdom of Khocho [Idïqut Uyghur Kingdom], ruled by the Turkic Uyghurs, was multiracial [and] multilingual and [it] permitted the peaceful coexistence of many religions. It enjoyed a living standard unparalleled in medieval Central Eurasia." [3] He goes on:

Among the non-Muslim Turkic peoples none has reached the degree of civilization attained by the Uyghurs and they developed a culture in many respects more sophisticated than that of most of the Muslim Turks. In the visual arts they continued a tradition, non-Turkic in origin, of which they maintained very high standards. The script they used gained widespread acceptance both to the east and the west. The Uyghurs undoubtedly wrote one of the brighter chapters of Central Eurasian history.[4]

Medieval Uyghur life and culture flourished until the Mongol invasion, at which time Uyghur-land underwent two hundred years of war and division. A cultural renaissance began under the famous Uyghur cultural founders Sakaki, Lutfi, and Ali Sher Nawayi. For many decades, up through the present time, Uyghur scholars worked hard to save and preserve Uyghur culture, and to recover it from both assimilation into other cultures and external political pressure.

A typical example of interference in Uygher life comes from recent history. Following the assassination of Yakup Beg[5] in April 1877, Uyghur-land endured eight long years of intervention by both Russia and China. Finally, the Manchu Qing dynasty in 1884 made a secret deal with the Russians, and the two imperial forces annexed Uyghur-land. The Qing dynasty renamed it "Xinjiang Province" and ruled it harshly; this reign was succeeded by the domination successively of Yang Zenxin, Jin Shuren, and Shen Shicai.[6] These rulers enforced three decades of severe control on Uyghur-land, causing political, social, and economical instability, provoking ethnic conflict, and forcing the decline of Uyghur intellectual life.[7]

Here is an example from the small village of Tijän in Artush County near Qäshqär: the rulers arrested more than fifty men during the period 1910-1928, and some of these never came back. The fifty men who were taken away were among the most influential, some being wealthy men and others leading intellectuals. In fact, throughout all of Uyghur-land, nothing remained of Uyghur cultural and social activities, except for limited religious freedom (permission to keep some mosques open).[8] Finally, the Qäshqär uprising started under a few Uyghur intellectual leaders. The Uyghurs overthrew the cruel rulers and established a new Republic of Eastern Turkistan in 1933. The cultural renaissance that followed helped Uyghurs to enter the modern era.

From 1933 on, Qasimjan Kamberi, a cultural leader, led the Uyghurs in a literary and artistic renaissance. He organized a performance troupe in the city of Ghulcha, which then performed in other areas of Uyghur-land. He recreated the "Gherip-Sänäm" opera; he wrote plays, staged and directed them, and performed as a principal actor. He also made it possible for women to perform on the stage for the first time in modern Uyghur history.[9]

After the Republic was crushed by the Chinese government, with Russia's help, the Uyghurs once more lost the ability to advance their own culture. But ten years later the Uyghurs took back their rights and independence. They founded the Republic of Eastern Turkistan (1944-1949), which once again created a cultural revival in Uyghur-land. The Uyghurs had survived some of the most difficult circumstances and tremendous pressures in human history. Uyghur intellectual circles, using every opportunity, successfully brought about the transfer of Uyghur cultural heritage to the new generation.

[1] *Qädimqi Uyghur Yazma Yadikarlaridin Tallanma* [Selection of Ancient Uygher Manuscripts], ed. Abdukeyim Khoja (Ürümchi: Khälq Näshriyati, 1983).

[2] See Dolkun Kamberi "A Survey of Uyghur Documents from Turpan and Their Importance for Asian and Central Eurasian History," *Central Asian Survey* (1999), 18 (3): 283.

[3] Denis Sinor, *Inner Asia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Publications, 1969), p. 120.

[4] Sinor, *Inner Asia*, p. 121. See also Annemarie von Gabain, "Das uighurische Königreich von Chotscho, 850-1250," in *Sitzungsberichte der deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin*, 1961, Nr. 5, and A. von Le Coq, *Buried Treasures of Chinese Turkestan: An Account of the Activities of the Second and Third German Turfan Expeditions* (London, 1928).

[5] Yakup Beg (1820-1877) was the founder of a dynasty (1864-1888) in Uyghuristan. Türkey recognized the kingdom in 1872. Queen Victoria of England sent a British delegation in 1870 and a second delegation in 1873, with a document in her own handwriting recognizing the kingdom's legitimacy (Boulger, *The Life of Yakup Beg* [London, 1878], chap. 11).

[6] Saypidin Äzizi, *Ömür Dastani* [Epic of Life] (Beijing: Millätlär Näshriyati, 1990), pp. 119-24.

[7] Äzizi, *Ömür Dastani*, pp. 351-60.

[8] The researcher obtained this information from a Uyghur historian, Abduqadir Aji (1902-1986).

[9] *Xinjiang Tarikh Materyalliri* [Xinjiang Historical Materials] (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Khälq Näshriyati, 1990), 27inchi Sani, pp. 200-11.

Uyghur Linguistic Identity

The Turkic peoples historically used the Uyghur literary language. The ancient Uyghur language, which was used in the eighth century during the Uyghur Khanate, is the same as the language of the Orkhun–Yenisay inscription, called ancient Türki. There was no great difference between the literary language of the Iduqut Uyghur Khanate and the Uyghur literary language of Khaqaniyid.

This phenomenon proves that the ancient Türki literary language, which was in use before the eighth century, actually was the Uyghur literary language. As we know, until the fourteenth century, the ancient Uyghur literary language was commonly in use among the Türki peoples. Shämsidin Sami, the author of *Qamusul'Alam*, wrote: "Uyghurs being most advanced in cultural development, their language was the common literary language among the Türki peoples, since at the period during which the Chaghatay Khan was in power, the Uyghur language, called Chaghatay Tili, was famous."[1]

Based on the history, literature, religion, content, and script of Uyghur linguistic materials, I have classified Uyghur language into five different periods:

> Pre-historic Uyghur language, before the sixth century B.C.E. No written material in Uyghur from this period has been found so far, but the language has come down to us through Uyghur oral literature, idiom, idiomatic phrase, folk story, folk song, and folk literature, and through the ancient mythology and legends recorded in other languages.
>
> Ancient Uyghur language, sixth to tenth century C.E., mostly pre-Islamic literatures, whose influence spread from non–Altaic languages.
>
> Medieval Uyghur language, tenth to fifteenth century C.E. These mostly record Islamic literature and are strongly influenced by the Arabic and Persian languages.
>
> Early Modern Uyghur language, sixteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century C.E.
>
> Modern Uyghur language, from the end of the nineteenth century to the present.

Modern Uyghur belongs to the Ural-Altaic language family, a Turkic language group of the eastern branch. Among the six major Turkic languages, the Turkish and Azari languages are very close; the Kazakh and Kyrgyz languages also are closely related; and the Uyghur and Uzbek languages are similarly paired. In each "couple," the languages can communicate with each other on simple subjects.

Modern Uyghur has two major dialects, southern and northern. According to the official Chinese census of 2000, the number of native speakers of Uyghur is nearly ten million. Of these, the vast majority lives in the Uyghur Autonomous Region under Chinese rule. There are considerable communities of Uyghur-speakers living in the Central Asian Republics and Turkey, and smaller communities live in Russia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and in the Western countries.

According to Uyghur Autonomous Regional law, the standard Uyghur language has served as the official language of the Uyghur Autonomous Regional government since 1955. Despite the fact that there are more than ten million Uyghurs living throughout a vast region of Central Eurasia, and despite the fact that they have possessed a very rich literary heritage for almost two thousand years, the Uyghur language has been greatly neglected by the international community. There are no generally accessible Western publications or education on the Uyghur languages and literature, except for a few early publications in Russian, and some in German and Swedish. Uyghurs have used more than eight different writing systems from early medieval times to the present. Now they use the Arabic-script-based modern Uyghur writing system.

Uyghur Writing Systems from Medieval Times to Present [2]

     Brahmi Script I
     Brahmi Script II
     Uyghur Runic Script
     Medieval Uyghur Script
     Uyghur, Sogdian and Manichaean Script
     Arabic–Persian–Script–Based Uyghur–Chaghatay Writing System
     Modern Uyghur Script
     Roman–Script–Based Modern Uyghur Writing System

See Appendix for a full description of these systems.

[1] Khämit Tömür, *Chghatay Tili* [Chaghatay Language](Qashqar: Qashqar Uyghur Näshiryati, 1987), p. 2.

[2] Turghun Almas, *Uyghurlar* [The Uyghurs] (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Yashlar–Ösmürluar Näshriyati, 1989), pp. 801-10; Annemarie von Gabain, *Alttürkische Grammatic* [Ancient Turkish Grammar] (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1974), pp. 1–41; *Weiwuer Zu Jianshi* [Brief History of Uyghur], ed. by a Group (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, 1991); Liu Yi Tang*, Weiwuer Yanjiu* [Studies of Uyghur] (Taibei: Zhengzhong Shujü, 1975), pp. 517–84; Abdukeyim Khoja, ed., *Qädimqi Uyghur Yazma Yadikarlaridin Tallanma* [A Selection of Ancient Uyghur Manuscripts] (Ürümchi: Khälq Näshriyati, 1983), pp. 37-44.

Uyghur Cultural Identity

The Uyghurs are indigenous peoples of Central Asia. They have developed a unique culture and have made significant contributions to Asian literature, medicine, architecture, music, songs, dance, and fine arts. The Uyghur economy is based on light industry and on the farming of fruits, cotton, wheat, and rice, made possible throughout this arid region by the ingenious irrigation method invented by the Uyghurs over two thousand years ago. In addition, Uyghur-land has rich oil and mineral reserves.

Generally speaking, the Ïdïqut Uyghurs maintained friendly relations with all their neighbors. Evidence excavated in Turpan Basin shows that the Ïdqut Uyghur Kingdom was for centuries a major Central Asian Buddhist cultural center. During the tenth century, Wang Yande, an envoy of the Sung dynasty, visited the Ïdïqut Uyghurs between 981 and 984 and was impressed by the high level of civilization he found in the kingdom. Under Uyghur rule, there were at that time more than one hundred temples in Kuchar and more than fifty temples and libraries in the city of Turpan, and welfare programs existed for the support of the poor.[1]

This level of cultural attainment is shown both by archaeological excavations in the Uyghur region and by Uyghur historical documents. The wall paintings and manuscripts discovered in the Turpan Ïdïqut Uyghur Khanate offer further pertinent illustrations of the cultured lifestyle and the continuity of Uyghur civilization. For instance, wall paintings discovered at Turpan offer a picture of the Uyghurs as a refined people, with elegant ladies and well-dressed gentlemen in long embroidered tunics holding long-stemmed flowers in their hands. Many other art objects and manuscripts were also recovered from the ancient Yarghul and Ïdïqut cities. Later, when the Taoist Chang-Chun, on his way to visit Chingis Khan in the thirteenth century, passed through the still-flourishing Uyghur kingdom, he marveled at its riches. The fields were all irrigated with water brought from a great distance. He was entertained by dwarves and musicians, offered wine and marvelous flowers, and treated to watermelons weighing some thirty pounds.[2]

Medieval Uyghur saying: "öküz adaqï bolghïnchä buzaghu bashï bolsa yig."

Modern Uyghur saying: "öküz ayighi bolghïchä mozay beshi bolsa yakhshi."

Translation: "It is better to be a head of a calf than to be a hoof of an ox." [3]

(In other words—it is better to be a big frog in a small pond than a small frog in a big one.) The saying expresses the idea of Uyghur longing for freedom and independence. It also suggests that a person should think independently, not follow others, no matter whether the others are big or rich. This proverb encourages an individual to be a leader, although he might lead only a small or poor group or place, rather than to be a servant; to decide everything for himself; and to refuse to live under constraint. Mäkhmut Qäshqäri recorded this medieval Uyghur saying in the eleventh century. The saying has remained prevalent among Uyghurs for more than a thousand years, and it retains the same form and meaning.

The medieval Uyghurs, striving over a long period to build great cities and to develop their cultural life and agriculture, finally earned their independence and established a strong base in medieval Central Asian cultural development, as suggested in the saying quoted above. Thereafter, Uyghurs founded a strong empire in Central Asia and became leading figures among other groups of Central Asian peoples for the extent of the medieval period. For this reason, medieval Uyghur literature made an unprecedentedly rapid development. Early Uyghur manuscripts, recently excavated, will offer further understanding about this period, its religious life, social activities, urban culture, and the general cultural background of the Uyghurs. The existence of the manuscripts itself indicates that Uyghurs had a close relationship with other groups and engaged in considerable social

exchange with them.

These manuscripts include the following: (1) Maitrisimit, (2) Altun Yaruq, (3) Samso Acharining Tärjimali, (4) Säkiz Yükmäk, (5) Abidarim Koshvardi Sutra, (6) Guan Shi Im Pusar, (7) Linhua Chächäk Üzä Itigi Yaratighï Atlïgh Sutra, (8) Amitaba Sutra, (9) Aryarajavavadaka Sutra, (10) Mahamegha Sutra, (11) Kshanti Qïlghuluq Nom, (12) Kimqoki Vajiracchetika Sutra, (13) Tishastwustik Sutra, (14) Yitigän Sutra, (15) Amitayus Sutra, (16) Agamas Sutra, (17) Prajna–Aparamita Sutra, (18) Dashakrma Budaawtanamal Sutra, (19) Lailitaristara Sutra, (20) Yogacharyabhuni Sastra, (21) Nagarjuna Liligig Ötlämäg Taqshut, (22) Insadi Sutra, (23) Mahamayuri Sutra, (24) Manijushirinama Samgiti Sutra, (25) Jataka and Awadana Story, (26) Alqu Ayïgh Yawuz Yollarigh Artuqraq Uz Aritdachi Sutra, (27) Mahapaya Utlisin Yanturmish Sutra, (28) Alqu Anchulayu Kälmishlärning Ushnirlaqshänlarintin Önmish Atï Kötirilmish Sitatapadra Atlïgh Utsuqmaqsiz Darni, (29) Oghuz Namä, (30) Chashtana Ilig Bäg, (31) Ikki Tigin Yikayisi, and many more.

The Uyghurs established an excellent writing system and, over time, created literary genres unique among all the neighboring groups. The medieval Uyghur urbiculture evinced unprecedented development, especially under the leadership of Ay Tängridä Qut Bulmïsh Tängri Äl Bilgä Bögü Arslan, the Uyghur emperor who reigned 759-779 A.D. The Uyghurs twice provided significant military aid to the Tang court (618 A.D. and 907 A.D.), saving it from internal political disaster and rebuilding its political and economic power.[4]During the pre-Ïdqut and Ïdqut Uyghur Khanate (605-1250 A.D.), the Uyghurs not only strengthened their political power but also developed a strong economic society and cultural life. They played an important role in the Silk Road economy and contributed to Central Asian literature, as well as creating localized Buddhist arts.

The credibility of the Uyghurs made them the regional power. They were able to achieve a developed literary life, and not only during a period in which they had a great leader or because they were briefly dominant regional figures. Their cultural achievements were built upon an endeavor to develop their arts over centuries. "For some 150 years, from about 400 A.D., the entire Central Asia region from northern Korea to Karashar [qarashähär] was dominated by the JuanJuan [Jurjan] and the ancestors of the Uyghurs; the Kaoch'e [the Qangqïl] lived under their control as subjects."[5]

I have deciphered a poem unearthed from Bezeklik in Turpan that belongs to the medieval period. The poem presents the very kindly feeling of its author for his relative, who evidently lives far away. The author not only greets him, but also encourages him to study hard, giving him good advice and wishing him great success when he returns. The poem also reflects the attitude of the medieval Uyghurs toward learning. They believed that knowledge combined happiness with great honor. Thus, this well-written poem indicates that medieval Uyghurs took education very seriously. (The document is preserved in the Turpan Museum. The original document number is 80. T. B. I 522, and it measures 37.5 x 3 cm.

Transliteration :

1. özüng-ning ögränmish yandïrlarta

2. öglinä ädgü-ki-mä busugh silikil

3. öngi-mä nägü-kim yanglar-ta öslü-

4. nchü-singä tägi anchulayu ol umuq-

5. luq közüm birlä oqïp sanga ïdïm.
Translation:

1. No matter what subject, study in your own way;

2. Think more; be aware; do not be a show-off;

3. Be careful and steady, whatever you engage in;

4. That is the only way to be outstanding.

5. I read this with hopeful eyes and send it to you.

Uyghur culture likely will survive indefinitely but may not hold the vitally important place it occupied in the past. That culture seems to exist only in the preserved form witnessed in the Uyghur Mäshäräp performance or in old museum pieces. A select but substantial group of scholars and readers may well continue to admire the magnificence of such medieval arts. But no matter what benefit the study of medieval Uyghur culture may confer, drastic social change cannot fail to transform the traditional culture. Yet the preservation of that culture will benefit contemporary civilization greatly, especially as it preserves the cultural identities of peoples through their arts.

[1] Geng Shemin, *Gudai Weiwuer Shige Xun* [Selection of Ancient Uyghur Poems] (Xinjiang Renming Chubanshe, 1983), pp. 5, 19.

[2] Sinor, *Inner Asia*, pp.118-19.

[3] Mäkhmut Qäshqäri, *Turki Tillar Divani* [Turkic Languages Dictionary] (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Khälq Näshriyati, 1981).

[4] See the section "Decline of Uyghurs in History" in Dolkun Kamberi, "The Study of Medieval Uyghur Drama and Related Cultural Phenomena: From *Maitrisimit* to *Qutadghu BIlik*, ca. 767-1069 A.D." Dissertation. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Company, 1995), chap. 5.

[5] Colin Mackerras, *The Uyghur Empire (744-840), According to the T'ang Dynastic Histories* (University of South Carolina Press, 1972), p. 8.

Uyghur Artistic Identity

Uyghur arts have spread widely and had a powerful impact on public education in Central Asia and therefore on the cultural history of the region. Such material is of fundamental importance for understanding Uyghur civilization and philosophy. Uyghurs have kept their cultural identity alive in literature and art; they have also continued to develop their traditional culture up to the present.

The Uyghurs formed a design system and decorative style of their own unique flavor in arts and crafts. The distinctive Uyghur style persists especially in clothing, hats, jewelry, boots and shoes, scarves, bed sheets, tablecloths, carpets, bed felts, blankets, wall hangings, pillows, bags, riding bags, knives, musical instruments, bedside cupboards, horse gear, doors, designs on windows and buildings, and household decorations. These designs are derived from various plants, animals, landscapes, shapes, and geometric figures. The designs are unique in form, compact in organization, and rich in subject and color. Ancient petroglyphs, Buddhist and Manichaean temple wall paintings, and archaeological finds in the Uyghur region offer evidence of the origins of Uyghur design and art.

One of the most important early medieval Uyghur Buddhist art centers, the Bezeklik monastery is located in the Murtuq River gorge of the Flaming Mountains (Yalqun Tagh), about forty kilometers east of Turpan. One can still see the traces of the performance stage, though it is ruined. The monastery consists of caves spaced for one kilometer along the cliffs on the west side of the gorge. There are eighty-three surviving caves, of which about forty are decorated with wall paintings totaling approximately twelve hundred square meters. The surviving caves date mostly to the Uyghur Idïqut Khanate period. Researchers have examined some typical wall paintings from the caves, and their analysis shows that Uyghur Buddhist art was an important feature in medieval Uyghur culture.

The German archaeologist A. von Le Coq cut out many wall paintings, shipping them back in several hundred cases to Berlin. The world was surprised by the esthetics of Uyghur Buddhist art. The consensus is that the art of the Bezeklik Buddhist Monastery is the most representative, important, and numerous as well as the best preserved of Uyghur Buddhist art objects. The British archaeologist Aurel Stein, who visited Bezeklik at the end of 1914, indicated that, in terms of richness and artistry, no other finds from similar sites in the Turpan Basin can match those of Bezeklik, which parallel the rich ancient paintings of the Dunhuang Thousand Buddha Caves.[1] Professor Albert Grünwedel (1856-1935) writes in a letter dated April 2, 1906: "For years I have been endeavoring to find a credible thesis for the development of Buddhist art, and primarily to trace the ancient route by which the art of imperial Rome, etc. reached the Far East. What I have seen here goes beyond my wildest dream. If only I had hands enough to copy it all, [for] here in the Kizil are about 300 caves, all containing frescoes, some of them very old and fine."[2]

[1] M. Aurel Stein, *Ruins of Desert Cathay* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc), pp. 353-63.

[2] Herbert Härtel and Marianne Yaldiz, Along the Ancient Silk routes: Central Asian Art from the West Berlin State Museums (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1982), p. 41.

Uyghur Musical Identity

The Uyghurs also have a colorful and outstanding heritage in music, song, and dance. One achievement of the contemporary Uyghur intellectuals who have worked toward a cultural revival is the return of the classical suites of the Muqam and of the Uyghur songs and dances that once appeared on the stage in Uyghur-land.

The Uyghur Twelve Muqam, for example, is well preserved and very popular among Central Asians. The Muqam was a part of Uyghur theatrical culture that was recreated under Abdurishit and Amannisa Khan in the sixteenth century. Abdurishit (1533-1570) was the king and son of the founder of the Yärkänt Uyghur Khanate (1514-1678); his wife, Queen Amannisa Khan (1534-1567),[1] was an outstanding Uyghur musician who compiled and created the Uyghur Twelve Muqam. Together they conserved and developed the muqam during the cultural revival that emerged in the sixteenth century in Uyghur-land.

The original Muqam texts came mainly from Uyghur folk songs and oral literature; the later were gradually replaced by the writings of poets and thinkers like Atayi, Muhämmäd Säkkaki, Lutfi (1366-1465), and Elishir Nawayi, Uyghur cultural revivalists and reformers active after the Mongol invasion, who made a great contribution to the literary renaissance in Central Asia. Uyghur literary development underwent an experience similar to that of other groups in the Central Asia at that time. Arabs and Persians had influenced literary history more strongly than ever during the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries. Uyghur society faced a cultural decline under the rule of Chaghatay Khan's descendants. As time went on, the Muqam was in danger of disappearing from contemporary Uyghur history.[2] But thanks to the many Uyghur musicians who worked to sustain it, it has survived to the present. For instance, one of the most famous Uyghur folk musicians, Turdi Akhun (1881-1956), who had been born into an aristocratic musical family, was still active in Qäshqär in 1950 and could play and sing the Muqam completely from memory, including the poetic texts.

In 1950, Turdi Akhun and the people of his town clearly remembered four notable generations of folk musicians from his family, preceding himself. They were: his great-great-grandfather Ibrayim Akhun, his great-grandfather Ashim Akhun, his grandfather Qawul Akhun, and his father Täwäkkül Akhun. The five generations of that aristocratic Uyghur musical family thus go back to the Yärkänt Uyghur Khanate period (1514-1678). If the father of Ibrayim Akhun were also a folk musician, he would be a person in the same generation as the well-known Uyghur poet and thinker, Nizamiddin Elishir Nawayi (1441-1501).[3] This hypothesis offers an explanation of why there were many Nawayi poems in the Muqam's texts—not only did the old Muqam texts performed by Turdi Akhun include many of Nawayi's poems, but there were also countless verses of Nawayi in his amazing memory. He probably acquired the words directly from the earlier generations of his own family. This phenomenon offers the best evidence for connecting the continuation of the Uyghur Muqam with the social activities of the sixteenth-century female Muqam compiler and creator Amannisa Khan.

These five generations of one musical family offer an invaluable heritage of music and poetic literature, brought forward from Lutfi's and Nawayi's works to modern generations. Their lives also fill a gap in the history of Uyghur musicians that extended from Amannisa Khan to 1950, evidence of which was nearly lost. During the period 1951-1954, the outstanding Uyghur artistic leader Qasimjan Kamberi (1910-1956)[4] organized a group of Uyghur folk musicians in Qäshqär headed by Turdi Akhun, and thus saved the Uyghur classical music Muqam.[5] Today, such Uyghur classics as the Twelve Muqam serve as the basis of Uyghur and Central Asian contemporary music.

[1] See *Uyghur on Ikki Muqam Häqqidä* [Regarding Uyghur Twelve Mukam] (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Khälq Näshriyati, 1992), pp. 342-47.

[2] See *Täwarikhi musiqiyum* [The History of Musicians], written by Uyghur scholar Mulla Ismätulla Mujizi in 1854, in the city of Khotan in Uyghuristan. He mentions in the preface of his book that, after receiving an order from the king of Khotan, Älishir Hekim, he started to collect materials to write his history of musicians. He described seventeen famous musicians in the book. The Queen, Amannisa Khan, from the middle of the sixteen century, was the last described and also the only female musician. At the end of the work, the author wrote "Moreover, I should explain that during each century, in each city has appeared a hundred or a thousand musicians. If a book described the events of each person one by one, there wouldn't be room. Therefore, I selected only one from a thousand, chose someone who created the music or the Muqam, or invented one of the instruments, or wrote in this field, to become famous. I used this information about the musicians presented, in this brief introduction in front of you." See also Abdushukir Muhämmät Imin, "Amannisa Khan he shi'er muqan," *Sichou zhi lu yuewu yishu* (Ürümchi: Xinjing Remin Chu Ban Shi, 1985), pp. 32-35.

[3] Äli Shir Nawayi was born in a Uyghur Bakhshi family in Herat; his father's name was Ghiyasidin Kichik. See *Uyghurlarda kilasik ädäbiya* [Uyghur Classic Literature] (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Yashlar-Ösmürlär Näshriyati, 1988), p. 351.

[4] See *Xinjiang Tarikh Materyalliri* [Xinjiang Historical Materials] (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Khälq Näshriyati, 1990), 27: 200-11.

[5] Ämätjan Hämidi, "On Ikki Muqam Tarikhidiki Yengi Namayändä [New Discovery in Twelve Mukam History]," in *Uyghur on ikki Muqam häqqidä* [Regarding Uyghur Twelve Mukam] (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Khälq Näshriyati, 1992), pp. 458-77.

Uyghur Religious Identity

A productive way to understand the rituals of medieval Uyghurs is to view them as exercises in religious practice. A number of the more insightful analysts of the medieval Uyghur manuscripts have already highlighted the importance of religious symbolism and role-playing. The ritualized quality of the religious devotions and the significance of audience participation make them very important social and cultural activities in a religious context. The symbolic implications of a variety of Uyghur religious texts and dramatic metaphors capture the mood and explain the impact of religious literature on Uyghur identity since the early medieval period.

The religious processional performance of the medieval period, first of all, embraces certain religious institutional activities in both a fixed and an unfixed form. These include daily prayer as well as religious teaching offered in both fixed and unfixed locations such as monastery, temple, mosque, or on the street—untitled, improvisational, with constantly changing casts. Though fluid in form, the religious activities nevertheless followed a historically established tradition of group participation. This means that even participants in religious events worked from familiar "scripts," which gave a common sense of how to behave during a given action. These included: where and when to pray, how to express one's beliefs, how to costume oneself and apply makeup when preparing to perform the ritual for calling for God's protection from evil, and so on.

Some of these ritual performances and the makeup used in them originated in the distant past, even stretching back millennia. For example, I examined three-thousand-year-old mummies in excellent preservation from ancient tombs in Uyghur-land that offered evidence of such rituals. The male corpse was dressed in a short jacket and long trousers, all made of dark purple wool. The female wore a dark reddish-brown one-piece open-necked dress that was cut to below knee length. There were multicolored felt socks and knee-high white deerskin boots on their feet. Traces of makeup in ocher spiral sun-symbols could be seen on their faces. The presence in the tomb of two small bone spoons with dried ocher pigment in them may indicate that the makeup was applied after death. Some other ritual objects unearthed from the tomb included yarn, which may have been used as a symbol of fire, and some reed bundles bound in red wool yarn and suspended from forked branches.[1]

Furthermore, historical evidence shows that ritual ceremony, religious institutional activities, and processional performance underwent considerable development in Uyghur-land. In medieval times, the Buddhist processional performance paraded from the fourteen largest monasteries of Khotan City of Uyghur-land during the spring Buddhist festival. People carried large images of Buddha and colorful banners emblazoned with the images of various Buddhist figures. Each monastery would perform on a certain day. The entire event would go on for fourteen days, and the participants included the king of Khotan as well as all the civilians engaged in state rituals and official ceremonies, who supplied additional "scripts" for the religious theater.

The processional performance remains very popular today in Uyghur-land; it performs a kind of ritual drama. The processional performances occur during the religious festivals or in great ceremonies of renewal, or they may appear in a more abbreviated form. The performances are offered respectfully for divine as well as for human enjoyment, and they vary little as the troupes parade from temple to temple or from mosque to mosque. Bystanders and other informants affirm that it is all just fun, a local tradition without special meaning.

Ethnographers have acknowledged the religious significance of the procession without suggesting systematic interpretations for its components. But the standardization of the elements of the procession throughout the region suggests a definite set of conventions; moreover, taboos and obligatory ritual greetings at the temples visited indicate that what goes on is more than entertainment. Even taking into account that some of the performances have lost all meaning and that some always have been purely entertaining, ritual procession may be seen as a form of fundamental play, in which both participants and observers are saying something about themselves.

The development of Uyghur Buddhism and its art is an important feature of Uyghur culture. The Buddhist heritage of Uyghur culture in the Qizil, Qumtura, Bezeklik, Siggim, Murtuq, and other Buddhist monasteries of Uyghur-land is a very important component of Uyghur civilization. Although the early Buddhist teaching of Gautama Buddha probably began in the sixth century B.C. (ca. 563-483), its oldest surviving remains and manuscripts are much later in date. The first independent evidence for Buddhism comes in the reign of the Maurya Emperor Asoka (273-232 B.C.), whose stone inscriptions are the earliest Indian historical records.

They mainly explain a benevolent creed that he called "Dharma," a word also used in Buddhism. Dharma was a system of duties and values, as it was in Buddhism. The Gautama Buddha was born in northeast India as Prince Siddhartha of the Sakya clan. His precepts originated in a critical appraisal of the Brahman religion. The term Buddhism also includes later interpretations, which, after the Buddha's death, were propagated by the different schools. The two most important of these schools were the Hinayana and the Mahayana. The Buddha is usually known by the title of Sakyamuni (Sage of the Sakyas), which derives from his clan name. According to the Buddhist legend, the Maitreya will be a future Buddha.[2]

The Buddhist idea is similar to other philosophic systems created in the world. The Buddhist prophets also place perfection, peacefulness, happiness, richness, freedom, hopes, and Sukhavati (pure land) in the future. If people do good deeds in this world, they will be reborn in the future. Therefore, the most pious Buddhist believers, using various forms and mediums, propagandize and eulogize the infinitely merciful kindness of the future Buddha, Maitreya. That is why legends, myths, poetic eulogies, poetry, sutras, and literary dramas about the future Buddha, Maitreya, were created throughout the Buddhist history of Central Asia and in Uyghur.

Maitreya, the future Buddha, the most famous, dramatic, and great figure in Buddhism after Sakayamuni, appeared in medieval Uyghur Buddhist manuscripts approximately between the seventh and eighth centuries. But the archaeological evidence shows that belief in Maitreya was very popular from the second century B.C. onward in Uyghur-land. Maitreya symbolizes the consummation of the rich legacy of Buddhist literature in Central and East Asia. All Buddhist monks believe that the arrival of the future Buddha will deliver all suffering creatures from a miserable life and establish a perfect state of justice, peace, purity, happiness, and truth.[3]

"Every religion, every culture, and every civilization has a characteristic view of the future as well as a characteristic way of recollecting the past, which together influence its understanding of the meaning of present existence."[4] Historically, Buddhism has shaped and influenced the culture, and thus the values, ideologies, arts, and imagination of the medieval Uyghurs. Since Buddhism and its arts were introduced to China through Uyghur-land, it, along with India and Gandhara, became a major source for Chinese Buddhism and its arts.

Besides Buddhism, the Uyghurs also believed in Manichaeism, and that is also an important component in the medieval Uyghur cultural development. Manichaean religion was created by the Persian Mani (216-274? or 276 A.D.) in the third century, under the influence of Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Dualist in nature, it postulates the contention between Light (good) and Dark (evil). It came under the protection of the Shapur I (r. 241-272 A.D.) of the Sassanian Empire, but was banished by Bahram I (r. 273-293) as heresy, and Mani was executed. During Mani's lifetime and soon after his death, his religion was disseminated to Egypt, Syria, and North Africa and later to Europe.[5]

According to the Chinese official record, Manichaeaism spread to the Uyghurs of the Orkhun river area in 762 C.E. The Uyghur Manichaean document discovered in Turpan is dated to approximately the middle of the sixth century C.E. Mani believed in two opposing principles: light and dark, or good and evil. The material world and especially the human body assisted darkness. He taught that time should be viewed in three phases, in the first of which good and evil were separated, in the second mingled, and in the third again distinct. The human existed as body and spirit only in the middle phase, and it was the human's duty to abstract himself from all matter. This would help bring on a great cleansing process, which Mani believed would usher in the third phase. When that time arrived, those who had succeeded in freeing themselves from the material world would live in the region of light, those who had failed in that of darkness.[6]

Finally, Uyghurs officially adapted Islam in 960 C.E. under the Sultan Sutuq Bughra Khan, one of the medieval Uyghur kings. Thereafter, for more than one thousand years, Uyghur has had an Islamic Identity.

[1] Dolkun Kamberi, "The Three-Thousand-Year-Old Chärchän Man Preserved at Zaghunluq," *Sino-Platonic Papers,* No. 44 (January, 1994, Department of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Pennsylvania).

[2] W. Zwalf, ed., *Buddhist Art and Faith* (London: British Museum Publications, 1985), pp. 9-16, 26, 32.

[3] *Maitrisimit* (Urumchi: Xinjiang Reming Chubanshe, 1988), p. 1.

[4] Alan Sponberg and Helen Hardacre, eds. *Maitreya, The Future Buddha* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 1.

[5] Ren Ju Yu, *Zong jiao Zi dian* [Religious Dictionaary] (Shanghai: Shanghai Ci Shu Chu Ban She, 1981), p. 1140.

[6] Scholars have principally used the historical texts of the Chinese version of the Toquz Uyghur inscription as evidence that Uyghurs adopted Manichaeaism in 762 A.D. However, they have taken the material out of context and have not considered the entire source. It is possible to obtain a quite different reading from the same sources heretofore used by these studies. Moreover, one sentence in that particular paragraph of the source has not been explained properly. It could be translated as "…Due to ignorance in the past, Buddha was as spirits (to us)." That sentence shows that, before some of the Uyghurs received the Manichaean faith, they were adherents of Buddhism (Dolkun Kamberi, "The Study of Medieval Uyghur Drama and Related Cultural Phenomena: From *Maitrisimit* to *Qutadghu BIlik*, ca. 767-1069 A.D." [Ann Arbor: UMI Company, 1995]).

Uyghur Historical Identity

The Uyghurs and their forerunners are an ancient group of Turkic-speaking people who have been living in Central Asia since the first millennium B.C.E. Their ancestors can be traced to the people who lived along the ancient Silk Road. That territory later became known as the Uyghur Empire. The social and cultural activities of the Uyghurs can be found in historical and archaeological materials of different times, from the Bronze and Iron Ages to the modern period. Even before the leaders of the medieval Uyghurs appeared in history in A.D. 605, the world-famous Silk Road had provided not only an immigration and trade path but also a route for cultural exchanges between the East and West. Uyghuristan[1] was the main region through which the Silk Road had to pass.

In the year 757 A.D., one of the military governors of the Tang dynasty, named An Lushan, started an uprising and strengthened his military power. In the year 744, he marched against the capital of Tang (Changan) with 200,000 troops; on his way he conquered the eastern capital, Loyang, and made himself emperor (756, Yen dynasty). Tang troops were sent against him under the leadership of the Tang general Gou Ziyi, but they were quickly defeated by the uprising army; An Lushan captured Changan. The emperor Xuan Zong now abdicated and fled into Sichuan. His son, Prince Li Heng (Emperor Su Zong 756-762) also fled into northwestern Shanxi. The Tang royal families begged help from the Uyghur emperor with a promise to give a daughter of the Tang emperor as a wife to the Uyghur Bugu Qakhan, plus payment from the Tang government of 10,000 bolts of silk. And they also signed a treaty for coming years relating to the horse-for-silk trade.[2]

The second time Uyghurs gave aid was in the year 762 A.D. Another military governor, Shi Siming, rose against the central government of the Tang. He had commanded his troops to come from the Hebei region to the south and cross the Yellow River, into the central plain. He conquered the eastern capital of Tang Luoyang, and important cities including Heyang and Huaizhou. He made the Tang dynasty once again lose political and military control, seizing almost all the Tang Empire territory. In the meantime, the new emperor, Daizong (Li Yu), immediately recalled the friendship and generosity of Uyghurs and begged their help once more. The Uyghur Qakhan himself, Tängri Il Bilgä Bögü Qakhan, led troops into China, defeated Shi Siming, wrested all the land he had seized and restored it to the hand of the Tang. The Uyghurs then helped the Tang court to rebuild their power in both Changan and Luoyang. But the Tang never carried out their trade promises, except that they did give a princess in marriage. But at the time the Uyghur Empire collapsed, the Tang court still owed it countless silks.

There are many records regarding this historical event in various Chinese sources. A passage from one of them reads: "The Uyghur Empire has coexisted peacefully with the Tang dynasty for more than a hundred years." There is also a record that an envoy of the Tang told Tibet's General Shangchi Shiner: "The Uyghurs have performed the feat of saving our country from disaster, yet they never occupied a foot or an inch of our land." And he added, "There is a horses-for-silk trading convention signed between the Uyghurs and the Tang. In these trades, the Uyghurs always were creditors and the Tang always were debtors, until the Uyghur Empire went into decline."[3]

After A.D. 840, because of weak kings and internal and external political disasters, including attacks by outside powers such as the Kirghiz and the Tang dynasty, the Uyghurs' political importance greatly declined. Everyone in the Tang court still clearly remembered how the Uyghurs had twice saved them from internal political disaster only a short time before, when the Uyghurs were strong. When the Uyghurs experienced still more problems, the Tang dynasty seized the sudden opportunity and used force to clear its debts.[4]

The Tang dynasty used a conflict between the Kirghiz and Uyghurs to its own advantage. Their officials closed the border against some Uyghurs who were trying to escape into Tang territory. They withheld all help from the

Uyghurs, attempting to destroy completely their power; they then attacked them from the rear. In the year 843, Manichaean property of the Uyghurs in China was confiscated, and Manichaean books and paintings were publicly burned. In the two capital cities, Uyghurs were ordered to dress in Chinese fashion. An edict by the Emperor sums up quite candidly the ultimate aim: "Now that the Uyghurs have been defeated, they should be extirpated for good." [5]

As a result, the central power of the Uyghur Empire collapsed. This historical event prevented the Uyghurs from retaining their position as one of the most civilized peoples and societies in the contemporary world. But the central government's decline did not mean that the civilization of the Uyghurs disappeared at that time. The Uyghurs had a long history of urbiculture and a high level of civilization as well as numerous intellectual groups in their court.

They also had developed a regional influence over the region so that the area remained solidly civilized in the Uyghur fashion. Evidence refutes some of the previous research by other scholars on these Uyghur historical events. At this time, the Uyghurs shifted the center of their power to another location or, to put it another way, they were forced to change the capital of the Uyghur Empire to another of their cities. They were able to move the surviving ruling group into the surrounding region without battle because their civilization extended throughout the area. Scholars have never found a historical record or even a single piece of evidence in any historical document that says that the Uyghurs used force when their remnants, driven by the Kirghiz, came down into the area of the present Uyghur-land. This is a true even though the Chinese historians of the Tang court left behind rich historical materials about the Uyghur Empire and detailed reports related to the history of the Uyghurs of that time.

After the Uyghurs shifted their central power and the surviving populations into the present Uyghur-land, they joined with that area's civilization to establish the Uyghur Qara Khanate and Idïqut Uyghur Khanate. They developed their culture in the present southern and eastern parts of the Uyghur region, reorganizing and rebuilding as well as further advancing their culture. And they made the region into a center of civilization of Central Asia once again, which lasted until the Mongol invasion.

Chingiz Khan conquered Eurasia in the thirteenth century (during the period 1219-1225). The war ruined innumerable cities, cultures, and antiquities. The Uyghurs, like other Central Asian groups, were forced to change their cultural life completely under both political and social pressure following the Mongol invasion. The Uyghurs also had changed ideologically, having converted to Islam in 960 A.D. But neither the Chinese, the Persians, the Arabs, nor the Mongols could assimilate them. The Uyghurs persisted as a distinct culture through the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

Regarding Uyghur civilization destroyed by the Mongol war, the scholars Thomas Francis Carter and L. Carrington Goodrich have described it as follows:

It is known that the Uyghur civilization did not long survive the drain on its manpower caused by the Mongol wars. Therefore, the date at which the Turpan documents come to an end cannot be much later than the close of the thirteenth century. It may therefore be said with a fair degree of certainty that a number of the best printed pieces—and perhaps a very considerable number—belong to the thirteenth century and the opening years of the fourteenth, when Uyghur printing came to its climax and ended. How far back this art goes can be only matter for conjecture. It may possibly go back as far as that at Tunhuang or further. It is certain that there is a large amount of very primitive printing and near printing, which may indicate several centuries of development. Some would assign much of the printing in the Uyghur language to an early date, because the Uyghur civilization rose to its height during the ninth and tenth centuries.[6]

There were many Uyghur scholars who have led Uyghurs to preserve Uyghur cultural heritage and maintain their cultural identity across time. These were: Tonyuquq, Yola Tegin, Zäkäk Bägän, Tängri Bögü Äl Bilgä, Sïngqu Säli, Chü Tashygän, Pïrtanrakshit, Kiky Qorsa, Sultan Sutuq Bughra, Yüsüf Khas Hajip, Mäkhmud Qäshqäri, Barchuq Arat, Äkhmät Yüknäki (seventh to twelfth centuries C.E.). Later scholars were Atayi, Sekaki,

Lutfi, and Elisher Nawayi (thirteenth to sixteenth centuries C.E.). They played significant roles in their lifetimes in protecting the Uyghur cultural identity and ethnicity since the early medieval times. Their names and works live among the Uyghurs and in Central Asian cultural history.

Every historian understands that much evidence has not yet and may never be found. Numerous Uyghur scholars and their great leaders (the Arslan Khans) who have contributed to Central Asian civilization, silently passed away unknown to their own people and public, left without even a tomb in history. A sense of their names and traces will be remembered by the Central Asian people, in the way one modern Uyghur poet unites the past with the present:

IZ [Trace]1. We were young when we made the long journey on horseback,

> It happens that those grandchildren of ours, in a way, have now mounted up.
> We were few when we mounted horses for the demanding journey,
> Now, leaving a trace in the deserts, we emerged as a great caravan.
> The trace still remained through the deserts, sometimes in mountain passes,
> So many lion-hearted ones[7] were left in the plain, in the desert, without graves.
> In a field where the tamarisk turns red, don't say "left without graves,"
> Our graves wrap themselves in blooms and flowers at dawn, in spring.
> A trace lingered, the halting place lingered, and all of them lingered, far away,
> When a storm comes up, even if the dunes shift, they will scarcely bury our trace.
> From the route of the ceaseless caravan, although the horses grow emaciated,
> One day, our grandchildren, or great-grandchildren, will most assuredly find this trace,
> No matter what. [8]

The poem is a highly artistic condensation of Uyghur history. It comprehensively traces the dramatic changes in Uyghurs society and reveals the continuous development of Uyghur civilization.

[1] The name Uyghuristan, like "Uyghur-land," is used in this monograph as a geographical location rather than a geopolitical term. "Uyghur Äli," found in a medieval Uyghur manuscript, means "The Country of the Uyghur."

[2] Turghun Almas, *Uyghurlar* [The Uyghurs] (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Yashlar-Ösmürlär Näshriyati, 1989), pp. 681-700. See also *Jiu Tang shu*, Juan 217, *Huigu Zhuan* (Beijing: Zhonghua Shujiu, 1972).

[3] Feng Jiashen, Mu Soulo, and Mu Guang wen, *Weiwuer Zu Shilao Jianbian* [A Brief History of the Uyghurs] (Beijing, 1955), p. 15.

[4] Turghun Almas, *Uyghurlar* [The Uyghurs] (Ürümchi: Xinjiang Yashlar-Ösmürlär Näshriyati, 1989), pp. 681-700.

[5] Denis Sinor, *Inner Asia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Publications, 1969), p. 117.

[6] Thomas Francis Carter and L. Carrington Goodrich, *The Invention of Printing in China and Its Spread Westward*, 2nd edition (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1988), pp. 143-44.

[7] "Lion" ("Arslan") here refers to the title given by Uyghur leaders across time to their kings. The author tries to remind new generations of Uyghurs not to forget their historic leadership and independence, even though the Arslan-like kings of the Uyghurs are gone without trace ("left without graves"). As soon as the season turns into "spring"—when the political weather turns fine—the names of the "Arslanlar" will be memorized by the hearts of the people forever.

[8] Abdirehim Ötkür, 1984. For details, see "A Gentle, New Allegory by an Older Uyghur Author," trans. and annotated by Edward Allworth and Gulamettin Pahta, *Central and Inner Asian Studies* 1:107–16 (New York, 1987).

Uyghur Regional Identity

According to Uyghur legend, people call Uyghur-land "three mountain grip three basins." The Tängri Mountains divide the entire Uyghur-land into two different natural geographical areas: the Yarish Basin in the north and the Tarim Basin in the south. The Turpan Basin and the Qumul district lie to the far east of Tängri mountain ranges, contiguous to the Buddhist caves of Dunhuang.

At the center of the Tarim Basin lies the Täklimakanian Desert, which has a surface area of 0.32 million square kilometers. One of the world's oldest civilizations and the richest urbiculture of the Uyghur city-kingdoms (which included Yotkan, Aksepil, Tokoz Saray, Niya, Kroran, Lelelik, Subexi, and Miran) was buried under the Täklimakanian sands. The 2,000–kilometer-long Tarim River intersects the Täklimakanian Desert, allowing both sides of the river to be cultivated; here the Uyghur created their civilization, unique in all the world. Among the Uyghur people there is the belief that "Täklimakanian" refers to a place where, "If you go in, you will never come out." However, the original meaning of "Täklimakanian" in ancient Uyghur is "Vineyard," and the meaning of "Tarim" is "cultivated land."

Geographical formations separated Uyghurs throughout history into the natural oasis communities of the south and the north, divided by the Tangri Mountains; one result is the difference in dialects spoken by southern and northern Uyghurs. Uyghur-land has a dry climate typical of the region, with rich natural resources; these include coal mines, metals, gold, silver, oils, gas, a vast green steppe for animal husbandry, vineyards of long cultivation, and orchards that, owing to its geological formation, produce various fruits unique to this land.

Conclusion

Archaeological excavations and historical records show that Uyghur-land is the most important repository of Uyghur and Central Asian treasures. Indeed, there are only a few places in the world that can claim the religious, linguistic, cultural, and artistic diversity at any period that Uyghur-land can. Shamanism, Buddhism, Manichaeism, Nestorianism, and Islam flourished in Uyghur-land side by side and one after another, along with the traditions of early ethnic Uyghur cults. Uyghurs are an indigenous people of Central Asia; they have developed a unique culture and arts that made significant contributions to the Asian culture. The Uyghur intellectuals have struggled to renew and keep their cultural identity since the tenth century C.E., and the best way to understand Uyghur identity is to learn Uyghur history and civilization.

By carefully examining the various aspects of Uyghur Identity, I hope I have demonstrated what I deeply believe: that neglecting Uyghur civilization is neglecting Central Asian civilization, neglecting Central Asian civilization is neglecting Asian civilization, and neglecting Asian civilization is neglecting world civilization; in other words destroying the Uyghur cultural heritage is destroying a rich part of the world's cultural heritage. Saving the Uyghur culture is saving Central Asian, Asian, and world culture.

Brahmi Script-I

Vowels

$\mathbf{q}$ *a*　$\mathbf{g}$ *ā*　$\mathbf{q}$ *(aya =)ä*　$\mathbf{q}$ *ï = i*　$\mathbf{g}$ *u*　$\mathbf{g}$ *ū*　$\mathbf{q}$ *(uyu =)ü*

$\mathbf{d}$ *e*　$\mathbf{q}$ *(eya =)ē*　$\mathbf{g}$ *ai*　$\mathbf{g}$ *o*　$\mathbf{q}$ *(oya =)ö*　$\mathbf{q}$ *(oyo =)ō*

Consonants

ka	*kha*	*(ga)*	*(gha)*	*ṅa*
ca	*cha*	*ja*		*ña*
				ṇa
ṭa	*ṭha*	*ḍa*	*ḍha*	*ṇa*
pa	*pha*	*ba*	*bha*	*ma*
ya	*ra*	*la*	*va*	
śa	*ṣa*	*sa*	*ha*	

$\cdot$ *-k*　$\cdot$ *-p*　$\cdot$ *-m*　$\cdot$ *-r*

$\cdot$ *-l*　$\cdot$ *-ś*　$\cdot$ *-ṣ*　$\cdot$ *-s*

$\mathbf{qa}$　$\mathbf{ga}$　$\mathbf{ba}$　$\left(\begin{array}{l}dza\\wa\end{array}\right)$ *(?)*　*wa*

$\mathbf{za}$ *(ža)*

Numbers

$\cdot$ *1*　$\cdot$ *2*　$\cdot$ *3*　$\cdot$ *4*　$\cdot$ *5*　$\cdot$ *6*　$\cdot$ *7*　$\cdot$ *8*

9　*10*　*20*　*30*　*40*　*50*　*60*　*70*

80　*90*　*100*　*14*

ṅī   nā   yā   lā   ṇā   qä   mä

lä   cā   kā   li   gi   li   ni

nu   yu   lu   qu   tu   rū   lū

tü   yü   rū   lū   rū   prä   b

te   le   lai   hai   to   lo   lö

kö   śau

kṣi   krām   ṅti   ṅri   jñā   ñcu

tkü   tti   tra   tru   trü   tgü

ntu   nda   nya   -nṭ   plu   ymā

rṇi   rtā   rdhā   rri   rlā   lṅu

lso   lqu   śrā   śru   slä   hśa

-hk   lrə   qli   gsi   zwa

iki   iśi   umu   uya   ula   lṛ

Uyghur Runic Script

No					No			
1	ʃ	ι	X	a . ɐ	20	ᕯ	p ?	y²
2	ſ	ſ		ɪ . ʏ	21	ᕒ	ϵ	ny (←ꟙ)
3	﹥	﹥		o . u	22	ᕝ	⋎	ng .
4	ᴎ	ᴎ ᴎ		c . u·	23	⅃		n¹
5	ᴎ	ᴎ		q	24	ᴎ	ᴎ ᴎ	n²
6	◁	▷		˙iq , ꞯ , ꞯ	25	⋇		m .
7	↓	↑		oq, uq , o , u	26	�	ᲢᲢ	r¹
8	Ж	ᵞ ᵞᵞ		gh	27	↑		r²
9	⅂	⅄ ⅄		k	28	J	V	l¹
10	ᕈ	B		c , ü , ko, kü	29	Y		l²
11	Ɛ	ϵϵ ⅄⅄		g	30	⅄	λ	ch
12	ᲢᲢᲢ	ᲢᲢ		t¹	31	Y		i
13	ᴎ	ᴎ		t²	32	ᶌ		s¹
14	ⵢ ⵢⵢ			d¹	33	ᛁ		s²
15	X			d²	34	ⵗ	ⵗⵗ	x
16	ᛏ			P	35	ᛊ	ᛇ	z
17	ᕁ ᕁ ᕁ			b¹	36	ᴎ		nt
18	ⵣ ⵣ ⵣ			b²	37	ᕒ	ᕒ	n
19	D	O		y¹	38	M		lt
					39	ꞁ		ax
					40	ⵈ		bax

Medieval Uyghur Script

No					No				
1				a	13				d
2				ə	14				l
3				i , ï	15				m
4				o . u	16				n
5				ə .	17				r
6				b . p	18				ch
7				w	19				s
8				gh	20				x
9				q	21				y
10				h	22			z
11				k . g	23			z
12				t					

Uyghur-Chaghatay Writing System

ENDING MIDDLE PREFIX CAPITAL

ENDING	MIDDLE	PREFIX	CAPITAL		
ل	ل	ٱٱ	١	a	ELIP
ب	ب	ب	ب	b	BÄ
پ	پ	پ	پ	P	PÄ
ت	ت	ت	ت	t	TÄ
ث	ث	ث	ث	th	thÄ
ج	ج	ج	ج	j	JIM
چ	چ	چ	چ	ch	CHIM
ح	ح	ح	ح	ḥ	ḤÄ

ENDING MIDDLE PREFIX CAPITAL

ENDING	MIDDLE	PREFIX	CAPITAL		
ع	ع	ء	ع	i	ÄYIN
غ	ۼ	ء	غ	gh	GHÄYIN
ف	ڣ	ڣ	ف	f	FÄ
ق	ق	ق	ق	q	QAP
ک	ک	ک	ک	g. k	KAP
گ	ګ	ګ	گ	g (persian)	GAP
ل	ل	ا	ل	l	LAM
م	م	م	م	m	ḤIM
ن	ن	ن	ن	n	RUN
و	و	او	و	w, v, o, u, ö, ü.	WAW
ه	ه	ه	ه	ḥ	ḤÄ

ENDING MIDDLE PREFIX CAPITAL

ﯼ ﻳ ﻳ ﻯ   g, ī, ï, ı,   YA

ﻧﮏ ﻧﮕ ﻧﮑ ﻧﮏ   ng, ŋ   NGA

UYƟIUR TILI ELIPBƏSI

Roman-Script-Based Uyghur Writing System

Aa	**Bb**	**Dd**	**Ef**	**Fe**	**Gg**
Aa	*Bb*	*Dd*	*Ee*	*Ff*	*Gg*
a	be	de	e	ef	ge
Hh	**Ii**	**Jj**	**Kk**	**Ll**	**Mm**	**Nn**
Hh	*Ii*	*Jj*	*Kk*	*Ll*	*Mm*	*Nn*
ha	i	je	ke	el	em	ne
Oo	**Pp**	**Qq**	**Rr**	**Ss**	**Tt**
Oo	*Pp*	*Qq*	*Rr*	*Ss*	*Tt*
o	pe	qiu	ar	es	te
Uu	**Vv**	**Ww**	**Xx**	**Yy**	**Zz**
Uu	*Vv*	*Ww*	*Xx*	*Yy*	*Zz*
u	ve	wa	xi	ya	ze
Ofoı	**Hh**	**Ķk**	**Əə**	**Θө**	**Üü**	**Zz**
Oıq	*Hh*	*Ķk*	*Əə*	*Θө*	*Üü*	*Zz*
oıa	he	ka	ə	ө	ü	ze

Modern Uyghur Script

transliteration	final end	medial mid	initial prefix	isolated single	
A	ل			ا ئا	(1
Ä	ـه			ه‍ ە	(2
B	ـب	ـبـ	بـ	ب	(3
P	ـپ	ـپـ	پـ	پ	(4
T	ـت	ـتـ	تـ	ت	(5
J	ـج	ـجـ	جـ	ج	(6
CH	ـچ	ـچـ	چـ	چ	(7
KH	ـخ	ـخـ	خـ	خ	(8
D	ـد			د	(9
R	ـر			ر	(10
Z	ـز			ز	(11
Z	ـژ			ژ	(12
S	ـس	ـسـ	سـ	س	(13
SH	ـش	ـشـ	شـ	ش	(14

transliteration	final end	medial mid	initial prefix	isolated single	
GH	غ	غ	غ	غ	(15
F	ف	ف	ف	ف	(16
Q	ق	ق	ق	ق	(17
K	ك	ك	ک	ك	(18
G	گ	گ	گ	گ	(19
NG	ڭ	ڭ	ڭ	ڭ	(20
L	ل	ل	ل	ل	(21
M	م	م	م	م	(22
N	ن	ن	ن	ن	(23
H	ه	ه		ه	(24
O	و		ئو ، و		(25
U	ۇ		ئۇ ، ۇ		(26
Ö	ۆ		ئۆ ، ۆ		(27
Ü	ۈ		ئۈ ، ۈ		(28

transliteration	final end	medial mid	initial prefix	isolated single
W	ﻖ			ﻕ (29
E	ﻲ	ﺒ	ﺌﺑ ، ﺋﺑ	ﺋﻲ ، ﻱ (30
I	ﻯ	ﺴ	ﺌﺩ ، ﺩ	ﺋﻰ ، ﻯ (31
Y	ﻲ	ﺴﻴ	ﺑﻴ	ﻱ (32
LA	ﻻ			ﻻ (33

The Uyghur Vowels Harmony

	low Open	middle Halfopen	High C l o s e d	Rounded/Un.
Back	ﺋﺎ a			un
Back	ﺋﻮ ﺋﻮ	o	u	R
Front	ﺋﻪ ä	ﺋﻲ e	ﺋﻰ i	un
Front	ﻮ ö	ﺋﻮ ü		R

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Uyghurs Commemorate East Turkestan Anniversary

2013-11-13

Uyghurs attend an anniversary of the establishment of the East Turkestan Republics in Washington, Nov. 12, 2013.
RFA

Ethnic Uyghurs from around the world gathered in Washington this week to commemorate the anniversary of two short-lived independent republics set up by their forefathers within what is today called the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in China.

Around 100 Uyghurs attended a ceremony on Tuesday at Capitol Hill in Washington to remember the establishment of East Turkestan republics on Nov. 12 in 1933 and 1944.

Ughyur activist and president of the Munich-based World Uyghur Congress Rebiya Kadeer praised the efforts of those who had founded the republics and called on the Uyghur people to remain strong in spirit despite what she called a policy of "repression" under the current Chinese government.

"The Uyghur people have been suffering under the oppressive government of China since the destruction of the Uyghur republics, however, the level of repression has since been extended to our beliefs and customs," she said at the ceremony at the Rayburn House of Representatives Office Building.

Kadeer slammed the Chinese leadership for denying Uyghurs the right to "practice their religion openly and

freely" and for an ongoing campaign of discrimination against the mostly Muslim ethnic group who call northwest China's Xinjiang their home.

She also condemned Beijing's tightened security measures, which include house-to-house raids targeting Uyghur families and which have led to a string of violent incidents in Xinjiang in recent years.

"China should understand that by suppressing our people [the government] cannot silence the Uyghur call for dignity and freedom," she said.

"I firmly believe there will come a day when we will establish an independent republic again."

Rebiya Kadeer (C) speaks at a commemoration of the anniversary of the East Turkestan Republics in Washington, Nov. 12, 2013. Credit: RFA RFA

Short-lived republics

The movement behind the First East Turkestan Republic, which was established in Xinjiang's Kashgar area, grew out of a desire to strengthen the state of education amongst Uyghurs and came to a head in response to official policies promoting the Sinicization of the local populace, according to reports.

It was put down only months later by the forces of local Chinese warlord Sheng Shicai backed by Soviet troops, as Moscow reportedly feared that the Uyghur movement for independence could spread to territory along the borders with China.

The second republic was established in northern Xinjiang on Nov. 12, 1944 with Ghulja as its capital after China's nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) Party under the leadership of Chiang Kai-Shek removed Sheng from power and subsequently lost control of the area to local Uyghurs supported by Moscow.

After the KMT administration in Xinjiang surrendered to the Communist People's Liberation Army (PLA) in mid-1949, the Second East Turkestan Republic was absorbed back into China by the end of October that year.

Wolf letter

During Tuesday's ceremony president of the Washington-based Uyghur American Association Alim Seytoff read a letter of congratulations from U.S. Congressman Frank Wolf to Kadeer for her work in highlighting human rights abuses by the Chinese government against Uyghurs.

"Our own State Department in its annual human rights report acknowledges the severe official repression of the freedom of speech, religious association and the harsh restrictions on the movement of ethnic Uyghurs," the letter read.

"I pray for the day when true freedom will come to all those living under the repressive rule of the Chinese government and I will continue to urge this administration and this State Department to be a voice for those whose voices have been silenced."

Following the ceremony at Capitol Hill, a group of Uyghurs held a protest in front of the Chinese Embassy in Washington.

Reported by Gulchehre Keyum for RFA's Uyghur Service. Translated by Mamatjan Juma. Written in English by Joshua Lipes.

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[#Current Affairs](#) [43](#)

- By [Hena Zuberi](#)
- June 18, 2015

Uyghurs in China: We Buried the Quran in Our Backyards

With the news of China forcing [imams to dance](#) in public and to make oaths to keep children away from religion in what is known as Xinjiang, where government officials warned that Muslims "During Ramadan do not engage in fasting, vigils or other religious activities," effectively banning Ramadan, I wanted to share an interview that I did for the Muslim Link newspaper, with the Prime Minister of the East Turkistan Government in Exile, Anwar Yusuf Turani.

"We are an occupied territory. We know the plights of our Muslim brothers and sisters in Palestine, Kashmir, but why doesn't the Muslim world know about our struggle?" asks Uyghur diaspora leader from East Turkistan, Anwar Yusuf Turani. He is the founder and prime minister of the East Turkistan Government in Exile. Uyghurs are a Turkic people by race and language, Muslim by religion.

"There are 35 million of us," he says, some in exile, others in the land of what is known to the world as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. This number is hotly contested and rejected by the Chinese government's official census.

Turani says most indigenous people of the region do not accept the name Xinjiang, meaning "new territory", and prefer the name **Sharqi Turkistan**, but even using this name is seen as a threat to the sovereignty of China. He believes that China ends with the boundary of the Great Wall.

In 1949, when Mao Zedong declared the establishment of Communist rule in China, the map of China looked different than the one seen today. Tibet was free and north of Tibet, East Turkistan, the size of Alaska, existed as an independent nation.

In talking with Turani, I learned that the struggle for independence is not new as an East Turkistan Republic was set up in Kashgar in 1933 and again in Ghulja in the 1940s, brutally crushed both times. The republic was short-lived. Its entire leadership perished in a plane crash en route to Beijing for talks with Chinese officials. According to the [Global Museum of Communism](), devoid of leadership, the East Turkistan Republic was then "liberated" by Chinese Communist Party troops. In essence, the Communists, "marched in and have occupied the overwhelmingly Muslim country, renaming it Xinjiang."

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Living in Maoist Run Kashgar

Turani, born in 1962, remembers his neighborhood in Artush, 40 km from of the ancient city of Kashgar. Islam was systematically erased and every region was divided; the head of each jurisdiction was Chinese or pro Chinese, and Maoist ideology was implemented.

"I remember 3-4 years of living in a labor camp in the outskirts in Tijen, forced by the Chinese military, since my parents opposed the Chinese policies." Turani's parents were labeled counter revolutionaries—bourgeois— and his father was fired from his position as the head of the agricultural department.

22 years of persecution followed his family. "In our town [where we lived], there was a man named Qudrat, and his wife, Quresh Khan. They were very poor; the government lured them with rhetoric and land, gave them a confiscated house from a landowner, after executing him," Turani relates a story of manipulation of the masses. Happy to receive land from the government, elderly Qudrat and his family were then forced to take care of 'a hundred pigs'. Turani and his parents, and the Khans had never seen a pig before in their lives, he shudders while squeezing the memories out, of a whole population of the Muslim town being [given 'free' piglets to raise]().

"Most masajid [in our area] turned into propaganda centers, cinemas and movie theaters," he recalls the horrific memories. "Our county became a labor camp," he says, and many wealthy landowners were executed.

From his middle school days, Turani recalls the destruction of a historic Muslim cemetery in the city; later a military base was built on sacred grounds.

"My father had a Quran buried in our backyard I saw that with my eyes. I saw my father dig that Quran out after the death of Chairman Mao—my father used to read that Quran," His eyes watered at the memory.

Dark Cloud of Death

"The occupation has been beyond brutal: open-air above-ground nuclear tests that killed hundreds of thousands, executed political prisoners, razed mosques, mass forced immigration of ethnic Chinese, deliberate economic discrimination in favor of said ethnic Chinese, Sinicization, etc.," writes D.J. McGuire, elected Chairman of the Republican Liberty Caucus of Virginia and a blogger who has been writing and lobbying against Communist China's role in aiding terrorist states—a glaring omission from the prevailing discussions about the war against terror. The Lop Nor testing site, located in East Turkistan, was used for 46 individual nuclear detonations from 1964-1996.

The Ministers of the East Turkistan Islamic Republic, Kashgar, 1933
Sawut Damullam (third from right): Prime Minister

These were the largest ongoing series of tests ever to be carried out in a populated area.

A conference was held in Brussels in The European Parliament in 2012 to examine the high rates of cancer, birth defects, and radiation-related illnesses in East Turkestan. Dr Enver Tohti, a Uyghur Surgeon and Independent Researcher, presented at the conference. He writes in '46 Detonations Later: The Human Costs of the CCP's Nuclear Programme', that a recent study conducted by Japanese professor and physicist Jun Takada concluded that Chinese nuclear weapon tests caused more deaths than those of any other nation. Takada who studied radiation effects from tests conducted by the U.S., the former Soviet Union and France, has reported that the Chinese government surface nuclear tests caused up to 190,000 deaths in the surrounding areas from the explosion and a further million were killed by the radiation from the three-megaton explosions. This is 200 times larger than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima, says Takada, who published his findings in a book, *Chinese Nuclear Tests* (Iryokagakusha, 2009). Since he was not allowed into the area, he visited neighbouring Kazakhstan using radiation levels measured there from 1995 to 2002. 'He devised a computer model to estimate fallout patterns using Soviet records of detonation size and wind velocity,' according to Scientific American, extrapolating the data for China.

Escape to America

Turani escaped from China and came to the United States as the first East Turkistani seeking asylum in the country. A Physics teacher, he lives in Northern Virginia with his wife, Gulzighra (who is a registered nurse) and their four children. He looks Afghan or Pakistani, could pass for Middle Eastern, anything but Asiatic. Most Uyghurs look like him but many photographs published by newspapers in the Muslim world show 'Chinese Muslims in Beijing' and call them Uyghur, he says.

In September 2004, Turani and his fellow countrymen declared an East Turkistan Government in Exile inside the U.S. Congress. They have a constitution, a flag and a written language, and a coat of arms based on the two previous states. East Turkistan exiles include Uyghurs, Kyrgyzs, Uzbeks, and Tajiks. The People's Republic of China opposed the formation of the East Turkistan Government in Exile. The fallout was great and the US government was quick to distance themselves away from the nascent government, saying that they do not recognize them. "The government in exile stated that its goal is freedom and democracy for its people, and an end to Communist China's occupation. It is explicitly non-violent, has repeatedly condemned al Qaeda-sponsored acts of terrorism," writes McGuire.

Turani, whose home is graced by a huge photograph of him embracing the Dalai Lama, says that China has used the global war on terror as an excuse to continue brutal oppression of the Uyghur Muslims. As noted by Amnesty International, many innocent Uyghur men and women including children have been massacred as recently as last Ramadan in Yarkant by the communist Chinese authorities 'in the pretext of terrorists, extremists, and separatists.'

Dr. [Haiyun Ma](#), a Hui Chinese professor of history in Maryland agrees, "China's "Anti-Three (Evil) Forces" campaign (extremism, separatism, terrorism), begun roughly in the 1990s, has since extended to preventing the Uyghurs from gaining their independence. China — which looks at the U.S. waging a war in Afghanistan (also against terrorism and extremism) not so far away — has used the perceived threat of terrorism to justify their actions in Xinjiang."

There has been development in the region, Turani concurs, but just like the West Bank settlements by and for Israelis, the development is only reserved for ethnic Hans or those who toe the Chinese government's line. Urumchi, the main city is filled by ethnic Chinese; in some areas there are only five percent Turkistani people left, especially in the downtown area.

Curating A Forgotten History

Turani asserts that the native Uyghur population is diminishing. There is no hard data to show that the population is decreasing, and in fact most census studies show that there has been a population growth. However, the percentage share of the Uyghur population is decreasing based on official and unofficial statistics. In 1964, it was 90 percent of the population, but through immigration from mainland China, the population is roughly 50-50. The Muslim population is controlled through birth control and forced abortion, which Muslims believe are divinely forbidden or haram. Turani says that if Muslim mothers are found pregnant with more than 2 children, they are taken to the hospital and even if they are 9 months pregnant their babies are systematically slaughtered in their bellies—physically, socially, psychologically and spiritually scarring the Muslim families. Many Uyghurs live in poverty, their children are not allowed to practice Islam. Those who work for the government are also not allowed to practice their faith. This Ramadan, Muslim students and civil servants were ordered to avoid taking part in fasting. Students who were found fasting were force fed during the day. Young boys and men are routinely taken away for 'illegal' Islamic classes.

Dr. Ma verifies the Tukistani leader's claims; in an interview with Duke University's public scholarship forum Islamic Commentary, he comments that "economically, the Uyghurs have little, if no access to the Chinese state economy, which includes state corporations and the quasi-military Xinjiang Development and Construction Corps (Its members are farmers during peacetime and soldiers during wartime). Unlike the Han-populated coastal regions of the southeast, the Uyghur economy in Xinjiang is almost dissociated from the Chinese economy. Adding to this, there was a large Han immigration [to the region], after the "liberation" of Xinjiang – following the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Large military and militia personnel, their relatives, intellectuals, and youth were sent by the government to Xinjiang during various periods. More recently, Han farmers and businessmen came to Xinjiang. Since they typically have friendly relations with Xinjiang officials and military (either they are friends or relatives), Han farmers and businessmen coming to Xinjiang have been able to quickly dominate Xinjiang's economic sectors — from mining to farming."

In his office, Turani has a studio set up where he broadcasts speeches on his [Youtube channels](#)—social media and the internet is extremely controlled in China—intent on making sure that his people don't forget their legacy and their history.

There is a collection of photos of Uyghur scholars, leaders.

A wall is dedicated to Muhammad Ali Tawfiq (Bey), the reformist educator who built 24 schools in Turani's city. He was murdered by the Chinese along with his followers in 1937, including Turani's uncles.

A devout Muslim with a melodious qiraa (recitation), Turani shows photographs he has curated of young men arrested for wearing the Turkish flag on their t-shirts, Islamic scholars in jail for teaching Quran to children, Uyghur women jailed for wearing the hijab.

"Why doesn't the Muslim world talk about us?" he questions. He also says that many times Chinese Muslims are shown in media when referencing Uyghur people, further diluting their existence.

The Case of Professor Tohti

Recently an economics professor and Uyghur rights advocate Ilham Tohti was arrested and put on trial for 'promoting' separatism (he is now in prison for life). Turani takes exception to this claim—separatism is not the right word in this situation, as the Uyghurs are occupied, he says.

An accusation of separatism carries the death sentence. When Western newspapers claim 'violent separatism' in the region, Turani struggles to contain his displeasure. "The place is like a pressure cooker; no one is allowed to talk, cameras watch every move. Hundreds and thousands are missing or dead. And we are violent separatists?" he says. Violence stems from the repressive policies, not from radical ideology.

Many Uyghur scholars such as Abdulkarim Abduwali, alims (religious scholars), businessmen, and educated people have died under the regime and Tohti is yet another name on the list of people who have sacrificed their lives. Before his arrest Ilham Tohti, 44, was attacked by three secret policemen who screamed, "We'll kill your whole family!" shares his friend, in an article about his arrest in The Guardian. Tohti was also a blogger and focused on the need to implement, "Xinjiang's long-promised autonomy; the need to observe the rule of law and human rights; that all ethnic groups should share fairly in the fruits of China's development; and that discrimination based on region, ethnicity or gender must be eliminated." "Criticism and dissent is good for any government. What was Professor [Tohti] doing that he deserves to [be] jailed?" Turani asks. "Anyone who stands up for their human rights is labeled a counter-revolutionary," he adds.

Independence vs Autonomy

Turani wants independence, other Uyghurs wants autonomy. Either way, he believes that a fair referendum could never take place in a region where two or more people are not allowed to convene without suspicion and harassment from the secret police; where jobs, passports, travel, even Jumuah khutbahs are all closely monitored by the Chinese government. People lose their pensions if they go on Hajj—if they are lucky enough to acquire a passport. Turani's relatives have all been blackmarked and cannot travel outside the region, unless they bribe officials.

There has been some debate about the Uyghur identity, especially by Kristian Petersen, an Assistant Professor at the University of Nebraska Omaha who wrote a study in the *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* on Uyghur presence of the internet— who they originally were and how and where the name was applied—but Turani wants freedom for all the East Turkistani people, not just those who identify as the Uyghurs.

Turani says he has the support of a handful of congressmen after years of activism. From time to time, Turkey will challenge China on its oppressive policies, but he says most other Muslim nations, including neighboring Pakistan, have turned their back. He understands why his people's struggle is not a priority for people of other faiths but to his Muslim brothers, Turani has a message, **"Do you not feel our pain?"**

Keep our Uighur brothers and sisters in your special Ramadan Duas.

43 / View Comments

43 responses to "Uyghurs in China: We Buried the Quran in Our Backyards"

1. *Faris Mee* says:
   [June 18, 2015 at 9:40 PM](#)

   The solution is the Islamic State. There is no other way.

   [Reply](#)

   - *Muhammad* says:
     [June 19, 2015 at 6:42 AM](#)

     Terse yet precise. But indeed not the IS that is currently rampaging in Syria. Ostensibly not that one. So the question arises, have we done our part in reviving the Khilafah?

     [Reply](#)

     - *[Aam](#)* says:
       [June 19, 2015 at 5:37 PM](#)

       Brother , you need to watch your mouth before saying anything like that (hands in this case). I am sure that your words are not based on the research that you have been doing since a decade for the pursuit of TRUTH but rather it is based on the ideas of a Hollywood movie you just watched or a fake CNN report you just read or a Game of Thrones you just enjoyed with your daughters and son at a family event.

       [Reply](#)

   - *Omar* says:
     [June 19, 2015 at 11:36 AM](#)

     No, actually that is not the solution. The solution is for you to care about their plight as much as you care about Syria, Palestine and do something about it.

     A magical "Islamic State" will not solve anything if people are not willing to change.

     Muslims have to become better Muslims and that is "The Solution".

     [Reply](#)

   - *SamBO* says:
     [June 19, 2015 at 11:48 AM](#)

     Islamic state? No thanks! Not on my road, not down my yard, and not in my manor. And I have one hundred thousand reasons why. I notice my last comment was deleted. I wonder how long freedom of speech will mean anything?

     [Reply](#)

   - *[Aam](#)* says:
     [June 19, 2015 at 5:33 PM](#)

     You are right but the ignorant muslims of modern times; the so called moderate or modern muslims would never allow that to happen. They do not like it when they are stopped from doing anything sinful.

     [Reply](#)

- *Wolday* says:
  [June 23, 2015 at 10:52 AM](#)

  Lol, you can say that again

  [Reply](#)

2. *Mohammad Sudaiz* says:
   [June 18, 2015 at 10:09 PM](#)

   May ALLAH grant your freedom from the communist China..Ameen ya Rabbi

   [Reply](#)

3. *Nida* says:
   [June 18, 2015 at 10:40 PM](#)

   Thank you for this article. I had no idea about any of this. I feel like I have been living under a cave throughout my time. Ya Allah help the Muslims in East Turkistan, guide them to the right path and grant them success.

   [Reply](#)

4. *THANVEERUL HAQ* says:
   [June 19, 2015 at 1:07 AM](#)

   Insha Allah, May Allah give hidayah, and show all muslim brothers right path, once we get in right path no one in the world has power to touch. because allah help will be with us.

   [Reply](#)

5. *Mohammed Yaseen* says:
   [June 19, 2015 at 1:20 AM](#)

   I never knew uyghurs muslims are suffering this much.I really cried after reading this article.May Allah grant all Uyghur muslim brothers and sister jannat ul firdous….Aameen

   [Reply](#)

6. *Ruby* says:
   [June 19, 2015 at 1:30 AM](#)

   May Allah swt ease the difficulties and hardships these brothers and sisters of ours are facing at the hands of these oppressors, ameen.
   They will try to extinguish the Light of Allah and they will never succeed!

   [Reply](#)

7. *Harun* says:
   [June 19, 2015 at 2:25 AM](#)

   May Allah save the Muslim ummah where ever they are and may He protect Islam in what ever circumstance. Ya Allah you know what is happening to the Muslims in East Turkistan, listen to our prayers and look into our pains in this Holy month and beyond.

Reply

8. *Anonmous* says:
    June 19, 2015 at 2:46 AM

    Why is muslim world OIC silent about this..why is US not putting sanctions on China ? Why is the world not boycotting them ?

    Reply

9. *Gumel* says:
    June 19, 2015 at 4:16 AM

    Oh Allah Help Uyghur Muslims; This shows there is no freedom under Chinese government. Why Amnesty cannot intervene?

    Reply

10. *Lilli* says:
    June 19, 2015 at 6:11 AM

    You (ignorantly) say all these things, yet you're the one causing problems and hate- while the rest of the comments are sympathetic prayers for those who are hurting. This article doesn't have to be about Islam for you. Look past that and read it again.

    Reply

11. *Lilli* says:
    June 19, 2015 at 6:15 AM

    (My previous comment was for a specific commenter)

    Reply

12. *Umar Adamu* says:
    June 19, 2015 at 10:20 AM

    Ya Allah help the Muslims in East Turkistan, guide them to the right path and grant them success. Ya Allah assist the muslims the opressed all over the world, ameen thuma ameen.

    Reply

13. *Hasan* says:
    June 19, 2015 at 4:03 PM

    Erdogan and Turkey please do more for our brothers and sisters in East Turkistan and in other oppressed nations. Allah sees all things and it's aware of what they do.

    Reply

14. *wasim* says:
    June 19, 2015 at 4:32 PM

    Assalam . i never make china for unknown i do know you have musalman .ALLAH is only God the highest .if can't live musalman there then we have pakistan next door

[Reply](#)

15. *ZAI* says:
[June 19, 2015 at 5:11 PM](#)

"why doesn't the Muslim world know about our struggle?"

Because Muslim majority nations and Muslim ethno- nationalists look after their own interests just like any others while only giving lip service to "ummah", and in this case China is Pakistan's best buddy…so this will be suppressed so as not to upset China. "Ummah" or "Islam" is used by many Muslims and Muslim majority nations the same way America uses "freedom"… God be with you brothers, because the Muslim "ummah" won't be in any meaningful way while Pakistan's military has any influence…

[Reply](#)

  o *Sunny Salman Jamil* says:
   [March 17, 2016 at 12:04 PM](#)

   You hit the nail on the head. Pakistan borders what China calls its Xinjiang province. If Xinjiang was freed and East Turkistan was formed, then China would no longer have access to the ports in Karachi and China would not like that.

   [Reply](#)

16. *PRINCESS NAF* says:
[June 20, 2015 at 3:59 AM](#)

its so sad that i read with pain in my heart,when will people learn that islam is not the problem but the solution? i feel pin for my brethren,patient oh brothers and sisters ALLAH will never let the oppress go unpunish,my prayer shall be with you INSHAA ALLAH forever

[Reply](#)

17. *Dyyf* says:
[June 20, 2015 at 12:32 PM](#)

Considering that Non-Muslims are brutally oppressed in Muslim nations (Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, now Turkey, Egypt and Libya among others) maybe it's karma that Muslims are somewhat oppressed in non-muslim countries. You would do well to criticize as forcefully, or more, your brethren for doing so completely what you find fault in others doing to you partially.

[Reply](#)

  o *M. Mahmud* says:
   [June 22, 2015 at 7:12 PM](#)

   Wait…so non-Muslim oppression of Muslims is "partial while Muslim oppression of non-Muslims is "complete"?

   Thank you for demonstrating yet again the typical non-Muslim double-standards.

   [Reply](#)

18. *Ali* says:
[June 24, 2015 at 8:23 AM](#)

Isn't it true that Muslims will only be victorious over the kuffaar once Eesa ibn Maryam AS returns to earth? And if so, isn't it futile to fight them until that time comes? Or am i being too pragmatic…

Post navigation

Reply

19. Peter Hall says:
June 27, 2015 at 6:16 PM

Join Our Newsletter

I am saddened by the responses to this article.

I note many calls for Allah, to fix a man made problem.

I note that even calls for the evil that is IS, to be visited upon these people.

[email address]   Sign Up

However, as a non muslim, I feel for these people, and the injustice is not the injustice that is against Islam.

The injustice is that these people are living in a country where they are not free to practice their religion, they are discriminated on the basis of race, and they have say in how they live.

Our Partners

these people should have are being denied to them by the Chinese Government.

Calling for Allah to fix these problems is not only completely useless, it is also using Allah to be used as an excuse to do nothing about it. That is shameful, if Muslims really do respect Allah, why do they constantly call to Allah, and use Allah as an excuse to do nothing? I see it all the time, that the Muslim world does nothing, expecting Allah to fix the problems that are the result of the evil of man, or the laziness of mankind.

MuslimMatters.org

Virtually every comment on here, asks why SOMEONE ELSE isn't doing something about this injustice.

- Subscribe to our RSS Feed
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- IS just another form of evil formed by men, that allows the ruthless and the evil to what they want, and Twitter
- Instagram respect for the basic rights of humans to practice their religions, to not be discriminated against and
- YouTube a say in how the society they live in is run. That is exactly the same as what the Chinese Government is doing. Same man made evil visited upon people.
- About
- Replacing the ruling body that suppresses one religion or any, with one that suppresses one religion in
- Comment Policy favour of others, is the same evil, visited in a different way.
- Meet The Team

When will the bulk of Muslims understand that Islam is strong enough to stand on its own feet, Islam does

When will Muslims learn that when a problem is created solely by man, such as now being visited upon the Uyghurs, by the Communist Chinese, needs to be fixed by a Political solution. That these people are Muslim is irrelevant, if they were Hindus, or Christians, the same moral outrage should be felt by free thinking moral people.

The Uyghur Muslims political problems should not be made a Muslim issue, it should be made a issue of basic human rights, the freedom of religion, the freedom of expression, the right to self determination and the right to not be discriminated against based on race.

Now the Qu'ran contains the ethical elements of all these rights, there is no compulsion in religion, is an example, shows that Muslim ethics can influence a political solution to a man made problem. However, man made problems require men to act.

Calling to Allah to solve a man made problem is insulting to Allah, and shows how lazy some Muslims are, that they invoke Allahs name, and expect Allah to do something about a situation, that they are too lazy to do anything about.

What do these people think? Allah is a servant ? They invoke Allahs name and expect that will solve the problem?

Take some personal responsibility, do not talk about it, do something about it. Lobby the UN, write a letter, boycott Chinese goods, wear a T-shirt, write a blog, do SOMETHING other than invoke Allah as an excuse to do nothing.

Reply

- *Aly Balagamwala* says:
  June 28, 2015 at 5:48 AM

  Peter I do not agree on it that Muslims shouldn't call upon Allah (SWT) for His help. But I totally agree that we have to put in our two cents worth of effort against this problem and pray alongside for Allah (SWT) to make it amount to a lot.

  Best Regards
  Aly

  Comment above is posted in a personal capacity and may not reflect the official views of MuslimMatters or its staff

  Reply

  - *Peter Hall* says:
    June 28, 2015 at 5:55 AM

    Greetings Aly

    It is not calling upon Allah, it is how they call upon Allah.

    I feel sorry for the persecution these people are suffering, and it is the duty of all moral people to do something to help them. I do not see it as a religious issue, but a moral issue, the morality of man.

    Calling on Allah's help is one thing, asking him to fix the mess of man, but do nothing yourself, is just lazy, ignorant and disrespectful.

    Evil only truly triumphs, when good men do nothing!

    Reply

- *Abdul Rahim* says:
  January 6, 2016 at 4:57 AM

  Well said. You obviously understood the issue. They need a political solution. Your suggestions are well meaning and indeed a good start. They must fight for media coverage, be heard and seen…… as an oppressed and dispossessed community. Be politically savvy and don't ever indulge in violent protest……lest the Chinese government will be quick to label them as terrorists. It's a battle of the minds……to win a positive global opinion. That's the only way.

  Reply

20.   *Aydin Anwar* says:
       July 4, 2015 at 2:29 PM

Assalamu Alaykum everyone,

My name is Aydin Anwar Turani and I'm writing on behalf of East Turkistan Government-in-Exile. Thank you very much for your love and support for the cause of the oppressed people of East Turkistan. We are so glad that this article generated many comments and discussions.

We are also very appreciative of the countless duas made toward the Uyghurs in East Turkistan. Unfortunately, like Peter Hall mentioned, prayer is not enough. Yes; it can have a profound impact, but it can also have a very minimal impact when no action is taken. What we need to do is give the same amount of attention we give to Palestine and Syria to East Turkistan. And rally together against the Chinese government.

The first step to solving any problem is identifying the problem itself. The main problem lies within the lack of attention and awareness of what is going on back in East Turkistan. Unfortunately, a very small portion of the international community knows what is going on back in East Turkistan, while the rest have never heard of the Uyghurs. It is quite saddening actually when we realize how little we know about what is going on in other parts of the world—parts of the world that are yearning for help as they are trapped under thick layers of cruelty and injustice.

Also, if you have any ambiguities that need to be cleared and happen to live in the D.C. area, East Turkistan Government-in-Exile will be hosting an event on July 25th: East Turkistan Awareness Day Conference. The purpose of this event is to raise awareness to the international community about the history, culture, and current political situation of East Turkistan. There will be various well-respected speakers and scholars from the D.C. area who will delve into the underlying issues of what, how, and why the atrocities are occurring back in East Turkistan and, most importantly, what we can do as a community to improve the plight of the Uyghurs back in their homeland.

Program Details:
When: Saturday, July 25th at 12:00PM-4:30PM
Where: Chantilly Regional Library (4000 Stringfellow Rd Chantilly, VA 20151)

Speakers:
— Anwar Yusuf Turani (Prime Minister of East Turkistan Government-in-Exile)
— Imam Taalib Abdul-Samad (Director of Islamic Research and Humanitarian Service- Center of America)
— Altan Erg (Representative of Turkish American Cultural Center in Maryland)
— Dr. Jeannette Hablullah (N.D. Wholistic Health Practitioner, Author of The Pearl Within)
— Imam Ali Siddiqui
— Sheikh Muhammad Raja
— Dr. Souheil Ghannouchi

Moderator: Turkel Anwar (Cornell University 2015)

** Refreshments will be served and event will be free of charge**

Reply

    o   *Abdul Rahim* says:
         January 6, 2016 at 5:31 AM

Dear Aydin,
You are spot on. The rest of the world know very little about this, including myself. Obviously, lack of media coverage. Sad to know even the notorious Boko Haram received more international media coverage for their heinous crimes. On the other hand we are bombarded with official news of Chinese Muslims in China doing relatively well, appearing wealthy enough with well dressed young children running in the playground. Until your report highlighted that the many pictures that the world get to see are actually Chinese Muslims in Beijing and not the supposedly oppressed Uighurs……..My family and I had just returned from a 9-day winter holiday in Beijing and Xi'an, those Muslim tour stuff. Obviously all the Muslims that I encountered are Chinese looking and apparently were quite pleased with their lives. We thought they are Uighurs too. Now I know the difference. Many of us have been ignorant about the plight of our Uighurs brothers, surely we are not apathetic about your cause…..

[Reply](#)

21. *bob* says:
     [July 5, 2015 at 9:05 PM](#)

     I wonder when a Muslim will write an article about the plight of Hindu's in Pakistan, The slaughter of 2Million of them when East Pakistan became Bangladesh. Over the centuries Muslims eliminated 80+ million Hindu's, why do you hate them so much is it because they invented Algebra? How about the burning of Churches and the persecution of Christians in Egypt. A good article on Nigerian Muslims killing Christians. Stories abound about Muslim intolerance of other peoples beliefs, history is awash with it. What about a treatise on the 250 million slaves taken from Africa to satiate the sexual appetite of muslims. mention of the fact 19 men or boys would die of shock or blood loss so that a eunuch could be created would not go astray.
     How about a bit of truth about your not so tolerant religion!

     [Reply](#)

     ○   *Peter Hall* says:
         [July 5, 2015 at 10:16 PM](#)

         I Agree with you totally, but as a non Muslim, I see that 2 wrongs do not make a right. What Muslims suffer in China is wrong and should be condemned just as strongly as condemning what ISIS is doing.

         I see that you do not reduce the inhumanity of man, by turning a blind eye to some injustice, in favour of other injustices.

         The "you reap what you sow" principal applies here. 200 years ago Christians were doing horrible things to Black Africans as well, 70 jews ago, Christian cultures were doing horrible things to Jews. No ones hands are clean when it comes to the past, so bringing up things from the past is of no benefit, it only allows excuses to foment.

         However, if injustice and cruelty, no matter who commits it, is condemned by men and women of good conscience everywhere, then hopefully man's inhumanity to their fellow man will reduce with time. we should learn from the past, not draw excuses from it. We should embrace a future where every man, and woman, has the chance to improve the overall morality and humanity of the societies we live in, not reduce it, by their actions.

         [Reply](#)

         ■   *Peter Hall* says:
             [July 5, 2015 at 10:18 PM](#)

Sorry about the typos, but posting from a smartphone.

[Reply](#)

■ *Bob* says:
[July 6, 2015 at 1:26 AM](#)

Peter wrote "We should embrace a future where every man, and woman, has the chance to improve the overall morality and humanity of the societies we live in, not reduce it, by their actions".

I totally agree Peter, however Islam does not allow this of its adherents.

I have only mentioned a few of Islam's appalling atrocities throughout its debauched history. Christianity ceased its world wide purge of others at least two centuries ago. Hindu's won't even eat an egg because they think its taking a life but are persecuted and killed by Muslims on a daily basis.

Islam has proven itself to be totally incompatible with the western world and has to be eradicated, but not in the way it is doing it to others.

[Reply](#)

■ *Abdul Rahim* says:
[January 6, 2016 at 5:42 AM](#)

Mr. Peter Hill, you have my utmost respect. All your comments have been very illuminating as a fellow human being….as an intellectual. I only came across this website today, but your posts which were in July, stood out glaringly for clarity of thoughts. Bravo.

[Reply](#)

○ [*EM Zee*](#) says:
[March 7, 2016 at 5:39 PM](#)

LOL WHAT? ALGEBRA, WAS MADE BY INDIANS?
That point was enough to show how ignorant and uninformed you are.
And btw, Algebra is derived from the Arabic word Al Jabr الجبر. It was made by the Persian MUSLIM Mathematician Muhammad Ibn Musa Al-Khawarizmi.

[Reply](#)

22. *Tomy* says:
[August 23, 2015 at 10:44 PM](#)

totally lying !!!

[Reply](#)

○ *Abdul Rahim* says:
[January 6, 2016 at 5:55 AM](#)

Sincere apologies. I meant Mr. Peter Hall.

[Reply](#)

23. [*"Things are getting worse day by day" – an interview with Uyghur Muslim "Mr X" | Voice of Salam*](#) says:

July 4, 2016 at 6:19 AM

[…] Forcing of imams to dance in public […]

Reply

24. *Peter Tager* says:
   October 11, 2016 at 3:50 PM

   And they support Pakistan?

   Reply

25. *Manal* says:
   January 6, 2018 at 12:54 PM

   I feel your pain. Im sorry my country Pakistans failed you. Ill spread awareness as much as I can. Im not sure what else I can do. If anyone has a plan im in.

   Reply

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ALJAZEERA

NEWS / CHINA

Xinjiang: China's 'other Tibet'

Ethnic tensions on the rise in China's vast western frontier.

24 Mar 2008

Xinjiang's Uighur population are culturally more Turkic than Chinese [Reuters]

While reports of unrest in Tibet frequently grab headlines around the world, little attention is given to what several human rights groups have dubbed China's "other Tibet".

China's frontier to Central Asia, the vast western region of Xinjiang has in recent years seen escalating ethnic tensions and the imposition of a heavy military presence to suppress what Beijing says is a growing terrorist threat.

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X

Covering an area more than three times the size of France, Xinjiang has long been an important crossroads of trade and culture.

For centuries its oasis towns were essential stopping points along the legendary Silk Road – a history that has left Xinjiang with a unique cultural legacy.

The region's indigenous population are the Uighurs - Muslims who are ethnically, linguistically and culturally Turkic, and worlds apart from their Han rulers, the ethnicity which dominates the rest of China.

After a chequered history with the Chinese Empire, Xinjiang's present incarnation as an officially "autonomous region" within the People's Republic of China began in 1949.

> "Before, looking for work was easy, but now they all want Han people, they don't want us"
>
> Hislat, Uighur resident of Urumqi

From Beijing's point of view, Xinjiang has always been a part of China.

But while the region has a history of domination at the hands of the Chinese, Beijing's claim overlooks long gaps where the region merged with Central Asian and Turkic states.

To this day, most Uighurs feel more culturally aligned with the Turkic peoples to the west, rather than Beijing to the east.

Conversely, and almost without exception, Han Chinese feel China's control of the region is perfectly legitimate.

'Chinese' Xinjiang

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"I've talked to a lot of people in China about it and they just don't question it," says

X n, author of *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Far Northwest.*

"It's always presented as Zhongguo Xinjiang [Chinese Xinjiang] like Tibet is Zhongguo Xizang [Chinese Tibet] and so the assumption is that it's always been part of China."

The region is of value to China due to "a very complicated mixture of political, economic and psychological reasons," says Dillon.

Among these, he says, are Xinjiang's bountiful natural resources and raw materials, and its strategic position buffering China from Russia.

Xinjiang's culture is rooted in its history as a
key junction on the Silk Road
[GALLO/GETTY]

But he adds, there is also the idea that "if Beijing doesn't retain Xinjiang, it's a question of losing face, because Xinjiang is part of the motherland."

On top of that, Xinjiang also boasts something clearly lacking in the rest of China - space.

Accounting for one sixth of China's total area, Xinjiang not only produces 30 per cent of China's cotton, but between the 1960s and mid-1990s it was also used as the test site for China's nuclear weapons.

Perhaps most unpopular with the Uighurs though is the use of their land to resettle huge numbers of Han from the overpopulated east of China.

Settlers rising

The numbers of ethnic Han settlers in Xinjiang has risen from well under half a million in 1953 to 7.5 million by 2000, and is rising fast.

According to the latest available figures, Han settlers make up around 42 per cent of ﹍﹍﹍﹍al population of 18 million, dictating a life that is culturally alien to the native Uighurs.

"There are more and more Han arriving here all the time," explains Tursuntay, a 45-year old Uighur man from the Xiniang border city of Ily.

"When I was young there were very few – this place belonged to us."

Hislat, a 22-year old Uighur woman from Urumqi, the Han-dominated capital of Xinjiang, is also feeling the squeeze.

Critics say few Uighurs are benefiting from
Xinjiang's development
[GALLO/GETTY]

"Before, looking for work was easy, but now they all want Han people, they don't want us," she says.

"It's really difficult, but there's nothing we can do about it."

Arienne Dwyer, Assistant Professor of Linguistic Anthropology at the University of Kansas believes the situation in Xinjiang has got worse over the last decade.

"In the eighties and early nineties we saw quite a lot of Uighurs, particularly intellectuals and those in the northern area, who felt that the Chinese project in Xinjiang, though very far from perfect, was OK," she says.

"One thing that people of any ethnic group in Xinjiang would agree on with the central government is that economic development is a good thing. This is one change that has continued and has been a positive force all around."

However, what has followed says Dwyer are increasingly Han-focused policies where

ethnic minorities, particularly on the periphery such as Xinjiang, "into the Chinese fold".

This cultural tightening accelerated rapidly after the late 1990s and was characterised by increased police action, suppression of unrest and changes in language policy, increasing the use of Mandarin in schools at the expense of the Uighur language.

"From the point of view of the government, this is because Uighur pupils and university students don't have the adequate Chinese language skills to be competitive in the market economy," says Dwyer.

"But from the point of view of the Uighurs, this is a bold-faced attempt to be assimilated and it has not been viewed favourably."

Disillusioned

This is causing many Uighurs to feel disillusioned, angry and afraid of losing their distinctive culture says Dwyer, and as a result many, especially Uighur youths, are becoming more religious than their parents and there is a growing trend to study Arabic.

Dwyer does not believe claims from some Chinese officials that there is any connection with a radical Islamist movement.

Instead she sees such moves as "a statement of Uighur identity, to say 'we are fundamentally different from the Han Chinese'".

For Urumqi resident Hislat, religion is the root of her dissimilarities with the Han.

"We are very different from Han people," she says.

"They don't believe in anything, they have no religion. We only eat Halal foods, but they don't worry about that, they can eat anything. Also they don't pray, they don't know how. They don't believe."

Although assertive about their identities as Uighurs and as Muslims, Hislat says she and her peers are in no fear of being radicalised.

Their culture and traditions are important to them, but they are living in a Han-dominated city and their lifestyles are accordingly secular.

They love American pop-stars, playing on the internet, going to discos and are prepared to be pragmatic with prayers in order to fit in with their work or study schedules.

Xinjiang's indigenous Muslims face tight controls on their culture
[GALLO/GETTY]

But in the border cities Kashgar, Aksu and Ily, the atmosphere is different, with a much stronger military presence and more attempts by the government to control political activity and the Imams in the mosques.

Beijing says the security presence is needed to meet the challenge of separatist movements and conflicts which have plagued Xinjiang since its annexation.

These activities peaked in the 1990s, the time that the Soviet Union was breaking up.

At the time "the old Muslim states of Central Asia, like Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan were all becoming independent states," says author Michael Dillon, "and there was a strong feeling among certain parts of the Uighur population that they ought to have their own Uighuristan or Eastern Turkistan.'

X is as a result of government measures, or a lack of reporting in the Chinese media is difficult to tell.

According to Dillon, it is a result of China's clever use of economic and diplomatic measures to dissuade its Central Asian neighbours from helping Xinjiang gain independence.

"I think this is one of the reasons that things have quietened down," he says. "The Uighurs have got no real external support."

SOURCE: **AL JAZEERA**