

UYGHUR (EASTERN TURKISTAN) SECESSIONISM IN THE PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC OF CHINA

A Master's Thesis

by
SOOHYE BAEK

Department of International Relations
Bilkent University
Ankara
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UYGHUR (EASTERN TURKISTAN) SECESSIONISM IN THE PEOPLE'S
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By

SOOHYE BAEK

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June 2008

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Masters of Arts in International Relations.

Dr. Hasan Ali Karasar
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Masters of Arts in International Relations.

Assistant Prof. Ali Tekin
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Masters of Arts in International Relations.

Associate Prof. Mitat Ç elikpala
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Institute of Economics and Social Sciences

Prof. Erdal Erel
Director

ABSTRACT

UYGHUR (EASTERN TURKISTAN) SECESSIONISM IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Baek, Soohye

MA., Department of International Relations
Supervisor: Dr. Hasan Ali Karasar

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Since the 1990s, concerns about Uyghur secessionism have taken increasing world media and official attention. This new situation has been heightened since the incident of 9/11 with not only the presence of the U.S. in Central Asia but also attempt of Chinese government to link Uyghur secessionism to global terrorism. This thesis aims to examine the Uyghur secessionism, which continues from the times of the Qing Dynasty to the present day. The thesis provides historical background and the case studies of Barin and Gulca in 1990s on what led to contemporary tensions between the Uyghur and the PRC. After examining the historical underpinning of Eastern Turkistan conflict, it also attempts to analyze current state of the Uyghur secessionism as an international issue, particularly after the incident of 9/11.

Keywords: Uyghur secessionism, Eastern Turkistan, People's Republic of China, 9/11, Religious Radicalism, Cyber- secessionism, Terrorism.

Ö ZET

UYGUR (DOĞU TÜRKİSTAN) AYRILIKÇILIĞI

Baek, Soohye

Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü
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1990’lardan bu yana, Uygur ayrılıkçılığından kaynaklanan endişeler, dünya Basını ve resmi çevrelerin artan biçimde ilgisini çekti. Görece yeni olan söz konusu endişeler, 11 Eylül 2001 saldırılarından sonra, sadece ABD’nin Orta Asya’daki varlığı nedeniyle değil, aynı zamanda Çin hükümetlerinin, Uygur ayrılıkçılığını küresel terör ile bağdaştırma çabalarından dolayı da artış gösterdi. Bu tez, Qing Hanedanı zamanlarından günümüze dek süregelen Uygur ayrılıkçılığını incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Tez, şu anda Uygurlar ve Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti arasındaki gerginliğin sebepleri olan 1990’lardaki Barın ve Gulca olaylarının analizini ve tarihi arka planını içermektedir. Uluslararası bir mesele olarak Doğu Türkistan sorununun tarihi temellerini inceledikten sonra, bilhassa 11 Eylül olaylarından sonrası olmak üzere, şu anki Uygur ayrılıkçılığının durumunu da çözümlemeye çalışmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Uygur ayrılıkçılığı, Doğu Türkistan, Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti, 9/11, Dini radikalizm, Siber-ayrılıkçılık, Terorizm.

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This thesis is supposed to be a present I offer to my dearest family in South Korea. I dedicate this thesis to my parents. I truly appreciate my parents for their patience and support which have been my greatest source of strength.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT-----	iii
Ö ZET-----	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT-----	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS-----	vi
LIST OF TABLES-----	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS -----	viii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION-----	1
CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND-----	6
2.1 Qing Era (1759 - 1911)-----	7
2.2 Republic of China (ROC, 1911 - 1949)-----	11
2.2.1. Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan (TIRET, 1933-1934)-----	15
2.2.2. Eastern Turkistan Republic (ETR, 1944-1949) -----	18
2.3 People's Republic of China (PRC, 1949 - 1989)-----	24
CHAPTER 3: UYGHUR SECESSIONISM IN THE 1990S-SELECTED CASES-	32
3.1 Barın uprising in 1990-----	36
3.1.1. Background-----	36
3.1.2. Eastern Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIP) and Barın uprising-----	37
3.1.3. Different sources about the scale of Barın uprising-----	41
3.1.4. Afterward-----	42

3.1.5. Conclusion-----	43
3.2 Gulca uprising in 1997-----	43
3.2.1. Background-----	43
3.2.2. <i>Meshrep</i> -----	45
3.2.3. Gulca uprising-----	47
3.2.4. Afterward-----	49
3.2.5. Human Rights Issue and Unjustification of Chinese government-----	52
3.2.6. Conclusion-----	54
CHAPTER 4: CONTEMPORARY UYGHUR SECESSIONISM IN EASTERN TURKISTAN - Impact of 9/11, 2001-----	56
4.1 Before 9/11-----	56
4.2 After 9/11-----	58
4.2.1 Religious Radicalism-----	61
4.2.1.1. Background-----	61
4.2.1.2. Cases of Religious Radicalism-----	63
4.2.1.3. Response of Chinese Government-----	65
4.2.1.4. Reality of Religious Radicalism-----	66
4.2.2 Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile-----	68
4.2.2.1. Formation of Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile-----	68
4.2.2.2. Limitation and Future of ETGE-----	71
4.2.3 Cyber- secessionism-----	73
4.2.3.1. Background-----	73
4.2.3.2. Uyghur Websites-----	75
4.2.3.3. External and Internal Limitations-----	78
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION-----	83

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY-----	89
APPENDICES-----	97
A. Map of Eastern Turkistan-----	97
B. Coins of Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan and Republic of Uyghurstan-----	98
C. “Why are We Fighting?” (Early Rebel Pamphlet)-----	99
D. “Struggle for the Motherland” (Later Rebel Pamphlet)-----	110
E. Main Figures’ Fotographs in Historical Background of the Uyghur Secessionism -----	113
F. Flags of Eastern Turkistan-----	115
G. Eastern Turkistan Regulations on the Management of Religious Affairs (2001) -----	116
H. The Constitution of Government-in-Exile of East Turkistan Republic--	121

LIST OF TABLES

1. Table : Demographic strength of the main Eastern Turkistan nationalities-----29
2. Table : Empirical Analysis of Internet Filtering in China-----80

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCP	: Chinese Communist Party
ETGE	: Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile
ETIM	: Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement
ETIP	: Eastern Turkistan Islamic Party
ETPP	: Eastern Turkistan People's Party
ETR	: Eastern Turkistan Republic
GMD	: Guomindang
IMU	: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IOC	: International Olympic Committee
IUHRDF	: International Uyghur Human Rights and Democracy Foundation
PLA	: People's Liberation Army
PRC	: People's Republic of China
RFA	: Radio Free Asia
ROC	: Republic of China
SCO	: Shanghai Cooperation Organization
TIRET	: Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan
XPCC	: Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps
WUC	: World Uyghur Congress
UAA	: Uyghur American Association
UHRP	: Uyghur Human Rights Project

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Eastern Turkistan is situated in the northwest corner of the People's Republic of China (PRC). This territory covers 1.6 million square kilometers making up one-sixth of Chinese landmass and borders eight countries: Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. Given its strategic location, Eastern Turkistan plays an important role as a gateway of the PRC to Central Asia. Moreover, this area is of enormous political, economic significance for the Chinese government, providing various natural resources supporting Chinese economic growth. Thus, the PRC remains strongly concerned over the region, restricting Uyghur cultural expression as well as the practice of Islam in Eastern Turkistan, prohibiting even peaceful expression of dissent from the Chinese policies, and in other ways continuing oppression that produces obvious disaffection among Uyghur and other non-Han ethnic group inside and outside. All these elements combine to make the result of secessionist struggle in Eastern Turkistan.

The proposition that in the feasible future, the strongest rivalry against the U.S., the only super-power in the international system, would be the China cannot be challenged easily. However, even if the increasing power of PRC in terms of

economy and military upgrades her status in the international society, the political reformations in the domestic politics, especially the ethnic minority issues such as Tibet, Uyghur and so on has not been improved. The increasing resistance of minorities against the Chinese administration not only have made the international society be interested in the minority issue with the application of human right but also have weakened the Chinese argument that the interest of international society about minority issues is the interference of domestic affairs.

Actually, since the 1990s, the Uyghurs who were the titular ethnic group have taken increasing attention of Western media for alleged involvement in “terrorism.” Especially, after 9/11 in 2001, the Chinese government has strengthened its crackdown on Uyghur secessionist movement in Eastern Turkistan as an important security problem of international dimension. In other words, the U.S. launch of a global war on terror presented the PRC with an opportunity to change its strategy on Eastern Turkistan and possibly to gain wider international support for activities of Chinese government over the Uyghurs. Following such a situation, since 2002 there were numerous Chinese articles written related to the subjects of the global “war on terror” and “terrorism” in Eastern Turkistan and Central Asia, claiming that Uyghur secessionism in Eastern Turkistan is directly connected to Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda network and related movements in Afghanistan and the post-Soviet Central Asia.¹

According to a recent report, since 1990 Eastern Turkistan has witnessed over 200 “terrorist” attacks including assassinations, explosions, attacks on Chinese government institutions and police, establishment of secret training bases and plotting and organizing disturbances. These incidents have resulted in the death of

¹ Michael Clarke, “China’s Internal Security Dilemma and the “Great Western Development”: The Dynamics of Integration, Ethnic Nationalism and Terrorism in Xinjiang,” *Asian Studies Review*, Vol. 31, (2007), p.338.

162 and injury of 440 people respectively.² In fact, what is occurring in Eastern Turkistan today is not new. Although the Uyghur population of Eastern Turkistan shares little in common with the Chinese not only historically but also culturally, Beijing has struggled to keep strict central government control over Eastern Turkistan since 1949.

At this point, it is necessary to understand the importance of Eastern Turkistan on behalf of the PRC. The main reason of Chinese struggle lies in Eastern Turkistan's geographical location, which extends the PRC's reach to the borders of Central Asia, and simultaneously acts as a security buffer to the PRC. It also lies at the cultural crossroads between the Islamic world and the Han Chinese heartland. Moreover, from the economic point of view, Eastern Turkistan is a region of vast natural resources and agricultural potential. For example, Tarim Basin in Eastern Turkistan is reportedly one of the largest unexplored oil Basins of the world, with some estimates of potential reserves ranging as high as 147 billion barrels.³ It has been estimated that the PRC will need to import 21 million tons of oil by 2010, if it is to maintain its current economic growth rate.⁴ Thus, energy security is a major consideration in Chinese policy towards the region. Lastly, in the political aspect Eastern Turkistan provides the PRC with a unique potential to assert its influence in both Central Asia and the Middle East. The PRC's regional authority is strengthened by its position as a Central Asian power and Beijing regards the collapse of the Soviet Union as an opportunity to expand Chinese leadership in Central Asia.⁵

² "East Turkistan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity," *Beijing Review*, Vol. 45, Issue 5, (2002), pp.14-23.

³ Kathy Chen, "Foreign Oil Companies Find Risks in Exploring China's Tarim Basin," *Wall Street Journal*, (October 10, 1994), p. A1; Cited Mamdouh Salameh.1995-1996. "China, Oil and the Risk of Regional Conflict," *Survival*, Vol.37, Issue 4, (Winter 1995-1996), p.139.

⁴ Paul George, "Islamic Unrest in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region," *Canadian Security Intelligence Service*, Commentary No.73. (1997), p.2.

⁵ Lillian Craig Harris, "Xinjiang, 1998 Central Asia and the implications for China's policy in the Islamic World," *China Quarterly* Vol.133, (1993), p.116.

Given this geographic and economic significance of Eastern Turkistan, Chinese control over the region is above all more important for its security concerns. Therefore, any kinds of discontent in Eastern Turkistan and demand for independence from the PRC have been a matter of great concern for the Chinese government for a long time. The PRC is also aware that a compliance with Uyghur demand will have a great influence on the secessionism of Tibet and Taiwan as domino effect. In all senses, Uyghur secessionism in Eastern Turkistan can lead to a dissolution and further insecurity of the PRC. This is the reason why Eastern Turkistan is regarded as an essential part of the PRC.

The situation of the contemporary Uyghur secessionism in Eastern Turkistan under the rule of PRC should be understood in the historical context of the relations between Eastern Turkistan and the PRC. In this respect, the main aim of this thesis is to inquire into Uyghur secessionism from the past phase to the current one through the continued conflictive relations of Uyghurs with the PRC. Through such a process, the fundamental causes that have led to the current secessionism in Eastern Turkistan will be also examined. Deep differences between the Chinese and Uygurs in terms of historical, cultural and religious aspects have served as the hidden and basic driving force to bring about the Uygur secessionism. In other words, traditional perception that the increasing secessionism of Uygurs has been affected by the religious radicalism cannot be applied into the case of Eastern Turkistan totally. In this context, examining the hidden factors to increase Uygur secessionism is inevitable to understand the origin of the Uyghur issue under the PRC rule. In order to conduct such process, this thesis utilizes the methodology of description by the chronological order based mostly on the English, Turkish and Korean books or articles, newspapers

and internet sites, including original Uyghur sources translated into Turkish and English.

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Following the introduction, chapter two examines the historical background of contemporary Uyghur secessionism in Eastern Turkistan to give a brief knowledge on in what kind of context these conflicts have been continued today. In chapter three, incidents of Barin in 1990 and Gulca in 1997 will be examined as representative case studies among violent incidents in 1990s. This chapter allows us to understand concrete reality how the PRC and Eastern Turkistan came to be in conflict through two main violent incidents in Eastern Turkistan, connecting historical background with today's Uyghur secessionism. Chapter four explains contemporary Uyghur secessionism, particularly focusing on the period of post- 9/11 as a turning point in the history of Eastern Turkistan. This event transformed the Uyghur secessionism from the domestic problem to an international one mostly related to the human rights issues. In this chapter, another emphasis will be put on the concept of religious radicalism and the Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile (ETGE) in the context of Uyghur secessionism and cyber secessionism on the ground of technological era. This thesis is concluded with an in-depth analysis of main factors which have brought about Uyghur secessionism and how contemporary Uyghur secessionism is different from the past one in the flow of tensions between Eastern Turkistan and the PRC.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Examining the historical background of Uyghur secessionism gives us an idea of what kinds of fundamental reasons have been laid before that led to the relation of conflict between the Uyghur and the Chinese. Therefore, in this chapter, the origin of tensions between the Uyghur and the Chinese that is divided into three eras as Qing, the Republic of China (ROC) and the PRC will be provided. Although the Ming Dynasty had produced a tribute system with Eastern Turkistan, real control over the region was started under the Qing (1759-1911).⁶ This is largely because the Qing Dynasty built the foundation of policies about the rule of Eastern Turkistan that continue until today and has a great influence on the Uyghur secessionism. The subsequent warlordism through Republican era to the PRC was even more significant to creating a motivation of Uyghurs for independence. Especially, this period was marked by a variety of violent incidents that often lead to ethnic conflict even until now. In this sense, the period from the Qing Dynasty to the establishment of the PRC will be examined in this chapter in order to understand the origin of the Uyghur secessionism within historical context.

⁶ Michael Dillon, *Xinjiang, China's Muslim Far Northwest*, (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004), p.17.

2.1 Qing Era (1759 – 1911)

The Manchus who established Qing Dynasty in China invaded the Uyghur Kingdom of Eastern Turkistan in 1759 and dominated it until 1862. Conquest by Manchu Qing Dynasty brought the territories known as Eastern Turkistan under the Qing rule. The Manchus are notable in that they were an ethnic minority in the empire that they ruled and it follows that they had an understanding of how to govern a multi-ethnic empire. During this period, starting with an unsuccessful uprising sparked by Manchu and Uyghur officials in Üç Turfan⁷ in 1765, Uyghur revolted 42 times against the Qing rule for regaining their independence.⁸ Although these raids disrupted Qing rule in Khotan, Yarkand and Kaşgar, they could not prevent the Qing armies from reasserting control in Eastern Turkistan. A chaotic situation was continued with the Uyghur's controlling the south and west and Hui's⁹ (Chinese Muslims in China, or known as Dungan or Tungan in Central Asia) dominating the east and north.

In 1864 both Hui and Uyghur people rebelled again in cities of Eastern Turkistan, following an on-going Chinese Muslim Rebellion in Gansu and Shaanxi provinces further east. As a result, in the last revolt the Uyghurs were successful in expelling the Manchus from their motherland. Yakub Beg (1820-1877, Khan 1864-1877) who was a warlord of Kokand Khanate entered Eastern Turkistan via Kaşgar and dominated almost the entire area except İli valley territory by 1872.¹⁰ Affiliated

⁷ For more information about Üç Turfan, see İklil Kurban, *Doğu Türkistan İçin Savaş*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1995), p.74.

⁸ Mehmet Emin Buğra, *Chinese Policy*, (İstanbul: İstanbul, 1954), p.25.

⁹ For more information, see Dru C. Gladney, *Dislocating China: Muslims, Minorities and Other Subaltern Subjects*, (London: Hurst & Company Ltd., 2005), p.120 and İsa Yusuf Alptekin, *Esir Doğu Türkistan için: İsa Yusuf Alptekin'in mücadele hatıraları*, (İstanbul: Doğu Türkistan Neşriyat Merkezi, 1985), p.291.

¹⁰ İli was under the control of Russia that took advantages on this chaotic. However, in 1881, Russia was forced by international diplomatic and Qing military oppression to return to the Qing most of İli territory it had annexed. See Mehmet Saray, *Doğu Türkistan Tarihi*, (İstanbul: Çağaloğlu Kitabevi, 1997), p.223.

with Hui, Yakub Beg established Kaşgar Khanate (1864-1877) and set Aksu as capital city.¹¹ Yakub Beg and his kingdom were of a great significance in the history of Uyghur secessionism because they served as national symbols that Uyghurs can gather around.

There are several factors beyond Qing control that led to the collapse of Qing rule in Eastern Turkistan. First, at the time of Qing conquest, sufism had helped to Uyghurs to survive. This played an important role as a unifying element for the various ethnic groups of Eastern Turkistan under the Qing rule.¹² Also, at the time that the Qing lost Eastern Turkistan, the empire was experiencing a period of significant weakness by the Opium War (1839-1842), and the Taiping (1851-1864) and Nian (1851-1868) rebellions in the following years. In fact, when the region was lost, there were serious debates on whether or not it was worthwhile to re-conquest it.¹³ The rebellion in the northwestern Chinese provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu that broke out among Hui in 1862 also seriously undermined the ability of the Qing to rule Eastern Turkistan.¹⁴ All these factors resulted in a financial crisis by burden of tax and encouraged corruption at the regional level.¹⁵ Regional corruption by selected local officials was main reason for tensions between the central Chinese government and the locals of Eastern Turkistan, even today.

The kingdom of Yakub Beg had several important characteristics. Although entirely the Yakub Beg kingdom did not fit with Uyghur claims for a national identity, it helped to shape it effectively. The rebellion in the later stages had a distinct Turkic flavor to it by virtue of the intervention of Yakub Beg, despite of Hui

¹¹ A. N., Korupatkin, *Kashgaria*, trans, Walter E. Gowan, (Calcutta: Thacker Spink, 1882), p.277.

¹² Michael Dillon, *China's Muslims*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p.23.

¹³ Kim Hodong, *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864-1877*, (California, Stanford University Press, 2004), p.163.

¹⁴ Mehmet Saray, pp.182-183.

¹⁵ Kim, p.33.

involvement. Furthermore, religion was an important component in this period. The significant point of Yakub Beg was that he was idolized as a ghazi (holy warrior).¹⁶ The manipulation of religious titles and the enforcement of *shariah* were also important aspects of Yakub Beg's kingdom. As the people of Eastern Turkistan were overwhelmingly Muslim, Islam became a standard banner for leaders to encourage unity. This is how in Eastern Turkistan an Islamic regime was established by Yakub Beg. By virtue of commercial treaties with Tsarist Russia and Great Britain, the kingdom of Yakub Beg was recognized by the Ottoman Empire as well as the Tsarist Russia and Great Britain.¹⁷ The relations with the Ottoman Empire played a significant role in strengthening Pan-Turkic nationalism in Eastern Turkistan.¹⁸

However, the ability of Yakub Beg to govern this region have had various limitations. The main problem was related to the economy. The rebellion had drastically reduced the population and handicapped the economy. For example, the barter system, among policies of Yakub Beg, worked as a dangerous factor for the economic stability and there was a massive loss of tax revenue due to the corruption of Kokand officials who were appointed to the high positions in the local governments.¹⁹ Yakub Beg also exacerbated the people by managing inner security through a blood and iron policy, and an oppression that was similar to the severe aspects of Qing rule.²⁰ Although he had strong cultural ties to the people of Eastern Turkistan, Yakub Beg was not able to gather a grassroots support. Furthermore, as an external factor for the collapse of Yakub Beg's kingdom, Great Britain persuaded the

¹⁶ Saadettin Gömeç, *Uyghur Türkleri Tarihi ve Kültürü*, (Ankara: Atatürk Yüksek Kurumu Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Başkanlığı, 1997), p.71.

¹⁷ İsa Yusuf Alptekin, *Doğu Türkistan Davası*, (İstanbul: Marifet, 1973), pp. 127- 128.

¹⁸ Kim, p.117.

¹⁹ Kim, p.133.

²⁰ Kim, p.129.

Manchu court to conquer Eastern Turkistan for the fear of Tsarist expansion into Eastern Turkistan. The Manchu invasion was financed mainly by the British Bank.²¹

In 1875, the Manchu court sent their general, Zuo Zongtang (1812-1885, Viceroy of Lianjiang 1881-1884), to take over the rule in the region. Although, Qing armies fought fiercely with mainly Hui forces in the Turfan-Urumqi-Manas area, they faced little opposition from them because of Yakub Beg's death.²² As a result, Zuo Zongtang officially proclaimed that Eastern Turkistan was dominated by the Qing Dynasty on May 16, 1878.²³ After the collapse of the Yakub Beg regime, Zuo's force could not only regain the Tarim Basin with little resistance from Uyghur, but also pressure the Russian power to withdraw.²⁴ In order to keep stability in the region later, the Qing attempted to isolate Eastern Turkistan from the problems of China proper. This was a relatively successful policy approach as indicated by the ability for able Han bureaucrats presided over a peaceful Eastern Turkistan after the collapse of Yakub Beg's kingdom.²⁵ This policy was maintained in the region in the sphere of Qing influence for the remainder of the Qing's existence until its collapse in 1911.

Finally, in 1884, the Qing established Xinjiang (New frontier) as a province, formally taking it under the political system of China proper.²⁶ Governments of cities in Eastern Turkistan were established following the Chinese way and administration.

²¹ Owen Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and the Inner Asian frontiers of China and Russia*, (New York: AMS Press, 1950), p.32.

²² Saray, p.195.

²³ Kurban, p.85.

²⁴ James Millward and Nabijan Tursun, "Political History and Strategies of Control, 1884—1978," in *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland*, S. Frederick Starr, ed. (New York: Central Asia Caucasus Institute, 2004), p.62.

²⁵ Andrew D.W Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang 1911-1949*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p.10.

²⁶ Anwar Rahman, *Sinicization Beyond the Great Wall: China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region*, (UK: Matador, 2005), p.22.

About thirty years from the formation of Xinjiang province in Eastern Turkistan to the collapse of Qing Dynasty, this area was comparatively stable.

2.2 Republic of China (ROC, 1911 - 1949)

The Republican era played an important role in the early formation of current Uyghur secessionism. It was in this period that Uyghurs in Eastern Turkistan underwent national ethnic awakening. This is largely because various legacies of discrimination over Uyghurs that has been lasted to today began to re-emerge strongly under the Republican rule. For example, contrary to the policy of the Qing era, republican officials encouraged Han immigration and then provided them even with farmland. This region was governed by Han Chinese at the provincial and several sub-provincial levels, giving them the authority to allocate land to the newly arrived Han.²⁷ The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps²⁸ (XPCC) also repeated this process under the later communist rule.

At this point, to examine overall national minority policies throughout the Republican era can be helpful to understand contemporary Uyghur conflict with Han Chinese. First of all, Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925, President of the ROC January 1, 1912-April 1, 1912, Premier of the GMD 1919-1925), who was a Han nationalist, supported autonomy for the minorities within limits of self-determination.²⁹ Meanwhile, in the case of Chiang Kai-shek (1887-1975, Director-General of the

²⁷ Gardner Bovingdon, "Autonomy in Xinjiang: Han Nationalist Imperatives and Uyghur Discontent," *Policy Studies* 11: East West Center, Washington D.C., (2004), p.5.

<http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/PS011.pdf> (accessed January 12, 2008)

²⁸ XPCC, also known as Bingtuan for short, is a unique economic and semi-military governmental organization existing in Eastern Turkistan in the PRC. The stated goals of the XPCC are to develop frontier regions, promote economic development, ensure social stability and ethnic harmony and counter the Uyghur secessionism. This is also characterized as a vehicle of colonization among supporters of Uyghur secessionism.

²⁹ Sun Yat-sen considered nomad and sedentary, Chinese and Turkic Muslims all as one race in his scheme of the 'five race of China'-Han, Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan and Hui. See Sun Yat-sen, *Sun Yat-sen, his Political and Social Ideals: A Sourcebook*, ed. Leonard Shihlien Hsu, (Los Angeles: University of Southern California Press, 1933), p.165.

GMD 1938-1975, President of the ROC (i.e. Taiwan) 1948-1975), his main political ideology was guided by a Han centric point of view.³⁰ In other words, Chiang Kai-shek believed that all minorities in Eastern Turkistan were branches of the Han ethnicity, following the concept of a Greater Han Brotherhood that means that the greater Han are the big brothers of all other nationalities in China.³¹ Although various warlords such as Sun Yat-sen tried to prevent from practically applying the concept, this became a legacy in the central government of China, fueling Han chauvinism.

Following the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, the first warlord³² to govern Eastern Turkistan was Yang Zengxin (1859-1928, Governor of Eastern Turkistan 1911-1928) who was the former administrator of this region during the last years of the Qing rule. His policies were detrimental to ethnic relations over Eastern Turkistan and ultimately contributed to the revolt and ethnic awakening of Uyghur that led to establishment of the Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan (TIRET 1933-1934). Although Yang kept the Beg system that was a feudal land owning administration system of the Qing era, the Beg system under his rule had a tendency of direct role in ruling the province. As Yang distrusted the native peoples of Eastern Turkistan, he appointed officials from his home province of Yunnan.³³ Throughout his rule, Yang carried out a system of political repression and developed

³⁰ Although regarding ethnic minorities Chiang Kai-shek employed the same five categories (Han, Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan and Hui) like Sun Yat-sen, he asserted that they were all actually offshoots of the original Chinese stock, all descendents of the Yellow Emperor, which had diverged only by unfortunate historical and geographical accidents. See Chiang Kai-shek, *China's Destiny*, trans. Wang Chung-hui, (New York: Macmillan, 1947), p.40

³¹ Linda Benson, *The Ili Rebellion: the Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang 1944-1949*, (New York: M.E. Sharp, Inc., 1990), p.11.

³² This terminology is often used in ROC period. Warlord has its origin in the 'Warlord era' that represents the period in the history of the ROC from 1916 to the late 1930s when the country was divided by various military cliques, and this division continued until the fall of the Nationalist government in mainland China in many regions, such as Sichuan, Shanxi, Qinghai, Ningxia, Guangdong, Guangxi, Gansu, Yunnan, and Eastern Turkistan.

³³ Yunnan was a province of the Republic of China (ROC), located in the far southwestern corner of the country spanning almost 100 million acres.

a political feature of terror.³⁴ Moreover, he prohibited the publication of newspapers, strictly controlling the flow of information. Forbes explains Yang's brutal policies as an attempt to isolate, divide, and maintain in enforced ignorance in the peoples of Eastern Turkistan.³⁵

Ultimately, these policies deeply influenced the Uyghur identity during his reign. Under the strict official information control, two competing schools of thought developed among the Uyghurs: the secular nationalist movement modeled after the Central Asian Jadids³⁶ and a conservative religious movement espoused by the Amirs (commander or general) of Khotan.³⁷ The division of the two ideologies also underlines contemporary splits between secular nationalists and those who identify themselves rather with religion. At the same time, there was a heightened secular Pan-Turkic ideology that was stemming from Central Asia by the Jadid movement. This started to spread in Eastern Turkistan through the Central Asia ruled by Tsarist Russia before the revolution. In other words, the growth of Russian power inside and outside Eastern Turkistan worked as the major carrier of the Turkic nationalist ideologies for Uyghur secessionism from early on.

The successor of Yang-Zengxin was Jin Shuren (1883-1941, Governor of Eastern Turkistan 1928-1933). Overall his policies were disastrous, resulting in not only wide spread nepotism but also political corruption. Jin was also responsible for the annexation of the Kumul Khanate³⁸ as well as the pushing down the Kumul

³⁴ For example, when Yang discovered through a messenger that several Yunnanese were plotting to engage Eastern Turkistan in a conflict against another warlord Yuan Shikai (1859-1916), he had the messenger executed to calm the fears of the conspirators and then had the conspirators killed at a dinner he hosted. See Forbes, p.15

³⁵ Forbes, p.14.

³⁶ For more information see Millward and Tursun, p.72.

³⁷ Justin J. Rudelson, *Oasis Identities: Uyghur Nationalism Along China's Silk Road*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), p.55.

³⁸ Kumul or Hami was a small principality of about 25 to 30 thousand Uyghur Turks, located in Eastern Turkistan along the main road to the rest of China. Following the Chinese conquest of the area in the 1870s, Kumul and several smaller khanates were allowed to retain a measure of independence.

rebellion³⁹ in 1931 by virtue of the decision to permit Han settlement in Uyghur land.⁴⁰ The Kumul rebellion was unique on the ground that it did not claim full secession, but rather wished for extended autonomy with the replacement of Jin as governor of the province.⁴¹ This rebellion provided the pretext for the invasion of Ma Chung-ying⁴² (1911- ? , Hui warlord of the Gansu province in China during the 1930s) who was a Hui (Chinese Muslim)⁴³ warlord. Moreover, he was one of members from the Ma warlord clique⁴⁴ whose severe warlord warfare in Eastern Turkistan created an anti-Hui feeling.

Under the Jin's command, the provincial authorities tried to oppress the Kumul rebellion. The rebellion came under the leadership of two former ministers of the khanate, Hoca Niyaz (? -1937) and Yulbars Khan (1888- ?). In an attempt to the military balance among the provincial forces, Yulbars travelled east to seek help from the nationalist government in Nanjing.⁴⁵ However, in the event he called upon the services of Ma Chung-ying who was a youthful, intelligent, charismatic warlord, admired by his Hui troops. Ma Chung-ying acted independently as a warlord, without an official Guomindang (GMD, Chinese Nationalist Party) sanction for this intervention. His intervention had a serious influence on Eastern Turkistan and

Following the death of Khan Maqsud in 1930, the Chinese governor of Eastern Turkistan, Jin Shuren annexed the Khanate. He immediately raised taxes and opened Kumul to Han Chinese immigrants. See Millward and Tursun, pp.73-77.

³⁹ For more information see James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang*, (New York: Columbia University, 2007), p.191.

⁴⁰ Forbes, p.239.

⁴¹ Forbes, p.231.

⁴² After several victories over Chinese and White Russian forces, Ma Chung-ying attempted to expand his territory into southern Eastern Turkistan by launching campaigns from his power base in Gansu, but was eventually defeated by Eastern Turkistan warlord Sheng Shicai in 1934.

⁴³ Turkic-speaking peoples in Xinjiang Province in China also refer to members of this ethnic group as Dungans. In both China and the former Soviet republics where they reside, however, member of this ethnic group call themselves as Hui.

⁴⁴ The Ma clique was a family of warlords who ruled the Chinese province of Qinghai, Gangu and Ningxia from the 1910's until 1949. The three most prominent warlords were Ma Bufang, Ma Hongkui, and Ma Hongbin, collectively known as the Three Mas of the Northwest; other prominent Ma's included Ma Qi, Ma Lin, and Ma Chung-ying. The Ma's were all ethnic Hui from Northwestern China distinguished by their adherence to Islam.

⁴⁵ Millward, p.192.

Uyghurs. One of the most important effects was that this intervention led to a sharp distinction in terms of interests between Hui Muslims and the native Turkic Muslims.

This factor strengthened ethnic character in Uyghur identity, reducing the importance of Islam in Uyghur ideology for secessionism. Although Ma Chung-ying was repelled from the Kumul region, he returned. As Ma Chung-ying was also cruel and brutal, and his troops were known for their reputation as brigands and murderers, his activities resulted in giving the revolt an anti-Hui flavor.⁴⁶

At the same time, Sheng Shicai (1897-1970, Governor of Eastern Turkistan 1933-1944) entered the region by the request of Jin. During Kumul rebellion and invasion of Ma Chung-ying, Sheng's position was to oppose the Ma's army.⁴⁷ Under the condition of brutal suppression by the provincial authorities, failure of their co-religionists to assist them, and even a series of attacks from their co-religionists, the Uyghurs went through distinct suffering at the hands of the Han Chinese. That is why following rebellion came about in the Tarım Basin soon.

2.2.1. Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan (TIRET, 1933-1934)

The Tarım Basin rebellion in the southern province of Eastern Turkistan was an entirely different rebellion from the others. In the beginning of 1933, a secessionist revolt planned under the leadership of Muhammad Emin Buğra (1901-1965) and his two brothers emerged in Tarım Basin.⁴⁸ These brothers styled themselves as “Amirs” of the new state, declaring independence of the Khotan Emirate on March 16, 1933.⁴⁹ At that time, although he was a member of the Islamic *ulama* and teacher of a madrasa in Karasar, Buğra also supported ‘Jadidist

⁴⁶ Forbes, p.231.

⁴⁷ Forbes, p.251

⁴⁸ Mehmet Emin Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan: tarihi coğrafi ve şimdiki durumu*, (İstanbul: Güven, 1952), p.30.

⁴⁹ Millward, p.197.

Movement.’ The Khotan Emirate sent one of the three brothers, Şahmansur Emin Buğra⁵⁰ and a former publisher named Sabit Damolla to Kaşgar, where they established the Kaşgar Affairs Office of the Khotan Government in July of 1933. In September, the Khotan Emirate’s Kaşgar Affairs Office had changed into the Eastern Turkistan Independence Association, which drew on ideas of reforms, nationalism and Jadidism.⁵¹ After all, Sabit Damolla declared the establishment of the Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan (TIRET) with Hoca Niyaz as its president who was the former vizier of the Kumul Khan and then allied with Sheng-Shicai who was Governor of Eastern Turkistan from 1933 to 1944.⁵² The TIRET claimed authority over territory ranging from Aksu along the northern rim of the Tarım Basin to Khotan in the south.

However, TIRET faced with some limits. In fact, TIRET went through rapid inflation and surrounded by hostile powers including the Hui forces. Furthermore, Shinmen Yasushi argues that this Republic was founded not only on Islam but also on the modernizing, nationalistic ideals of the Jadidist movement of the 1910s and 1920s.⁵³ This ambiguous factor is included in confusion over the names used for the new state; although some primary sources refer to this state as the ‘Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan,’ in other sources, including the constitution itself, it is simply called ‘Eastern Turkistan Republic.’⁵⁴ There was also ethno-nationalistic

⁵⁰ He was also known as Amir Abdulla.

⁵¹ Although Hoca Niyaz was even physically far away, this choice included in some part wishful thinking that respected and noted leader of rebellion would again change sides. See Millward and Tursun, p.77.

⁵² Mehmet Emin Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan: tarihi coğrafi ve şimdiki durumu*, (İstanbul: Güven, 1952), p.42

⁵³ Shinmen Yasushi, “Higashi Torukisutan Kyowakoku” (1933-34 nen) ni kansuru ichi kosatsu’ (An Inquiry into the Eastern Turkistan Republic of 1933-34), *Ajia-Afurika gengo bunka kenkyu*, nos 46-7 (30th anniversary commemorative no. 1), Tokyo gaigokugo daigaku Ajia-Afurika gengo bunka kenkyu, (1994), p.39. Quoted in Millward, p.202.

⁵⁴ This ambiguity continues. In the case of the Erkin Alptekin’s article, ‘The Uyghurs,’ it refers to ‘an independent Islamic Eastern Turkistan Republic.’ See Erkin Alptekin, ‘The Uyghurs,’ *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.8, no.2, (July, 1987), pp. 302-310. However, on the

ambiguity in the first coins of the new government under the name of ‘Republic of Uyghurstan’ (*Uyghurstan Cumhuriyeti*). However, later passports as well as coins were labeled ‘Eastern Turkistan Republic.’⁵⁵

Another limitation of TIRET was the fact that this new government was failed to take international recognition despite of dispatching the numerous envoys such as Prime-Minister Sabit Damolla to USSR, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey and British India. Especially, Soviet Union rejected all offers of dealing with “Islamists” and therefore, actively opposed this independent “Islamic Republic.”⁵⁶ In the same way, other countries also refused to deal with envoys as representatives of independent Republic. This is largely because no one would have liked to make a challenge to the powerful Soviet Union and the ROC in their political relations and engage in fighting in Eastern Turkistan. As a result, TIRET was surrounded by hostile powers, Huis, Soviet Union, and the ROC.⁵⁷

Although its life was short, TIRET had a lasting effect on the Uyghur national identity. First, it was the first independent state in Eastern Turkistan that was founded under the native Uyghur leadership in the 20th century. Moreover, its domestic policies were based on a rather Islamic *sharia* system, but with an important addition of certain social, educational and economic reforms.⁵⁸ Although there were major differences between kingdom of Yakub Beg (1864-1877) and TIRET, these states played a significant role in providing national historical consciousness of Uyghur with motivations for independence from the Chinese rule.

Unrepresented Nations and People’s Organization (UNOP)’s Eastern Turkistan page of the website, the same passage shows without the word ‘Islam.’ UNPO, <http://www.unpo.org/content/view/7872/107/> (accessed January 21, 2008)

⁵⁵ Abduqadir Haji, “1933-1937-yilighicha Qashqar, Khotan, Aqsularda Blup otkan waqalar” (Events during 1931-1937 in Kshgar, Khotan and Aqsu), *Shinjang tarix materiyyalliri*, no.17, (1986), pp. 60-62. Quoted in Millward, p.203.

⁵⁶ Millward, p.206.

⁵⁷ Gömeç, p.74.

⁵⁸ Dillon, p.21.

Meanwhile, Jin became reliant on the Soviet Union and fully engaged in the war with Ma Chung-ying for the rule of Eastern Turkistan.⁵⁹ In the course of the war, Ma Chung-ying who previously had claimed to enter Eastern Turkistan to help the Turkic peoples in the Jin's sphere, attacked TIRET and after all destroyed it. That is, ultimately TIRET met its fate not by the Nationalist forces of ROC but by its fellow, Muslim warlords, resulting in the historical break between the Huis and the Uyghurs.⁶⁰

2.2.2. Eastern Turkistan Republic (ETR, 1944-1949)

In the campaign against Ma's forces, Sheng's continued successes damaged authority of Jin in the region and as a result Jin was ousted by a coup.⁶¹ The Soviets supported Sheng Shicai, who was officially recognized as governor by the nationalist government of ROC in 1933.⁶² He defeated warlord Ma Chung-ying, removing him as a major player in Eastern Turkistan from that time on.⁶³ The policies of Sheng were particularly brutal and eventually rebellions were ended up with the creation of Eastern Turkistan Republic (ETR). It was Sheng's harsh rule that make the Uyghurs perceive the Han regime as their cultural enemy. By his close relations with the USSR, Eastern Turkistan was basically a Soviet satellite from 1937 to 1944.⁶⁴ Furthermore, under the effect of Stalinism in Eastern Turkistan, Sheng's various purges including Hoca Niyaz who was accused of spying for the Japanese also had an influence on alienating the Turkic communities in Eastern Turkistan.⁶⁵ Estimates

⁵⁹ Forbes, p.98.

⁶⁰ Dillon, p.21.

⁶¹ Forbes, p.104.

⁶² Forbes, p.111.

⁶³ Forbes, p.245.

⁶⁴ Forbes, p.144.

⁶⁵ Sheng adopted the nationalities policy of Stalin for Eastern Turkistan and implemented *korenizatsiia*: the primary policy consisted of promoting representatives of titular nations and national minorities on lower levels of the administrative subdivision of the state, into local government,

of those killed in the purges of Sheng ranged from 50,000 to 100,000 during his career.⁶⁶

During WWII, the situation of Eastern Turkistan was very sensitive about shifts in the international strategic alignments between world powers. As Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in June of 1941, the U.S. began to support the GMD. Sheng decided to cut off relations with the Soviet Union. First, he tried to kick out Soviet personnel and even executed his Chinese Communist advisers such as Mao Zemin (1896-1943).⁶⁷ As a result, Sheng became Chairman of the GMD Xinjiang party branch and welcomed Nationalist troops as well as the opening of a U.S. consulate in Urumçi. However, Sheng once again attempted to seek the patronage of the Soviet Union because of the failure of the German army to take Stalingrad in 1943. Therefore, he arrested the representatives of GMD in Eastern Turkistan, writing to Stalin that they were spies of Japan and telling Chiang Kai-shek they were Communists.⁶⁸ This time Stalin refused the request of Sheng and passed his letter to Chiang.⁶⁹ Finally, Sheng was forced to return to the Nationalist government, which led to his removal from Eastern Turkistan in September 1944.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, fiscal and economic policies of GMD government played a negative role in Eastern Turkistan. After Sheng's fall, GMD governors imposed an exchange rate that benefited mainly Han Chinese, strengthening aspects of economic

management, bureaucracy and nomenklatura in the corresponding national entities. Especially, this policy focused on promoting literacy and publication in various Turkic dialects, creating cultural associations for each of the new ethnic categories and assigning government posts on their basis. See Millward and Tursun, p.80.

⁶⁶ Nabijan Tursun, 'Chinese Control over Xinjiang in Theoretical and Comparative Perspective,' paper contributed to the preparation of Ferederic Starr (ed.), *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland*, (Armonk, NY and London: M.E. Sharpe, 2002), pp. 31-76.

⁶⁷ Millward, p.211.

⁶⁸ Millward and Tursun, p.81.

⁶⁹ Mehmet Emin Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan: tarihi coğrafi ve şimdiki durumu*, (İstanbul: Güven, 1952), p.54.

⁷⁰ Lattimore, p.74.

discrimination in the policy and practice that continues even today.⁷¹ Furthermore, Chiang Kai-shek began the “Northwest Development” policy in 1942.⁷² The main goal of this policy was to encourage Han immigration to the Eastern Turkistan in order to change demographic system and eventually integrate this region into the Republic of China (ROC).⁷³ This policy continued in the Communist period with Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), resulting in the main source of current tensions between the Uyghur and Chinese government. In this period, nomadic Kazaks, who were already in revolt against Sheng because of his policies, especially for the closure of the Soviet border, also found little improvement under the GMD government.⁷⁴ Accordingly, some Kazak guerillas under the leadership of Osman Batur (1899-1951)⁷⁵ made sporadic raids on Chinese settlements and government.⁷⁶ Likewise, by 1944 when Sheng left Eastern Turkistan, a revolt was already spreading into İli valley.

In October 1944, a revolt broke out in Nilka located in the south of Gulca.⁷⁷ This was the beginning of the “Three Districts Revolution” named after the İli, Altay and Tarbagatay districts of northern Eastern Turkistan. Although Chiang Kai-shek ordered massacre as a step to put down these revolts in the northern region of Eastern Turkistan, gathering supporters not only from Eastern Turkistan exiles but also

⁷¹ Forbes, p.167.

⁷² In this policy, the Nationalist government suggested subsidizing the migration of 10,000 officials and their families to Eastern Turkistan to serve as administrators, teachers and technical experts. Millward and Tursun, p.212.

⁷³ Forbes, p.168.

⁷⁴ Oraltay Hasan, *Hürriyet Uğrunda Doğu Türkistan Kazak Türkleri*, (İstanbul: Türk Kültür Yayını, 1976), p.84.

⁷⁵ He was a leader of Kazakh tribal chiefs, who received Soviet military aid channeled through Outer Mongolia and wished to establish his own state in the Altay. For more information about him, see Jaksılık Samiytulı, *Kaharlı Altay*, (Ankara: Bengü, 2007)

⁷⁶ Millward and Tursun, p.82.

⁷⁷ For more information about revolt in Nilka, see İklil Kurban, *Şarki Türkistan Cumhuriyeti (1944-1949)*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992), pp.38-62.

Soviet Union, rebels took Gulca by November.⁷⁸ As a result, the independence of the Eastern Turkistan Republic (ETR) was declared on 12 November 1944.⁷⁹ The President was Alihan Töre⁸⁰ (1885-1976, President of ETR 1944-1946) who was an Islamic scholar and cabinet members were consisted of the representatives from each ethnic group in Eastern Turkistan. With the support of Soviets, Eastern Turkistan Army took over İli, Tarbagatay and Altay districts.⁸¹ However, the secret pact between GMD and Soviet Union allowed China to govern Eastern Turkistan in exchange of Mongolian People's Republic and Soviets' taking privileges from Manchuria.⁸² In consequence, although the representatives of Eastern Turkistan insisted on complete independence from China, the ETR became high autonomy [a de facto independence] in the autumn of 1945.⁸³

With the mediation of Soviet Union, on October 14, 1945 the ETR and GMD entered into an arrangement to govern Eastern Turkistan after the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance on August 14, 1945.⁸⁴ This ended Soviet support for the ETR. Although the negotiations between the GMD and ETR took months, the agreement was eventually concluded on July 1946 and as a result, Eastern Turkistan coalition government consisted of both GMD and Eastern

⁷⁸ Mehmet Emin Buğra, *Unknown Political Features on Tibet and Eastern Turkistan*, (Ankara: Ayyıldız Matbaası, 1959), p.9.

⁷⁹ İklil Kurban, *Doğu Türkistan İçin Savaş*, (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1995), p.88.

⁸⁰ He was the only person in the ETR leadership who opposed Stalin's order to terminate offensive of İli National Army on Urumçi and started negotiations with GMD in October 1945, on the merge of full victory of rebel forces over GMD in Eastern Turkistan.

⁸¹ Millward and Tursun, p.82.

⁸² Forbes, p.83.

⁸³ Forbes, p.84.

⁸⁴ This is the treaty of alliance concluded between the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union in February 1950, after difficult negotiations in Moscow between Mao Zedong and Joseph Stalin. The treaty did not prevent relations between Beijing and Moscow from drastic deterioration in the late 1950s-early 1960s, at the time of the Sino-Soviet split. The treaty expired in 1979. See Yang Kuisong, "The Sino-Soviet Alliance and Nationalism: A Contradiction," *Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact, The Cold War History of Sino-Soviet Relations*, (June, 2005), p.2.

Turkistan members was approved.⁸⁵ In this period, as a Chinese provincial Chairman, the role of Zhang Zhizhong (1896-1965) who was formerly the Commander of the North-western Military Headquarters in Lanzhou⁸⁶ is significant in the modern history of Eastern Turkistan, as he recognized not only that most people of Eastern Turkistan were not Han Chinese, but also that rhetorical assertions to the contrary would not help.⁸⁷ In the negotiations to create a coalition government, Zhang's main opposite person was Ahmetcan Kasimî (1914-1949, President of ETR 1946-1949) who was a Soviet-educated Uyghur originally from the İli Valley and had spent some time in Sheng's prisons. Although the most significant early leaders of the anti-Chinese revolt in the İli Valley were conservative figures such as Alihan Töre, there were tendencies to shift to more secular and pro-Soviet ones by 1945 including Ahmetcan Kasimî. In the coalition government, Zhang Zhizhong would be Chairman and Ahmetcan Kasimî Vice-Chairman of the New Xinjiang provincial government.

However, there were little changes and high conflicts in the coalition government. As a result, this government soon parted and the ETR cabinet members went back to İli to form 'Union for the Defense of Peace and Democracy.'⁸⁸ Accordingly, the ETR declared again autonomy in 1947 and it was remained a *de facto* separate pro-Soviet state with its own military forces and currency. Political activities of ETR were limited to the 'Union for the Defense of Peace and Democracy,' a party on the Leninist one-party model.⁸⁹ In 1949, when People's Liberation Army (PLA) that was victorious in the Chinese Civil war was reaching

⁸⁵ Mehmet Emin Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan: tarihi coğrafi ve şimdiki durumu*, (İstanbul: Güven, 1952), p.61.

⁸⁶ Lanzhou is a prefecture-level city and capital of Gansu province in northwestern China.

⁸⁷ He also wrote, 'We Chinese comprise only 5 percent of the population of Eastern Turkistan. Why have we not turned over political power to the Uyghurs and other racial groups who constitute the other 95 percent?' cited in Forbes, pp.199-200.

⁸⁸ Forbes, p.83.

⁸⁹ Millward, p.223.

Eastern Turkistan, autonomous government in İli decided to have a conference with Chinese Communist Party by a mediation of Soviet Union.⁹⁰ Uyghur political leaders departed to attend the conference in Beijing, however, on the way, they disappeared under a mysterious plane crash over the Soviet border. They were all considered dead, including Alihan Töre.⁹¹ In the end, the PRC's occupation of Eastern Turkistan was started by GMD's surrender in the south and a deal struck with the Soviet Union in the north, together with the elimination of the ETR leadership in 1949.

The ETR has several significant characteristics that make it essential to both Uyghur intellectuals and nationalists today. First, it incorporated Jadidist ideologies into national character. Despite its deep connections with the USSR, ETR was declared as an Islamic state with a list of 14 priorities.⁹² These priorities can be explained to a large extent as a list of concrete grievances that the Uyghur people in the ETR had against Chinese government. The ETR distinctly maintained an anti-Han factor among them. Moreover, religion played an important role as unifying

⁹⁰ Forbes, p.86.

⁹¹ Mehmet Emin Buğra, *Doğu Türkistan: tarihi coğrafi ve şimdiki durumu*, (İstanbul: Güven, 1952), pp.66-67. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, former KGB leaders revealed that five top leaders of ETR were killed under the Stalin's orders in Moscow in late August 1949, in accordance with a deal between Stalin and China's communist leader Mao Zedong. See Cao Chang-Ching, "The quest for an eighth Turkic nation," *The Taipei Times*, October 12, 1999, p.9. <http://taipeitimes.com/News/archives/1999/10/12/0000006151> (accessed January 14, 2008)

⁹² Benson lists 14 priorities as follow

1. End Chinese rule.
2. Establish equality for all nationalities
3. Organize a national political alliance representing all people in East Turkistan in numbers proportionate to their population.
4. Place local government in local hands.
5. Promote free cultural development in all groups and the use of local languages.
6. Re-establish locally manned military units.
7. Abolish Sheng Shicai's prison system.
8. Free all those arrested under Sheng.
9. Establish friendly relations with the USSR and resume trade, especially for cattle, wool, skins and grains.
10. Reduce taxation.
11. Establish religious freedom.
12. Oppose Han migration in East Turkistan.
13. Increase the amount of irrigated and.
14. End all forced labor.

See Benson, p.46.

element between the different peoples of Eastern Turkistan.⁹³ Although ethnicity is a key point to Uyghur secessionism, Islam was also a major marker as a cultural shield to assimilation into the Han Chinese.

2.3 People's Republic of China (PRC 1949 – 1989)

After PLA occupied Eastern Turkistan in late 1949, Uyghurs, especially in the southern Tarim Basin, occasionally resisted to the efforts of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to consolidate its rule and develop its policies. According to a Chinese source, there were 194 cases of counterrevolutionary secessionist activities and 19 revolts in Eastern Turkistan between 1951 and 1981.⁹⁴ Although there were such oppositions, the PRC succeeded in bringing the Islamic establishment under its rule while reforming land tenure, dispossessing powerful Uyghur landholders and redistributing lands once held as shrine and mosque endowments. This success was partly due to a relatively liberal policy related to the cultural expression and the whole religious life at the beginning of the PRC.⁹⁵

In fact, during the 1950s, the minority nationality policies of PRC in Eastern Turkistan were in the culturally pluralistic way. Especially, the policies of Chinese government from 1949 to 1956 were tempered and the CCP was afraid of pursuing strong anti-Islam policies, fearing that it can lead to higher conflict between the Han Chinese and the Uyghur, and further aggravate the widespread anti Han sentiments.⁹⁶

⁹³The creation of Ministry of Religious Affairs supported this argument. See Benson, p.145.

⁹⁴Zhang Yumo, "Anti-Separatism Struggle and Its Historical Lessons Since the Liberation of Xinjiang," (August, 1993). In English translation and web publishing by Uyghur American Association, <http://uyghuramerican.org/articles/141/1/The-Anti-Separatism-Struggle-and-its-Historical-Lessons-Since-the-Liberation-of-Xinjiang/The-Anti-Separatism-Struggle-and-its-Historical-Lessons-Since-the-Liberation-of-Xinjiang.html> (Accessed February 5, 2008) Originally published in Yang Faren, gen.ed., Fanysilanzhuyi, fantujueuzhuyi yanjiu (Research on Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism), (Urumchi: Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences, 1994), p.4

⁹⁵Yumo, p.3

⁹⁶Rudelson, p.135.

McMillan explains the reasons for these careful policies of the Communist Chinese in Eastern Turkistan as follows:

1. The existence of strong traditional tendencies among the local nationalities toward autonomy and even separation.
2. The presence of distinct cultures, languages, and religions in the primarily non-Han area.
3. The endurance of a Moscow-oriented communist movement and Soviet influence in the area.
4. The continued resistance by counterrevolutionary and bandit elements in much of Eastern Turkistan.
5. The great distances within the province and between Eastern Turkistan and China proper, which were amplified by the inadequate nature of the existing transportation and communications network.⁹⁷

However, following the Sino-Soviet split, under the Great Leap Forward⁹⁸ (1958-61), the radical collectivization and industrialization trends were accompanied by a more cultural offense for assimilation, increase of Han immigration and settlement in Eastern Turkistan. Moreover, political attacks on the people of Eastern Turkistan associated with the former ETR and Soviet Union. As a result, although smaller population of Eastern Turkistan shielded it from hunger, the famine caused

⁹⁷ Donald, H. McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power and Policy in Xinjiang, 1949-77*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1979), p.42.

⁹⁸ The Great Leap Forward was certainly one of the largest man-made catastrophes in human history, triggered by political fanaticism, ruthless suppression, and technological ignorance. Mao Zedong wanted to transform a predominantly agricultural society into an industrial economy within a few years.

by the Great Leap Forward as well as above elements resulted in an exodus of some 500,000 Eastern Turkistanis to the Soviet Union in 1959 alone.⁹⁹

There were continuous conflicts on the Eastern Turkistan border from the late 1960s through the early 1970s. Following the Cultural Revolution¹⁰⁰ (1965-76), the disruptive condition was continued to the Deng Xiaoping¹⁰¹ (1904-1997, General Secretary of the CCP 1956-1966, Chairman of the Central Military Commission of CCP 1981-1989) era. Serious discontents were also existed among Han youths Eastern Turkistan. In 1979, some 8,000 Han youth who had been dispatched from Shanghai and other urban centers to Eastern Turkistan in the previous decade demonstrated in Aksu. They requested better jobs, improved living conditions and educational opportunities in the region. In that time, they occupied both party and government offices for 40 days and 1,000 of them even staged a hunger strike.¹⁰² This was one of the most significant demonstrations in Eastern Turkistan's modern history.

Moreover, in this period as the most serious secessionist activity since 1949, the Soviet supported the Eastern Turkistan People's Party (ETPP)¹⁰³ managed to establish 178 branch offices in Eastern Turkistan and recruited more than 60,000

⁹⁹ Rob Johnson, *Oil, Islam and Conflict: Central Asia Since 1945*, (London: Reaction Books Ltd, 2007), p.183.

¹⁰⁰ Launched by Mao Zedong, the Chairman of the CCP from 1945 to 1976, this was a struggle for power within the CCP that manifested into wide-scale social, political and economic chaos, which grew to include large sections of Chinese society and eventually brought the entire country to the brink of civil war.

¹⁰¹ Deng is generally evaluated with developing China into one of the fastest growing economies in the world and vastly raising the standard of living.

¹⁰² James Millward, "Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment," *Policy Studies 6: East-West Center*, Washington D.C., (2004), p.7.

<http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/PS006.pdf> (accessed January 3, 2008)

¹⁰³ While the Chinese authorities argue that this was founded in February 1968, a Uyghur source explains that the party had already been active for several years beforehand. Although this party was active during the 1970s, it was gradually weakened by the arrest of its leaders and by the decline of the communist ideology. Nevertheless, a new party by Uyghurs was developing in southern Eastern Turkistan. As the revival of Islam was starting in Eastern Turkistan, the Islamic Pan-Turkic trend was also re-created by new young Uyghur leaders. It was re-organized around the East Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIP). See Castets, pp.10-11.

members.¹⁰⁴ Although it is difficult to verify these numbers, the ETPP is probably the largest secret organization ever created since the invasion of Eastern Turkistan. Allegedly, the group tried to seek to establish an independent ETR that was secular, communist, and pro-Soviet in orientation.¹⁰⁵ According to a Chinese source, the ETPP sent their delegations to Soviet Union and Mongolian People's Republic to ask for arms and the use of radio stations for their secessionist movement on several occasions.¹⁰⁶ The ETPP focused not only on mobilizing Turkic-speaking populations in Eastern Turkistan with the purpose of preparation for a mass insurrection against Chinese government but also on guerrilla activities that include various attempts at insurrection during the 1960s and the 1970s.¹⁰⁷ Even in recent years, some of the old ETPP members began the ethnic secessionist movement again.¹⁰⁸

Following the rise of Deng Xiaoping, Eastern Turkistan became generally more stable than during the reign of Mao Zedong¹⁰⁹ (1893-1976, 1st Chairman of the PRC 1954-1959, Chairman of the CCP 1945-1976) that were full of political campaigns. Various reforms in the nationality policies by Hu Yaobang (1915-1989, Chairman of the CCP 1981-1982, General Secretary of the CCP 1980-1987) led to the relaxation of assimilation aspect regard to Eastern Turkistan and comeback of non-Han cadres who had been purged during the Great Leap and Cultural Revolution years to the party and government. Despite of such atmosphere of relaxation in Chinese policy, however, the 1980s was also a period of new demands. Uyghur people wanted greater political autonomy and jobs. These calls resulted in new

¹⁰⁴ Cao Chang-Qing, "Fighting to free another Chinese 'province'," *Taipei Times*, October 11, 1999, p.9.

¹⁰⁵ Rémi Castets, "The Uyghurs in Xinjiang – The Malaise Grows," *China perspectives*, (September-October 2003), p.9.

<http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/document648.html> (accessed January 3, 2008)

¹⁰⁶ Yumo, p.4.

¹⁰⁷ Castets, p.10.

¹⁰⁸ Yumo, pp.3-4.

¹⁰⁹ He was a Chinese military and political leader, who led the CCP to victory against the GMD in the Chinese Civil War.

impositions and surveillance from the Chinese authorities.¹¹⁰ In this period, there was an influx of student demonstrations in Eastern Turkistan.

For example, in December 1985, about 2,000 Uyghur students from seven universities and colleges including Xinjiang University demonstrated in Urumçi under the various slogans against mainly nuclear testing at Lop Nor,¹¹¹ private immigration of Han Chinese and extension of the PRC's family planning policy to minorities in Eastern Turkistan.¹¹² They were openly against the Chinese government's political decision related to Uyghurs and the Xinjiang University played a role as the headquarters of demonstrations. At that time, various posters with contents such as "Chinese out of Eastern Turkistan," "independence for Eastern Turkistan" and "cut off the railroad from China proper to Eastern Turkistan" were seen in Urumçi.¹¹³ The demonstration reflected Uyghur's fears that the Chinese government would make them a minority in their own autonomous region by permitting the influx of Han Chinese from China proper and limiting the Uyghur birthrate.

Indeed, as Table 1 indicates, during the PRC period between 1949 and 2000, the number of Han settlers to Eastern Turkistan has been increased from 291,000 to 7,250,000. Accordingly, by virtue of not only Han Chinese-centered policies but also increase of the Han Chinese population growth rate, conflicts between Uyghur and Han Chinese were inevitable in Eastern Turkistan.

¹¹⁰ Amnesty International, "People's Republic of China: Gross Violation of Human Rights in the Uighur Autonomous Region," April 21, 1999, p.4.
<http://archive.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA170181999?open&of=ENG-CHN> (accessed January 13, 2008)

¹¹¹ Lop Nor is a group of small, now seasonal salt lake sand marshes between the Taklamakan and Kuruktag deserts in the southeastern portion of Eastern Turkistan in PRC.

¹¹² See Johnson, p.185. Although the PRC stopped nuclear testing in 1996, it is widely believed that the radiation has continued to damage the health of Uyghurs in southeastern Eastern Turkistan.

¹¹³ Castets, p.8.

Table 1: Demographic strength of the main Eastern Turkistan nationalities

	Total Population (thousand)	Uyghrus	Han	Kazakhs	Hui
1949	4,330	3,291 (75%)	291 (6.7%)	443 (10.2%)	122 (2.8%)
1964	7,440	4,020 (54%)	2,440 (32.8%)	501 (6.7%)	271 (3.6%)
1982	13,082	5,950 (45.4%)	5,287 (40.4%)	904 (6.9%)	571 (4.3%)
1990	15,291	7,249 (47.4%)	5,746 (37.5%)	1,161 (7.4%)	688 (4.5%)
2000	18,494	8,523 (46%)	7,250 (39.2%)	1,318 (7.1%)	844 (4.5%)

Source: *Fenjin de sishi nian: 1949-1989. Xinjiang fenci* (The advancing 40 years. 1949-1989. Xinjiang Volume), Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, Urumchi, 1989, p. 332; 2002 *Xinjiang tongji nianjian* (Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook), Pékin, Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 2002, pp. 107-109.

In the case of 1988, there were also various protests by the students of Uyghur Universities in Urumçi. The origin of these conflicts was started on June 15 when two student leaders of the Student Science and Culture Union¹¹⁴ in Xinjiang University had meetings with the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Party Committee vice chairman, the Planning Committee director, the Education Committee director and the Finance Committee director for six hours. During these meetings student leaders demanded to stop the disparity between the Chinese and Uyghur education systems as well as the ethnic discrimination, and the implementation of the Autonomous Regions Policy of PRC. However, Chinese authorities refused their demands and therefore, some 5,000 students protested on city streets. Although this demonstration was peacefully without any incident,

¹¹⁴ Dolkun İsa founded this Union in Xinjiang University in 1987. The purpose of the Union was to eliminate illiteracy among Uyghurs by mobilizing university students to offer classes in rural areas during summer vacations. This Union was a public organization by the permission of Xinjiang University. See “*Rebuttal of the Chinese Public Security Ministry’s “Terrorist” Accusation*” in the Publication by Dolkun İsa of the World Uyghur Congress, <http://www.uyghurcongress.org/En/AboutWUC.asp?mid=1095738888&mid2=-2118628734&mid3=-1844889938> (accessed on 15 April 2008)

authorities called this protest as "June 15 riot," and not only placed thirty student leaders under close surveillance but also questioned them intensely.¹¹⁵ Because it was consisted of a number of Turkic students in the demonstration, this incident was also evaluated as one aspect of the Pan-Turkism.¹¹⁶

Meanwhile, Chinese government began to worry about the religious revival in the Uyghur identity. These worries increased dramatically in 1989. On May, Muslim students marched in Urumçi in a demonstration organized by Hui students to express rage at the publication in Shanghai of Sexual Customs (*Xing Fengsu*), a book containing insulting misrepresentations of Islam with the statement that Muslim culture was centered on sex.¹¹⁷ This demonstration also turned in People's Square in Shanghai, where cars, motorbikes and windows were smashed and students clashed with police, leaving almost 200 injured.¹¹⁸ Moreover, 3,000 Muslims also protested the publication of this book in Beijing.¹¹⁹ Because of a series of demonstrations, the book was ultimately withdrawn by both Chinese authority and its publisher, and government ordered the authors to apologize in public. As a religious protest, this event became a critical reference to the history of Chinese policy related to its Muslim subjects.

In 1989, the Tiananmen Square protests¹²⁰ in Beijing made the atmosphere of Eastern Turkistan grow tenser. Especially during the period of the Tiananmen Square protests, Örkeş Dölet (1968-) who fled China after this incident and now

¹¹⁵ "Rebuttal of the Chinese Public Security Ministry's "Terrorist" Accusation" in the Publication by Dolkun İsa of the World Uyghur Congress.

¹¹⁶ Gömeç, p.77.

¹¹⁷ Dru C. Gladney, "The People's of the People's Republic: Finally in the Vanguard?" *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, Vol.14, Issue 1, (1990), p.62.

¹¹⁸ Yumo, pp.11-12.

¹¹⁹ *The Hui People in People Groups, China Source: Partnering Resources with Vision*, <http://www.chsource.org/Hui.htm> (accessed April 15, 2008)

¹²⁰ This is widely known as the Tiananmen Square Massacre. These were a series of demonstrations by labor activists, students and intellectuals in the PRC between April 15 and June 4, 1989. Although the protests lacked a unified leadership, participants were generally against Chinese authoritarianism and economic policies under the CCP rule.

lives in Taiwan rose to fame as a Chinese/Uyghur student leader. He also achieved prominence while studying at Beijing Normal University as a hunger striker who rebuked the Chinese Premier, Li Peng (1928- , 4th Premier of the PRC 1988-1998), on national television.¹²¹ Moreover, by December 1989 with the collapse of Eastern European communism as the outside effect, Chinese government became increasingly sensitive to discontent of ethnic minorities, including Uyghur, that is continued even until today.

¹²¹See “Witnessing Tiananmen: Student talks fail,” *BBC News interview*, May 28, 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3757433.stm> (accessed April 12, 2008)

CHAPTER 3

UYGHUR SECESSIONISM IN 1990S-SELECTED CASES

There were a series of disturbances and unrests over Eastern Turkistan in the decade of 1990s. In the history of Uyghur secessionism, situation of 1990s includes transitional factor that connects the past historical background with the current problem of Eastern Turkistan. Accordingly, to examine condition of 1990s plays an important role in understanding contemporary Uyghur secessionism. A Chinese “White Paper” demonstrates the situation of 1990s from Chinese point of view as follows:

Especially in the 1990s, influenced by religious extremism, separatism and international terrorism, part of the "Eastern Turkistan" forces both inside and outside China turned to splittist and sabotage activities with terrorist violence as their chief means. Some "Eastern Turkistan" organizations openly stated that they would use terrorist and violent means to achieve their purpose of separation. The "Eastern Turkistan" forces in China's Xinjiang and relevant countries plotted and organized a number of bloody incidents of terror and violence, including explosions, assassinations, arsons, poisonings and assaults, seriously jeopardizing the lives, property and security of the Chinese people of various ethnic groups, and social stability in Xinjiang, and posing a threat to the security and stability of the countries and regions concerned.¹²²

¹²² Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, White Paper on National Minorities Policy and Its Practice in China, May 2003, <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20030526/4.htm> (accessed March 13, 2008)

Under this national atmosphere, especially since 1996, the Chinese authorities have proclaimed various anti-crime campaigns in Eastern Turkistan that included purported “illegal religious activities”. The Chinese anti-crime campaigns of 1990’s in the region had been conducted as follow;

- 1996: First “Strike Hard” campaign specifically targeting “splittism and illegal religious activities”
- 1997: “Rectification of Social Order” campaign
- 1998: “People’s war” drive against “separatist and religious extremists”
- 1999: “Special 100 Days Strike Hard Fight” and “General Campaign against Terrorism”¹²³

Like this, Chinese government started to recognize the Uyghur secessionism as a violent threat to the national security especially during 1990s.

At the beginning of the 1990s, Chinese government feared that the independence of the Central Asian Republics as well as the spread of radical Islam in Afghanistan would have negative effects on Eastern Turkistan in the PRC. This was largely because the independence of other important Turkic populations of Central Asia (or Western Turkistan) could lead to strengthening of the Uyghur secessionism. Moreover, the cultural connections that bind the Uyghurs together with the peoples of the new neighboring Republics and also with the Uyghur diaspora in these countries made Chinese government to worry about that solidarity could build up between the Uyghur secessionists and these Republics.¹²⁴ In fact, some of them, especially Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, have provided asylum for the new refugees and even recognized various organizations of the local diaspora supporting the Uyghur secessionism.¹²⁵ Accordingly, Chinese government tried to cut off the militants’ activities in Eastern Turkistan from these potential outside supporters. The PRC suggested the prospects for economic cooperation and promoted cooperation in

¹²³ “Devastating Blows: Religious Repression of Uighurs in Xinjiang,” *Human Rights Watch*, Vol.17, No.2(C), (April 2005), p.67.

¹²⁴ Castets, p.8.

¹²⁵ Castets, p.1.

the struggle against secessionism as well as religious radicalism in Central Asia through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).¹²⁶ Through such a process, Chinese government persuaded the Central Asian Republics to prevent the activities of the Uyghur organizations present on their territories.¹²⁷

In this manner, it is noticeable that Uyghur secessionism of 1990s included international elements in it several ways. A variety of Chinese sources had claimed the existence of ‘foreign forces’ behind the secessionists in Eastern Turkistan. Especially, they pointed to Uyghur exile groups, including the activities of İsa Yusuf Alptekin (1901-1955, General Secretary of the National Assembly, TIRET 1933-1934) who was the former Eastern Turkistan member of the GMD Legislative Yuan, which is legislative body of the PRC. His son, Erkin Alptekin (1939-),¹²⁸ who is now active in Turkey and Germany. Moreover, as real security threats to Chinese government, Uyghur groups were engaged in political organization and some military training abroad. According to a Chinese source, there had been secret training camps in southern Eastern Turkistan, which later moved abroad under the

¹²⁶ The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is an intergovernmental security organization which was founded in 2001 by the leaders from PRC, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. All these countries had been also members of the Shanghai Five which founded in 1996 except for Uzbekistan. In 2001, with the inclusion of Uzbekistan, these members renamed the organization.

¹²⁷ Thus, for example, the government of Kazakhstan, which had officially recognized organizations seeking independence that were operating within its territory (The United National Revolutionary Front of East Turkistan, the Organization for the Liberation of Uyghuristan and the Union of Uyghur Peoples) ended up by banning them in 1995 under pressure from the Chinese government. On the repression of the Uyghur activists in Central Asia, see “Special report on the state of human rights in East Turkistan over the period January-May 2002,” *Eastern Turkistan Information Center*, May 1, 2002, pp. 7-8. http://www.uygur.org/enorg/h_rights/report_may_2002.html (accessed February 4, 2008)

¹²⁸ In 1971, he joined Radio Free Europe in Munich, Germany as a Program Specialist, Senior Research Analyst, Asst. Director of the Nationality Services and Senior Policy Advisor. In 1991, he also became one of the founders of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO), which has its seat in the Hague, Holland. Between 1991 and 2003, Erkin Alptekin served as the Vice Chairman, Chairman and the General Secretary of the UNPO. He was also elected as the President of the World Uyghur Congress (2004-2006). For more information, see ‘Biographical Note of Erkin Alptekin’ in the World Uyghur Congress. <http://www.uyghurcongress.org/En/AboutWUC.asp?mid=1095738888&mid2=1109104014&mid3=1109598091> (accessed June 11, 2008)

Chinese oppression.¹²⁹ Under this situation, Chinese government began to concern about activities of Uyghurs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan, and even in Pakistan.¹³⁰

Related to the international aspect of secessionism, the PRC also indirectly and directly accused the U.S. of supporting activities of Uyghur secessionists. Minister of Public Security, Wang Fang's announcement in August 1989 that "The root cause of secessionist instability in Eastern Turkistan lies in the attempt by the U.S. and other countries to split and subvert our country," also indicates this point of view.¹³¹ However, the most significant Chinese concern was the international attention to human rights violations in Eastern Turkistan. Amnesty International as well as Human Rights Watch and the U.S. State Department's Human Rights Report all started to examine Uyghur people's human rights issue under the Chinese rule.¹³² With the increased openness of the region to not only such organizations but also global society, the Uyghur secessionism took an international dimension from the 1990s on.

Meanwhile, Bhattacharya pointed out that there are three main characteristics in the 1990's Uyghur secessionism in his article "Conceptualising Uyghur Separatism in Chinese Nationalism." First, although secessionist tendencies in Eastern Turkistan are part of the region's history, the violent factors in the Uyghur secessionism were started in 1986 when a few Uyghurs first joined the anti-Communist Jihad in Afghanistan. Second, the increasing Uyghur people's dissatisfaction pointed to the geographical reach of secessionism. Bhattacharya

¹²⁹For more information see Yitzhak Shichor, "Fact and Fiction: A Chinese Documentary on Eastern Turkistan Terrorism," *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Silk Road Studies Program: China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 4, No. 2 (2006) p.92.

¹³⁰ James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang*, (New York: Columbia University, 2007), p.336.

¹³¹ Quoted in Dillon, pp.61-62.

¹³² Millward, p.335.

suggested the bomb explosions in Beijing as the example of threat extent. Last, some Uyghur groups were influenced by the concept of jihad that the Afghan Mujahideen were practicing.¹³³ His points indicate that Uyghur secessionism in 1990s includes not only extended scale in the movement but also in some part tendency of religious radicalism.

Including Bhattacharya's three characteristics, Barin uprising in 1990 and Gulca in 1997 have significance among various disturbances in 1990s. This is largely because these resulted in a number of deaths as well as arrests during incidents and it is deeply related to the international action of the problem of human rights. Therefore, in this chapter, as representative incidents of 1990s, Barin and Gulca uprisings were inquired into the case studies. This will help to understand transitional characteristics of Uyghur secessionism that include the aspects of both past and contemporary secessionism through the real demonstrations and approach to these incidents.

3.1 Barin uprising in 1990

3.1.1. Background

The Barin uprising, known in Chinese as the Barin County Counter-Revolutionary Armed Rebellion,¹³⁴ initiated the cycle of violence during the 1990s of violent Uyghur uprisings and Chinese crackdowns. In fact, Barin county, Akto township¹³⁵ had been named an "Ethnic Unity Model Town" in 1984.¹³⁶ However, six years later this name became ironic when an armed Uyghur uprising started to rebel in there against the Chinese rule. Although there had been various violent

¹³³ Abanti Bbattacharya, "Conceptualising Uyghur Separatism in Chinese Nationalism," *Strategic Analysis*, (Jul-Sep 2003), pp.372-373.

¹³⁴ Millward, p.325.

¹³⁵ This is located about 10 km south of Kaşgar.

¹³⁶ James Millward, "Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment," *Policy Studies 6*: East-West Center, Washington D.C., (2004), p.14.

clashes before in Eastern Turkistan, Barin is regarded different because of the “claimed” qualities of foreign money and supporters as well as the quantities of weapons and explosives captured. The Chinese government also evaluated that the Barin uprising was a well planned, well organized, and premeditated act of ethnic secessionists hidden in the region.¹³⁷ Furthermore, the Chinese government admitted that it was the most serious incident carried out by the ethnic secessionists since the invasion of Eastern Turkistan.¹³⁸

The main purpose of Barin uprising was to resist Chinese repression and politicalize Eastern Turkistan issue by mobilizing Uyghurs.¹³⁹ Uyghurs also demanded to end the Chinese colonial rule in Eastern Turkistan and re-establish the Eastern Turkistan Republic, which existed during the 1940s. However, it is necessary to remember that there was the fundamental Uyghur’s dissatisfaction with Chinese one-sided political aspects. For example, some report suggest that underlying complaint was not only Chinese mass migration to Eastern Turkistan but also political application of birth limits to minority ethnic groups in 1988, although today Uyghurs in cities are legally limited to have two and those who live in the countryside to have three children.¹⁴⁰

3.1.2. Eastern Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIP) and Barin uprising

The uprising of Barin was initially organized by the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIP) under the leadership of Zehidin Yusuf and the preparations for

¹³⁷ Yumo, p.5.

¹³⁸ Anwar Rahman, p.53.

¹³⁹ Elizabeth Van Wie Davis and Rouben Azizian, “*Islam, Oil, and Geopolitics: Central Asia after September 11*,” (UK: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2007), p.53.

¹⁴⁰ Millward, “*Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang*,” p.327.

the uprising began as early as 1988.¹⁴¹ Before the Barın uprising took place, the ETIP had conducted a series of planning exercises and detailed preparation, including a plan to expand their organization all over Eastern Turkistan. Smuggled weapons for uprising had been stockpiled, and organizers had been spreading the message of jihad beforehand.¹⁴² There were also various schemes of ideological discussion, task sharing, financial support, food supplies, weapons, and combat training etc.¹⁴³

Initially, as the plan of organization was partially exposed to the Chinese security service by March 1990, the organizers of the uprising had to change their initial plan and to speed up their activities. As a result, the style of member recruitment of the ETIP was changed from underground to public, from individual recruiting to group recruiting, and from tricking to threatening.¹⁴⁴ Moreover, in this process, ETIP formed its major military force, the “Islamic Warriors” mainly from young people.¹⁴⁵ They intensified propaganda about the armed uprising, setting up loudspeakers in the villages of the Barın area to proclaim the uprising against Chinese occupation in Eastern Turkistan.¹⁴⁶

On April 5, 1990, the Barın riots started with the ETIP’s active efforts in mosques, followed with a mass protest. In the early morning, some 200 Uyghurs surrounded the compound hosting government and security offices for Barın county, Akto township.¹⁴⁷ The crowd requested the expulsion of the Chinese, claiming that “United all the Turk peoples, long live the great Eastern Turkistan, take Barın,

¹⁴¹ Salahuddin Eser, “Doğu Türkistan Vesilesiyle,” <http://64.233.183.104/search?q=cache:s7NtKphn6RQJ:www.geocities.com/doststrateji/dost/doutrk.htm+Barın+ayaklanması&hl=tr&ct=clnk&cd=9&gl=tr>

¹⁴² Davis and Azizian, p.53.

¹⁴³ Rahman, p.53.

¹⁴⁴ Yumo, p.5.

¹⁴⁵ Yumo, p.5.

¹⁴⁶ Rahman, p.53.

¹⁴⁷ Mehmet Emin Batur, “Doğu Türkistan Barın Şehitleri,” Barın Katılım’ın 14.Yıl Dönemi, April 5, 1990 *Hür Gökbayrak: Doğu Türkistanın Sesi*, http://www.hurgokbayrak.com/yeni_sayfa_138.htm and see also Millward, p.326.

establish Eastern Turkistan.”¹⁴⁸ Later that afternoon, the situation became more aggressive with some 300 men surrounding the same compound. Although five policemen had been sent to arrest Zehidin Yusuf, they were seized and their guns and other equipment were taken by rebels. Besides, at a nearby bridge some Uyghurs ambushed two cars from the Barin Armed Police and killed six officers in the car with axes and knives, taking a few guns before torching the vehicles.¹⁴⁹

In the night, Yusuf’s fellows warned an ultimatum threatening to attack if those barricaded in the compound did not hand over all arms stored within. After all, shooting broke out as the some Uyghurs reportedly threw homemade grenades into the compound. During this moment, Zehidin Yusuf was shot and the besiegers fled. In that time, Zehidin Yusuf was 30 years old.¹⁵⁰ In the end, artillery troops and four battalions of infantry from the southern Eastern Turkistan military district dominated the entire area of Barin, scattered the Uyghurs holding the bridge, and pursued 16 Uyghurs who fled into the mountains.¹⁵¹

According to local people, several thousand people took part in the uprising, while the Chinese authorities asserted that there were fewer than 200 participants.¹⁵² Although the Chinese government tended to reduce the scale of this uprising, its real response to control the incident included firmly systemic and strong ways. Among the government armed forces acted in the Barin incident, there were three control departments; Public Security Police, the People’s Armed Police, the army, and even some of its special units were sent not only from Artuş and other nearby prefectures, but also from Urumçi.¹⁵³ Some of them were even sent by air from China proper to

¹⁴⁸ Yumo, p.6.

¹⁴⁹ Millward, p.326.

¹⁵⁰ Mehmet Emin Batur, “Doğu Türkistan Barın Şehitleri.”

¹⁵¹ Millward, p.327.

¹⁵² Rahman, p.53.

¹⁵³ Rahman, p.53.

help crackdown the uprising. The scale of the protest in Barın was such that the Public Security Bureau personnel and the People's Armed Police had to be reinforced by up to 1000 regular PLA troops.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, one Chinese source revealed the list of weapons confiscated by authorities from Barın participants as follows: 16 guns, 470 bullets of various types, 243 earthenware hand grenades, 512 blasting caps, 53 kilos of blasting powder, 180 knives of all sizes, three motorcycles and five horses.¹⁵⁵

Likewise, Becquelin argues that, the implication of Barın uprising was extremely serious because of its scale and evident organization of the insurgents:

The conjunction of organizational sophistication, radical Muslim ideology and the weaponry used by the insurgents was far beyond the expectations of the security apparatus, suggesting foreign support from across the borders. The uprising took three days to quell and resulted in more than 30 deaths and numerous casualties.¹⁵⁶

The scale of this uprising provided China with deep suspicions of external influences penetrating Eastern Turkistan and stirring up nationalist sentiments among Eastern Turkistan's ethnic minorities.

In that time, Chinese media and government placed the responsibility for the Barın uprising on İsa Yusuf Alptekin in İstanbul.¹⁵⁷ One Chinese source also reports that 16 rebels were killed in fighting, 124 arrested, 508 detained for questioning, 40

¹⁵⁴ Dillon, M., "Central Asia: the view from Beijing-Urumçi and Kashgar," in M. Mozzafari (Ed.) *Security politics in the commonwealth of independent states the southern belt*, pp. 133-148, (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 137.

¹⁵⁵ Ma Dazheng, *Guojia Liyi gaoyu yiqie: Xinjiang wending wenti de guancha yu sichao (The National Interest is More Important than All Else: Observation and Reflection on the Xinjiang Stability Question)*, (Urumchi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2003), p.59. Quoted in Millward, p.327.

¹⁵⁶ N. Besquelin, "Xinjiang in the nineties," *The China Quarterly*, Vol.178, (June, 2000), p.69.

¹⁵⁷ Melike Ülker Nazmiye, "Doğu Türkistan'ın Sessiz Çılgılığı," *Doğu Türkistan Kültür ve Dayanışma Derneği* Kayseri Türkiye, p.2.
<http://www.gokbayrak.com/turkistan.asp?inc=yazilar&numara=341>(accessed April 14, 2008)

convicted, 3 executed and 378 released after education in this period.¹⁵⁸ However, Amnesty International has denied that report through unofficial sources which consisted of eyewitnesses' testimonies, claiming that up to 50 Uyghurs were killed by Public Security Forces including some killed by both mortars and gunfire from helicopters.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, an Uyghur source argued that about 5,000 Uyghurs were killed and 7,000 arrested in this period.¹⁶⁰ That is, although the uprising did not last long, there was no precise information not only from the local population due to fear under strong the Chinese surveillance but also from the Chinese government. That is why a variety of information related to this uprising mostly depends on the testimonies of eyewitnesses.

3.1.3. Different sources about the scale of Barin uprising

According to several local people, who later fled from China, the death toll must have been hundreds, most of them being participants in the uprising.¹⁶¹ Another eyewitness asserts that it is estimated that between 22 and 50 people were shot dead.¹⁶² Western sources gave a more detailed death toll: 22 Uyghurs killed during the events of April 5 and 6, more than 60 killed on April 12.¹⁶³ It was said that a fourteen-year old boy also participated in this uprising and even killed a policeman. This young boy was later caught by government forces, and his whereabouts was not clear. According to the rumors in the street, he was executed secretly by the Chinese

¹⁵⁸ Ma Dazheng, *Guojia Liyi gaoyu yiqie: Xinjiang wending wenti de guancha yu sichao (The National Interest is More Important than All Else: Observation and Reflection on the Xinjiang Stability Question)*, (Urumchi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2003), p.59. Quoted in Millward, p.326.

¹⁵⁹ Amnesty International, *People's Republic of China: Gross Violations of Human Right in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region*, (London: Amnesty International, 1999), p.64.

¹⁶⁰ Nazmiye, p.2.

¹⁶¹ Rahman, p.53. See also the analysis of Eastern Turkistan's position in Sino-Middle East relations by Harris Lillian Craig, 'Xinjiang, Central Asia and the Implications for China's Policy in the Islamic World,' *China Quarterly*, Vol.133, (1993).

¹⁶² Amnesty International (1999), pp .164-5.

¹⁶³ Rahman, p.53.

authorities.¹⁶⁴ An Uyghur report also explains that a seven months baby was killed by 77 bullets during the event of Barin uprising.¹⁶⁵ All these accounts indicate Chinese government's severe responses to the uprising.

3.1.4. Afterward

As a result of Barin uprising, the Chinese government started to step up security measures after the event. First, after the Barin uprising the number of police forces was increased including 28,000 additional armed police, and police power was changed as specialist riot-control units.¹⁶⁶ For making firm surveillance system by the secret police, Uyghur spies were also recruited. Furthermore, cameras were set up in mosques and those who attend to the religious ceremonies were listed and photographed.¹⁶⁷ Under this condition, Chinese media continued to oppress and condemn Uyghur secessionism. As a result, 50 religious sites in that district were closed by the Eastern Turkistan authorities and they ordered construction halted on 153 mosques.¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, Chinese investigations were conducted over some 12,000 religious figures.¹⁶⁹

Related to the Barin uprising and Chinese response to it, a Xinjiang provincial Communist Party meeting on July 1990 came to the conclusion that "the most important lesson identified was that; for a long time, our Autonomous Region did not have a unified vision that national secessionism is the main danger for Xinjiang... The task of fighting ethnic secessionism has not been carried out in a top-

¹⁶⁴ Rahman, p.54.

¹⁶⁵ Nazmiye, p.3.

¹⁶⁶ Johnson, p.187.

¹⁶⁷ Johnson, p.187.

¹⁶⁸ Nicholas D. Kristof, "A Muslim Region Is Tugging At the Ties That Bind China," *The New York Times*, August 14, 1993, p.3, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0CE2D7173FF937A2575BC0A965958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=3> (accessed March 1, 2008)

¹⁶⁹ Kristof, p.3.

to-bottom fashion. This lesson is very important, and we still need to pay full attention to it today”.¹⁷⁰ In other words, the Barin uprising played a significant role in strengthening Chinese security policy connected to the various ethnic minority groups as well as reviewing the Eastern Turkistan problem.

3.1.5. Conclusion

The Chinese government concluded that the Uyghur secessionist movement in Eastern Turkistan has become a unified movement in 1990s. There is not only an organizational unity, but also an ideological unity. As proven by the Barin uprising, the ETIP is a representative example. This was an underground political organization with a relatively complete programme of objectives, including concrete strategy of uniting and absorbing other secessionist forces in Eastern Turkistan. As a result, the ETIP has successfully developed its branches and members in more than 20 cities and counties in south and east of Eastern Turkistan.¹⁷¹ With such collective activities, not only to the ETIP but also to entire Uyghur people, the Barin uprising became a symbol and played an important role in providing motivation for other Uyghur protests.

3.2 Gulca uprising in 1997

3.2.1. Background

The increased opposition of Uyghurs during the 1990s coincided with the Chinese government’s renewed suppression of religious expression, which included limiting mosque construction as well as prohibiting religious education and

¹⁷⁰ Yang Faren, Li Ze and Dong Sheng (eds), *Fan yisilanzhuyi, fan tujuezhuyi yanjiu* (Research on Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism), (Urumqi: Xinjiang Shehui Keque Yuan, 1994), p.45. Quoted in Besquelin, p.69.

¹⁷¹ Rahman, p.58.

supervision of religious leaders.¹⁷² As the starting point of the greater violence, the government launched “Strike Hard” anti-crime campaign in 1996, broadening it to crackdown on Uyghur secessionist groups and at the same time creating tremendous Uyghur disaffection. According to the announcement of Xinjiang Public Security Office, “more than 2,700 terrorists, murderers and other criminals, presumably of various ethnic groups as well as 4,000 sticks of dynamite, 6,000 pounds of explosives, 30,000 rounds of ammunition, and 600 firearms” were captured for two months of 1996.¹⁷³ In response to the “Strike Hard” campaign, Uyghur anti-government protests, violence and terrorist activities have reached to the serious levels. Related the scale of the violence, Chinese media noted that foreign “fanatics” including the jihadist Afghans were trying to support Uyghur secessionism like the case of the Barin. The Gulca uprising was started from this social and political atmosphere.

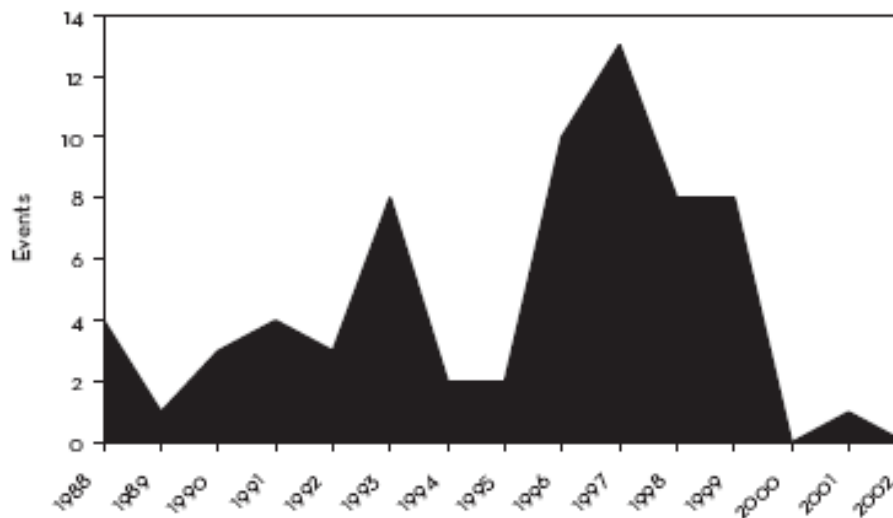
The Gulca uprising is regarded as the most severe street violence since the Cultural Revolution and the second-largest protest in recent history of Uyghur secessionism since the demonstration and hunger-strike of thousands of Han youth in Aksu under the communist regime in 1979. Brent Hierman also pointed the significance of the Gulca uprising in his article, providing figure 1 related to the Uyghur protests in Eastern Turkistan.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² Paul, p.12.

¹⁷³ Jane Macartney, “China to build steel Great Wall against separatism,” *Reuters News Service*, June 4, 1996.

¹⁷⁴ Brent Hierman, “The Pacification of Xinjiang: Uighur Protest and the Chinese State, 1988-2002,” *Problems of Post-Communism* Vol.54, Issue 3, (2007).

Figure 1. Contentious Events Per Year Between January 1988 and July 2002



Source: Hierman, Brent. 2007. "The Pacification of Xinjiang: Uighur Protest and the Chinese State, 1988-2002," *Problems of Post-Communism* 54(3): p.49

As the Figure 1 indicates, the Gulca uprising in 1997 marked the peak of Uyghur secessionism. This figure includes empirical justification for labeling the Gulca uprising the high-water mark of the expression of Uyghurs' dissatisfaction with the Chinese rule.

3.2.2. *Meshrep*

To understand Gulca uprising, religious background of 1990s also should be understood. In 1994, young Uyghurs initiated a movement in the city of Gulca in İli Prefecture, which is called İli Youth *Meshrep*.¹⁷⁵ As an ancient Uyghur tradition, the *meshrep* (religious youth club) is a form of social gathering of people of all ages and both sexes, and the gathering the participants feel free to play music, to sing songs and to dance. Even today, there are *meshrep* gatherings in Uyghur populated areas, especially in the villages.

¹⁷⁵ Rahman, p.56.

Especially, the *meshrep* organized in Gulca was a particular one as the organizers of *meshrep* wished to solve social problems by reviving such a traditional form of social gathering. In that time, one of the significant problems among young people who were mostly the uneducated and unemployed was drug abuse. Initially, the İli Youth *Meshrep* was organized with the agreement of the local government. Several local official cultural institutions supported this organization and they also donated various materials for a library set up by the Youth *Meshrep*. Moreover, they tried to revive cultural and ethnic traditions and a sense of moral values. As a result, they reportedly achieved some success in reducing the drug problem among the young Uyghurs. *Meshrep* gatherings were organized regularly for a period of months in villages. Their activities became popular and had a great influence on other areas in Eastern Turkistan. According to some sources, there were soon some 400 *meshrep* organizations in the region.¹⁷⁶ Various *meshreps* developed into an unofficial and increasingly organized even network of boys clubs, including group meetings supported a soccer tournament bringing together teams representing multiple *meshrep* activities.¹⁷⁷

As the *meshreps* became more popular, the Chinese authorities apparently became increasingly worried about the power of these movements. Finally, Chinese government started to investigate the *meshrep* movement in 1995, refusing to permit an inter-*meshrep* soccer tournament.¹⁷⁸ In the process of this oppression, Chinese

¹⁷⁶ Rahman, p.57.

¹⁷⁷ James Millward, "Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment," *Policy Studies 6: East-West Center*, Washington D.C., (2004), p.17.

¹⁷⁸ The Uyghurs had organized a soccer league with 16 teams. This played an important role for diversion from concerns over high unemployment among young Uyghurs as well as for Uyghurs who tried to cut off alcohol and drugs. Just before the soccer tournament was started, the Chinese authorities parked tanks on the soccer fields in Gulca, claiming the space was needed for military exercises. Furthermore, regular radio programs of the state broadcast said that the games would be regarded as "illegal gatherings." For more information, see "Remembering the Ghulja Massacre." Press Release of *Uyghur American Association*, February 5, 2008,

officials even confiscated balls from soccer fields over the Gulca city.¹⁷⁹ After all, in August 1995, one of the initial founders of this movement, Abdul Halil, was arrested, together with two other Uyghurs.¹⁸⁰ This event provoked a protest demonstration by young Uyghurs in Gulca the next day. Soon after, the Chinese authorities decided to ban the *meshreps*. However, Uyghurs continued activities of *meshrep* secretly, accompanied by increasing arbitrary arrests over the following 18 months. Uyghur discontents apparently grew with government repression.

3.2.3. Gulca uprising

There was an incident that resulted with Gulca uprising on 4 February 1997. In that time, police chased two students whom they suspected of instructing young people with religious radicalism in a *meshrep*. However, they were arrested at a mosque and other worshippers in there tried to prevent the men being taken away. As a result, this fighting brought about a large-scale riot in the historical context of Uyghur secessionism.¹⁸¹ According to the accounts of some other Uyghurs, the police had murdered three of arrested 30 women who came together to read *Kur'an* and in the end, their bodies dumped on the street.¹⁸² Next day, a series of protests began in Gulca, as over 100 Uyghur students waving the blue Eastern Turkistan Republic flags and seeking an end to China's rule in Eastern Turkistan were fired by police.¹⁸³ This was the beginning of the Gulca incident.

<http://uyghuramerican.org/articles/1411/1/Remembering-the-Ghulja-Massacre/index.html> (accessed April 3, 2008)

¹⁷⁹ For more information about *Meshrep*, see Jay Dautcher, *Folklore and Identity in a Uighut Community in Xinjiang, China*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Berkley. 2000

¹⁸⁰ Rahman, p.57.

¹⁸¹ Amnesty International, "People's Republic of China: Gross Violation of Human Rights in the Uighur Autonomous Region," April 21, 1999, p.19.

<http://archive.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA170181999?open&of=ENG-CHN> (accessed January 13, 2008).

¹⁸² Nazmiye, p.2.

¹⁸³ Rudelson, p.170.

The Gulca demonstration in 1997 was also influenced by a series of incidents during the holy month of ramadan.¹⁸⁴ On 5 February, the demonstration started peacefully at nine o'clock in the morning.¹⁸⁵ Several hundred young Uyghurs, including women and children, took to the streets of Gulca, shouting religious slogans and calling for equal treatment for Uyghurs. According to an eyewitness, demonstrators were unarmed and peaceful at that time. However, two hours later Armed Police units escorted by trained dogs stopped the demonstrators.¹⁸⁶ As a result, Uyghur demonstrators were blocked by the Security Forces, including units of the People's Armed Police and Riot Police. They used tear gas as well as water cannon to break up the demonstration and violent clashes started to occur as news spread and more Uyghur people came out into the streets in various parts of the city. In that time, some police officers reportedly opened fire into the crowd.¹⁸⁷ The police then detained hundreds of people, who were loaded into trucks and taken to Yining City Police Detention Centre, also known as *Yengi Hayat* (New Life) Prison.¹⁸⁸

Including children and women, the Chinese soldiers hosed these Uyghur detainees with icy cold water in the open-air, and kept them there wet for some hours in 30 degrees below zero.¹⁸⁹ It was said that one of the detainees, a young man whose name was Abdul Gani, was taken away by the Chinese soldiers when he tried to question about their actions, and had dog set on him.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore, in the

¹⁸⁴ "Violence in Muslim Area In Western China Kills 2," *New York Times*, February 26, 1997, p.2. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9506E6D81731F935A15751C0A961958260> (accessed January 12, 2008)

¹⁸⁵ Rahman, p.57.

¹⁸⁶ "China: No Justice for the victims of the 1997 crackdown in Gulja (Yining)," *Amnesty International News*, 4 February 2003, p.3.

p.2. http://amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=14333 (accessed March 12, 2008)

¹⁸⁷ "China: No Justice for the victims of the 1997 crackdown in Gulja (Yining)," p.2.

¹⁸⁸ "China: Remembering the victims of police brutality in Gulja, Xinjiang on 5-6 February 1997," *Amnesty International Public Statement*, February 4, 2005, p.1.

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/005/2005> (accessed March 4 2008)

¹⁸⁹ Nazmiye, p.3.

¹⁹⁰ Rahman, p.57.

following days, those among the detainees who were suffering from severe frostbite were taken to hospital, and there some had to have their feet, fingers or hands amputated. This was not the end of the Gulca incident.

In the afternoon of 5 February, a second demonstration began by friends and relatives of those who had been detained in the morning. This time, some of the protesters were carrying stones and threw them at the police. The police reportedly beat the protesters with large wooden clubs over one metre long.¹⁹¹ Although several hundred demonstrators and bystanders were arrested the same day, the protests continued sporadically for two days, spreading to the suburbs.¹⁹²

By 6 February, a large number of anti-riot squads and troops had been brought into the Gulca city. They reportedly went through the streets arresting and beating Uyghurs, including children. Moreover, they opened fire on protesters and bystanders. Soon after, more troops were brought into the city and, as a result, the Gulca city was sealed off for two weeks, being imposed curfew.¹⁹³

3.2.4. Afterward

Although it is said that 196 Uyghurs were killed, nearly 3,500 arrested and 1,000 wounded during this incident, the Chinese official death toll of the Gulca uprising was noted as only five civilians and four police officers.¹⁹⁴ Following these riots, more than ten anti-Chinese demonstrations took place in Gulca, one involving more than 5,000 Uyghurs.¹⁹⁵ Furthermore, disturbances were continued by a series of bomb attacks. Influenced by deaths of Uyghurs in Gulca, on February 12 Uyghur

¹⁹¹ James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang*, (New York: Columbia University, 2007), p.332

¹⁹² Rahman, p.57.

¹⁹³ Johnson, pp.188-189.

¹⁹⁴ Nazmiye, p.2., Johnson, p.188 and Rudelson, p.171.

¹⁹⁵ Rudelson, p.171.

secessionists first derailed a train filled primarily with ethnic Han immigrants traveling from Lanzhou to Urumqi. Then on February 25, they bombed three Urumqi buses to coincide with the state funeral for Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping. In this incident, as many as 23 were killed and 74 injured.¹⁹⁶ Ten days later, in the first attack on China's capital, Uyghur secessionists also exploded a pipe bomb in a bus in Beijing's busiest shopping district, Xidan.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, the following week, Uyghur secessionists targeted the Chinese military, bombing an installation in south of Eastern Turkistan. Two exiled Uyghur groups in Kazakhstan; the United National Revolutionary Front¹⁹⁸ and the Organization for Eastern Turkistan Freedom,¹⁹⁹ have claimed responsibility for most of the bombings and warn that more bombings will come until independence of Eastern Turkistan is achieved.²⁰⁰

The Chinese regime also strongly responded to attacks of radical Uyghurs by controlling religious activities and sending more officials to supervise the condition of Eastern Turkistan.²⁰¹ In the process, Chinese authorities dispatched 17,000 officials to villages, work units, and military farms to reinforce propaganda and education work and to prevent the spread of such protests.²⁰² As a result, it is reported that 1,600 Uyghurs were disappeared, although some of them had fled to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan across the border.²⁰³ There were lingering concerns about the loyalty of local Uyghur officials, and 260 local Uyghur officials who were

¹⁹⁶ Rudelson, p.170.

¹⁹⁷ Jiang An, 'Xinjiang a Danger Zone.' *Singapore Straits Times*, Financial Times Asia Intelligence Wire, 29 March 1997, p.1.

¹⁹⁸ UNRF changed its name into United Revolutionary Front Eastern Turkistan (URFET) in 1997 and switched to a policy of armed resistance to Chinese "oppression."

¹⁹⁹ Turkey-based Organization for Eastern Turkistan Freedom is held responsible for numerous attacks against Chinese interests at home and abroad.

²⁰⁰ Rudelson, p.171.

²⁰¹ Nazmiye, p.3.

²⁰² Eric Hyer, "China's Policy towards Uighur Nationalism," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 26(1), (2006), pp.78-79.

²⁰³ Nazmiye, p.3.

suspected as sympathizers of the independence movement were fired.²⁰⁴ The unofficial reports explain that the number of arrests during two weeks after Gulca uprising vary from 3,000 to over 5,000.²⁰⁵ According to the personal account of Rebiya Kadeer²⁰⁶ (1947-), there were even the people who did not participate in the demonstration.²⁰⁷

Related to the condition of the detention during the Gulca uprising, many sources also have reported that as almost all the centers of detention in Gulca city were full. Therefore, some of those arrested were taken to jails outside the city or held to improvised places of detention.²⁰⁸ A large number of the Uyghur traders in the city were also reportedly detained during the week after the Gulca incident, and many of them were robbed by the Chinese soldiers. Those held were not only relatives and friends of people arrested during the protests but also anyone suspected of being a nationalist sympathizer. Most of those detained were held for several weeks or months, and many were even reportedly tortured. Their relatives had to give huge sums of money to the police officers in order to secure their release. Finally, on June 26, 1997 the Public Security Bureau of Gulca formally issued an announcement related to the Gulca uprising and it stated that people who were hiding and protecting criminals were committing a crime and its penalty was death.²⁰⁹ The Gulca uprising and its oppression lead to a new wave of bombings and repression that maintained from 1998 to 2000 and has continued until today to some extent.

²⁰⁴ Hyer, p.78.

²⁰⁵ Rahman, p.57.

²⁰⁶ She is the most leading Uyghur human rights activist and former prisoner at the Chinese prisons. She was also nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 and in November 2006, she was elected the president of the World Uyghur Congress in Munich. Now she lives in exile in the U.S.

²⁰⁷ People's Republic of China, "Rebiya Kadeer's personal account of Ghulja after the massacre on 5 February 1997," *Amnesty International* AI Index: ASA 17/ 001/ 2007, p.3

²⁰⁸ Rahman, p.57.

²⁰⁹ Rahman, p.58.

3.2.5. Human Rights Issue and Unjustification of Chinese government

Gulca incident has a significance on the ground of not only its domestic inequality problem, but also international human rights issues. To date, the Chinese authorities did not yet address the impunity surrounding this incident and raises serious questions about China's commitment to 'respect and protect human rights' as incorporated into the Constitution in recent year. According to the testimonies gathered by Amnesty International, after being arrested in link with the Gulca demonstration, at least two Uyghurs died in custody as a result of torture by Chinese government.

Information of Amnesty International related to this two Uyghurs and those who are believed to remain in prison can be helpful to understand the reality of human rights issues in the Uyghur secessionism.

“1.Salam Kari, a young man who had formed a Uyghur football team in Ghulja in the 1990s, was arrested in May 1997 by the February protests. A few days later, he was dead. His body reportedly showed marks of torture. The police reportedly argued that he had committed suicide in prison....

2.Abdulhelil, a founder of the *meshreps*, died in custody on 17 October 2000, because of repeated torture and beatings. The authorities initially denied his death, however, later claimed that he died of a heart failure after contracting a respiratory inflammation and myocarditis in prison....

3.Ablat Patar, a surgeon from Ghulja military hospital, accused of giving medical treatment to 'nationalist separatists.' Unofficial sources suggest that he may be held in *Yengi Hayat* Prison in Ghulja. Further details about current legal status remain unknown....

4. Iminjan, a 28-year-old teacher, reportedly detained during the Ghulja protests in 1997 and tortured in detention. This includes being made to stand barefoot in the snow and having cold water poured on him, causing brutal frostbite of both feet. He was accused of 'illegal religious activities' in 1998. His current status is unknown....

5. Kasim Haji, Hamit Mejit and Shevket Sakhal (or Shevket Tursun), three businessmen arrested in March or April 1997 because of passing information about the Ghulja protests to a group of foreign journalists. Unconfirmed

reports suggest they were sentenced to 15 or 18 years in prison, however, their current conditions remain unknown...”²¹⁰

All these information implicates that the Chinese response to the Gulca uprising includes not only the violation of human rights but also the absence of justification.

Meanwhile, various official Chinese reports are not consistent on the reasons and nature of Gulca uprising, ranging from denials that it happened to blaming it on religious factors and Uyghur secessionists went on stirring up holy war.²¹¹ Xinjiang Regional Party Secretary, Wang Lequan, also referred to the “Ili February 5th beating, smashing, looting disturbance incident” in an internal speech in 1999.²¹² Furthermore, in 2002, White Paper of the PRC on terrorism went a step further and regarded the incident as a “serious riot... perpetrated by the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Party of Allah and some other terrorist organizations,” saying that from 5th to 8th February terrorists killed seven innocent people, injured 200, destroyed thirty vehicles and burned two houses.²¹³ All these facts indicates that there are not enough understanding about the nature of the Uyghur problems among Chinese authorities and even the exact legitimacy in the Chinese policies for managing to this Uyghur uprising.

²¹⁰ “China: No Justice for the victims of the 1997 crackdown in Ghulja (Yining),” *Amnesty International News*, February 4, 2003, http://amnesty.org.uk/news_details.asp?NewsID=14333 (accessed April 1, 2008), p.12.

²¹¹ Jay Dautcher, “Reading Out of Print: Popular Culture and Protest on China’s Western Frontier,” in Timothy Weston and Lionel Jensen, eds., *China Beyond the Headlines*, (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), p.278.

²¹² Wang Lequan, 1999, ‘Secretary Wang Lequan’s Address to the Khotan District Stability Work Conference’ (Wang Lequan shuji zai Hetian diqu wending gongquo hurishang de jianghua), 27 August 1999, p.8. Quoted in *The World Uyghur Network News*, No.59, October, 1, 1997. <http://www.uygur.org/enorg/wunn97/wunn100197.htm> (accessed March 12, 2008).

²¹³ PRC State Council Information Office 2002, “‘East Turkistan’ Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity,” 21 January 2002, section headed ‘Organizing disturbances and riots and creating an atmosphere of terror.’ <http://www.chinaembassy.bg/eng/dtxw/t131736.htm> (accessed January 3, 2008).

3.2.6. Conclusion

Since the 1990s, with the political and economic changes in the domestic and international situation, the complexity and seriousness of political, social, and ethnic troubles have also been intensified, and inevitably, there have been increased political incidents in the PRC. The most important outcome of the Uyghur uprisings in 1990s was the increasing scale, that is, they have been transformed from individual cases to a well-organized collective movement.

The main political objectives of all these uprisings include similar nature and characteristics. The first is obviously to oppose Chinese communist rule, which may be a direct evidence of a mismanagement of the ethnic minority policies in Eastern Turkistan. Secondly, the uprisings try to revive an independent state and the demolition of the Chinese political ruling system in Eastern Turkistan. Thirdly, some of the uprisings were initiated with peaceful claims, such as equal rights for Uyghurs, religious freedom and true autonomy. However, none of the Uyghur claims has been responded by Chinese government properly. There were only series of suppressions of the collective movement and then severe punishment of individuals after the movement was crushed.

Recently, some Uyghur expatriates in Europe have renewed the Uyghur movement under the banner of “self-determination.”²¹⁴ In other words, they want this banner to be integrated into the political ideology of the Uyghur secessionist movement in Eastern Turkistan through peaceful methods. Related to Uyghur secessionist movement, the Chinese government also has sufficient reason to claim that the Uyghur secessionist movement in Eastern Turkistan has an international

²¹⁴ Rahman, p.59.

backing as Uyghur dissidents are fleeing from Eastern Turkistan and joining Uyghur expatriate organizations abroad.

In fact, the Uyghur uprisings do not constitute for the moment a real and direct threat to Chinese control over Eastern Turkistan. However, the increasing number of political incidents in the 1990s had a great negative influence on the fragile composition of Eastern Turkistan's society. As a result, these Uyghur uprisings, not only in quantity, but also in quality forced the Chinese government to reconsider its ethnic minority policies imposed on local populations of Eastern Turkistan. In this sense, as the representative incidents of 1990s, uprisings in the Barin and the Gulca have a major significance in the history of Uyghur secessionism.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEMPORARY UYGHUR SECESSIONISM IN EASTERN TURKISTAN

- Impact of 9/11, 2001

4.1 Before 9/11

The initial Chinese approach to Uyghur secessionism in Eastern Turkistan had been to minimize it by blaming only small core groups of secessionists backed by foreign forces. In the late 1990s, Chinese officials in Eastern Turkistan began formally discussing the violence in the region. For example, in March of 1999, Eastern Turkistan governor, Abdulahat Abdurishit (an Uyghur) claimed openly that there had been thousands of explosions, assassinations and other incidents in the 1990s.²¹⁵ However, Chinese officials moderated their statements relating to the Uyghur problems in the early 2000s, perhaps because of the impact of publicity on the development of Eastern Turkistan under the Great Development campaign.²¹⁶ The Eastern Turkistan Party Secretary, Wang Lequan, together with Abdulahat Andurishit even proclaimed that the situation in Eastern Turkistan was “better than

²¹⁵ “Governor Says Xinjiang Suffering Separatist Violence,” *Agence France Presse* (Hong Kong), March 11, 1999, FBIS-CHI-1999-0311.

²¹⁶ Millward, p.339

ever in history” and that “society is stable and people are living and working in peace and contentment.”²¹⁷

However, since the independence of Central Asian (western Turkistan) states, Chinese authorities have worried that these states would support Uyghur secessionism because of their close cultural and linguistic ties with the Uyghur people. Thus, the Chinese government considered more than one million Uyghurs living in these countries as a threat, fearing that these people might help Uyghurs in Eastern Turkistan to resist Chinese rule in what they regard their traditional homeland.²¹⁸

In 1996, the PRC, Russia and three newly independent Central Asian states (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) created the Shanghai Five²¹⁹ to resolve border issues after the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was the first transnational organization where the Chinese government played an important role in the direct and indirect control over the Uyghur secessionist movement.²²⁰ With the addition of Uzbekistan in 2001, the Shanghai Five became the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) which has focused mainly on China's security issues of “terrorism, separatism and extremism”.²²¹ The SCO has allowed China to use political, diplomatic and economic power to oppress Uyghur secessionism in Eastern

²¹⁷ Bao Lisheng, ‘Chinese Officials Say Not Much Terrorism in Xinjiang,’ *Da Gong Bao*, September 2, 2001.

²¹⁸ Alim Seytoff, “East Turkestan: SCO Suppression Exercise,” *Unrepresented Nations and Peoples organization*, August 12, 2007, <http://www.unpo.org/content/view/7065/236> (accessed April 14, 2008), p.2.

²¹⁹ The Shanghai Five was originally created April 26, 1996 with the signing of the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions in Shanghai by the heads of states of Kazakhstan, the People’s Republic of China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan. April 24, 1997 the same countries signed the Treaty on Reduction of Military Forces in Border Regions in a meeting in Moscow. Subsequent annual summits of the Shanghai Five group occurred in Almaty in 1998, in Bishkek in 1999, and in Dushanbe in 2000. For more information, see official SCO website, <http://www.sectsco.org/> (accessed April 12, 2008)

²²⁰ Ekrem Erkin, “Çin’in Doğu Türkistan Bağımsızlık Hareketine Yönelik Politikası: 11 Eylül Öncesi ve Sonrası-1. Bölüm,” *Stratejik Analiz*, Sayı 20, Aralık 2002, pp.75-76

²²¹ Bao Lisheng, “Three Evil Forces Threatening Xinjiang’s Stability-Interviewing Pan Zhiping, Director of the Central Asia Research Institute of Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences,” *Ta Kung Pao*, August 10, 2001, in FBIS-CHI-2001-0810.

Turkistan. The “Peace Mission 2007”²²² indicates that this is intended to turn the SCO into a military and political alliance to repress the Uyghur people's legitimate democratic and human-rights demands.

4.2 After 9/11

Since its declaration of “War on Terror” in late 2001, the U.S. government has expressed unprecedented interest in the religious radicalism in Eastern Turkistan through the media. Moreover, after the events of 9/11, developments in the relations between the U.S. and the PRC have allowed the PRC to deal with the problem of Uyghur secessionism with the same methods employed by the Bush administration. Thus, the Chinese government has justified severe measures in its anti-separatist campaign and continuous crackdown on not only religion, but also other aspects of life for the Uyghur by virtue of the political slogan of hegemonic power.

Actually, the al-Qaeda attacks of 9/11 changed the grounds underlying both China's new diplomatic position in the region and anti-terrorism policies. After 9/11, the Chinese government started to consider this new international situation carefully. Although the war in Afghanistan played an important role in eliminating the Taliban and guerilla camps that were training Uyghurs, it also placed the U.S. military in the range of the Chinese influence. In fact, in preparing for the invasion of Afghanistan, the U.S. made separate agreements with Central Asian countries for military bases and landing rights.²²³ In the end, in responding to 9/11, Chinese authorities started to

²²² Peace Mission 2007 was for the PRC a move toward defenses against several types of threat. For more information about this, see Jason Kelly, “Anti-Terrorism With Chinese Characteristics: Peace Mission 2007 in Context,” *Jamestown Foundation*, China Brief, Volume 7, Issue 20, October 31, 2007, <http://uyghuramerican.org/articles/1194/1/Anti-Terrorism-with-Chinese-Characteristics-Peace-Mission-2007-in-Context/index.html> (accessed April 12, 2008)

²²³ Millward, p.338.

concentrate on the Uyghur problem, having the chance to turn the official PRC position on Uyghur secessionism on its head.

In fact, a paper entitled “‘Eastern Turkistan’ Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity” which was released by the PRC State Council Information Office in late January 2002 includes the new approach of Chinese government. First, while the Chinese government used neither “Eastern Turkistan” nor “terrorism” in earlier documents, it started not only to regard Uyghur secessionists as what it now called “Eastern Turkistan terrorists” but also to connect them to the international terrorists and groups, such as Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda.²²⁴ Second, by virtue of using the general terminology ‘Eastern Turkistan forces,’ this paper proposes that all terrorist activities and deaths in the 1990s were led by a unified single terrorist organization, although there is no direct evidence to support this statement.²²⁵

Despite the renewed oppressive attitude of the Chinese government, the Uyghur secessionist movement has been continuing both inside and outside Eastern Turkistan. In particular, Rebiya Kadeer, who was a prominent Uyghur businesswoman, is regarded as the most notable Uyghur activist in contemporary Uyghur secessionism. In August 1999, Kadeer was detained on her way to meet a visiting delegation from the U.S. Congressional Research Service to complain about political prisoners in Eastern Turkistan. She spent seven years in prison on charges of “leaking state secrets.”²²⁶ However, the definition of state secrets in the law of PRC was very vague. Meanwhile, in 2004 she won the Rafto Prize for Human Rights and in 2006, she was nominated by the Swedish parliamentarian Annelie Enochson for

²²⁴ Millward, p.339.

²²⁵ PRC State Council Information Office 2002, “‘East Turkistan’ Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity,” 21 January 2002, section headed ‘Organizing disturbances and riots and creating an atmosphere of terror.’ <http://www.chinaembassy.bg/eng/dtxw/t131736.htm> (accessed January 3, 2008).

²²⁶ “Özgürlüğünü arayan Kadın.” *Kelebek, Hürriyetim*, August 8, 2000, <http://webarsiv.hurriyet.com.tr/2000/08/28/235681.asp> (accessed March 14, 2008)

the Nobel Peace Prize.²²⁷ Regarding her nomination, Annelie Enochson stated, “Rebiya Kadeer champions the rights of Western China's Uighur ethnic group and is one of China's most prominent advocates of women's rights... She has also used her resources as founder and director of a large trading company in northwestern China to provide fellow Uyghurs with training and employment.”²²⁸ On June 5, 2007 at a conference on democracy and security held in Prague, Rebiya Kadeer met privately with President of the U.S., George W. Bush and Mrs. Bush. In his speech, President Bush said about her,

“Another dissident I will meet with here is Rebiya Kadeer, whose sons have been jailed in what we believe is an act of retaliation for her human rights activities. The talent of men and women like Rebiya is the greatest resource of their nations—far more valuable than the weapons of their army or oil under the ground. So America calls on every nation that stifles dissent to end its repression, trust its people and grant its citizens the freedom they deserve.”²²⁹

The comments of Enochson and Bush demonstrate well Rebiya Kadeer's valuable career and her significance in Uyghur secessionism. Currently, as the president of the World Uyghur Congress by its second General Assembly meeting held in 2006 she is trying to seek for the wishes of Uyghur people.²³⁰ In contemporary times, not only Rebiya Kadeer, but also other representative Uyghur activists play significant roles as symbols of motivation for the independence of Eastern Turkistan and of protection of Uyghur human rights.

²²⁷ Mehmet Emin Batur, “Doğu Türkistanlılar “Azınlık Millet” Değildir,” *İstiklal Gazetesi*, 27. Sayı, , http://www.istiklalgazetesi.com.tr/new_page_9.htm (accessed April 14, 2008)

²²⁸ “Ms. Rebiya Kadeer thankful for Nobel nomination; China issues unfounded allegations.” *Uyghur Human Rights Project*, September 13, 2006, <http://uhrp.org/articles/262/1/Ms-Rebiya-Kadeer-thankful-for-Nobel-nomination-China-issues-unfounded-allegations/Ms-Rebiya-Kadeer-thankful-for-Nobel-nomination-China-issues-unfounded-allegations.html> (accessed April 14, 2008)

²²⁹ “President Bush Visits Prague, Czech Republic, Discusses Freedom,” *The White House*, June 5, 2007, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/06/20070605-8.html> (accessed April 14, 2008)

²³⁰ “The World Uyghur Congress Successfully Concludes Its Second Assembly.” Press Releases of the *World Uyghur Congress*, November 28, 2006, <http://www.uyghurcongress.org/En/PressRelease.asp?ItemID=1164714960&mid=1096144499> (accessed April 20, 2008)

In this chapter, the situation of contemporary Uyghur secessionism will be examined with special consideration of the significance of 9/11 in the international context. As a turning point, 9/11 has had a great influence on the contemporary Eastern Turkistan problem. In other words, contemporary Uyghur secessionism has entered a new phase as a world issue, attracting international attention related not only to human rights issues but also to religious radicalism in the region. In the 21st century, as one of the most representative and formal activities of Uyghur secessionism, the Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile (ETGE) in the U.S. has played a leading role in seeking peaceful independence of Eastern Turkistan through a political struggle. Although this government has failed to attract sufficient international attention and support, it has symbolic meaning in that the political stage for the Uyghurs to present Eastern Turkistan issues to international society was opened. Moreover, examining Uyghur secessionist activities in cyberspace and conceptualizing religious radicalism will also be helpful in understanding the changed facets of conflict between Eastern Turkistan and the PRC today.

4.2.1 Religious Radicalism

4.2.1.1. Background

As one of the important characteristics of contemporary Eastern Turkistani secessionism, the aspect of religious radicalism has been increased both at home and abroad under the banner of “fighting Islamic jihad (holy war).”²³¹ According to a Chinese report in 1999, Eastern Turkistan had 23,000 officially registered mosques

²³¹ Yumo, p.14.

(in 1999), compared to 2,000 in 1978.²³² This number has been linked by the moderate religious policy of Chinese government.

In fact, Uyghurs have used a variety of methods to carry out Uyghur secessionism through religion in Eastern Turkistan. They produced various religious books and tapes which promoted the Uyghur secessionist movement and also held religious seminars. Religious activities of the Uyghurs in foreign countries were somehow related to the radical aspects of Uyghur secessionism. In other words, the religious radicalism which aims using jihad as an ideological weapon has called all the Muslims of the world to unite has influenced Uyghur secessionism in Eastern Turkistan as well.

One Chinese report explains the situation of the religious radicalism in Eastern Turkistan as follows:

They attacked the ethnic and religion policy of Party, and strongly promoted ethnic animosity and religious fanaticism and “Islamic Jihad,” openly called for armed counter-revolutionary riot and establishment of an independent “Eastern Turkistan Republic” with the support of foreign forces. A series of ethnic separatism incidents that occurred since the peaceful liberation Xinjiang, the uncovered counter-revolutionary organizations such as “Eastern Turkistan People’s Revolutionary Party,” “Eastern Turkistan Islamic Party” and “Eastern Turkistan Youth Party,” and seek to split out Xinjiang from our motherland...It has become a mental opium, mental terror and mental shackle for people, but a mental weapon for the small number of ethnic separatists.²³³

As seen in the quotation, Chinese authorities has perceived a consolidation of fundamentalist and militant Islam in Eastern Turkistan and have often warned about the threat of Uyghur secessionism and religious radicalism.²³⁴ All these statements

²³² Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, *White Paper on National Minorities Policy and Its Practice in China*, September 1999.

²³³ Yumo, p.10.

²³⁴ June Teufel Dreyer, “China’s Islamic Challenge.” *China Brief* 1, no. 6, September 27, 2001 and Ahmad Lutfi, “China’s Islamic Awakening.” *China Brief* 4, no. 10, May 13, 2004.

reflect the Chinese perspective that the religious radicalism and the Uyghur secessionist movement are deeply interdependent and even identical.

Actually, after Deng Xiaoping came to power, *hajj* (pilgrimage) missions to Mecca were resumed in October 1979, the Chinese government essentially lost its control over religion in Eastern Turkistan.²³⁵ Many thousands of Eastern Turkistan Muslims started returning from Mecca with religious resources such as video cassettes and literature which encouraged religious radicalism. Moreover, in the relatively free political atmosphere of the 1980s, various traditional religious activities were revived. Since then, the Uyghurs have tried to continue expanding religious activities through the *Meshrep* meetings where religious issues are discussed publicly as well.²³⁶ Similarly, foreign Muslims were allowed to visit Eastern Turkistan. Such a religious revival atmosphere in Eastern Turkistan not only resulted in the strengthening of thoughts about secessionism and autonomy but also provided the ideological foothold for aspects of religious extremism.

4.2.1.2. Cases of Religious Radicalism

Despite its limited scale, some Uyghurs inside and outside of Eastern Turkistan have also emphasized the importance of studying religion and the expansion of religion's influence among Uyghur youth. Domestic radical groups, the Uyghurstan Liberation Front and the United National Revolutionary Front of Eastern Turkistan (UNRF) were claimed to be joined in a jihad in Eastern Turkistan.²³⁷ According to the same source, the UNRF announced that they had

²³⁵ Yitzhak Shichor, "Blow Up: Internal and External Challenges of Uyghur Separatism and Islamic Radicalism to Chinese Rule in Xinjiang," *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, Vol.32, No 2, Summer 2005, p.122.

²³⁶ Yitzhak Shichor, p.122.

²³⁷ Davis and Aizian, p.52.

killed an imam of a mosque in Kaşgar in 1996 because of his pro-China attitude.²³⁸ This instance reveals fundamentalist characteristics of some parts of the Uyghur secessionist movement.

Outside influences on Uyghur religious radicalism, especially from countries with a radical Islamic orientation, played an important role in promoting the radical aspects of religion in Eastern Turkistan. For example, the *Taliban* of Afghanistan, the *Wahhabi* movement in Saudi Arabia and the *Tableeghi Jamaat* based in Pakistan all encouraged religious fundamentalism in the region.²³⁹ Some Uyghurs has been claimed to have religious training in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and other Central Asian states to a lesser extent.²⁴⁰ There were also reports claiming that a large amount of weapons have been sent from Afghanistan to the border regions of Pakistan, Kashmir, and Tajikistan.²⁴¹

As one of the most important radical groups which has influenced and recruited Uyghurs, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) had a direct connection in Eastern Turkistan with the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM).²⁴² The goal of IMU was expanded from the establishment of an Islamic state in Uzbekistan to the creation of an Islamic state for all of Western and Eastern Turkistan after changing its name to the Islamic Party of Turkistan in 2001.²⁴³ According to an American report, Uyghurs were found at several camps in Afghanistan after the war in 2001.²⁴⁴

Meanwhile, Pakistan seems to reduce her support to the unrest in Eastern Turkistan by virtue of her national concerns on the security relationship with

²³⁸ Davis and Aizian, p.52.

²³⁹ Hyer, p.81.

²⁴⁰ Johnson, p.190

²⁴¹ Paul, p.7.

²⁴² Davis and Aizian, p.54.

²⁴³ Davis and Aizian, p.54.

²⁴⁴ S. Trough, "China's Pressure on the Uyghurs," *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst*, February 1, 2003, p.3.

Chinese government.²⁴⁵ According to the Eastern Turkistan Information Center on December 2, 2000, “two Uyghur Community Centers which had provided shelters for new Uyghur immigrants in Pakistan for decades were closed, Kaşgar Center on December 1 and Khotan Center on December 2, by Pakistani Army. Hundreds of Uyghurs who had been living in those centers were evicted by Pakistani soldiers.”²⁴⁶ Furthermore, joint military exercises between Pakistan and the PRC in Eastern Turkistan in August 2004 indicated that the Pakistani government had changed its political position drastically.²⁴⁷

4.2.1.3. Response of Chinese Government

Sensing a threat to increased religious unity, the Chinese government responded by restricting the contacts between Eastern Turkistan and its neighboring countries. As one of the measures taken against the radical religious aspect in the Uyghur secessionism, the Chinese government tried to develop ties with neighboring states to restrict the operations of Islamic groups. For example, in April 1996, Jiang Zemin, the Chinese President, signed an agreement with his counterparts from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan that included calls to oppose the religious fundamentalism in Eastern Turkistan.²⁴⁸ Actually, according to a Chinese report in 2002, the Chinese government was overtly trying to connect Eastern Turkistan secessionism with bin Laden and other terrorist networks;

The “East Turkistan Islamic Movement” headed by Hasan Mahsum is supported and directed by bin Laden. Since the formation of the “East Turkistan Islamic Movement,” bin Laden has schemed with the heads of the Central and West Asian terrorist organizations many times to help the “East

²⁴⁵ Hyer, p.81.

²⁴⁶ “Pakistan Killed 19 Uyghurs,” *Eastern Turkistan Information Center*, December 2, 2000, p.1.

²⁴⁷ Davis and Aizian, p.54

²⁴⁸ Paul, p.7.

Turkistan” terrorist forces in Xinjiang launch a “holy war,” with the aim of setting up a theocratic “Islam state” in Xinjiang.”²⁴⁹

As a response Hasan Mahsum was stating that although some individuals may have been drawn to the Taliban, there were no organizational connections and they did not receive any funds from al-Qaeda during a telephone interview with Radio Free Asia.²⁵⁰

Although there is no question about the existence of religious radicalism in Eastern Turkistan, the crucial problem is the fact that it is difficult to identify the genuine radicals among a disaffected population—to differentiate the dissident from the radical activist. The Chinese media and government authorities do not try to explain the cause of the Uyghur unrest, but focusing only on extremist behaviors among various groups standing for secession. Therefore, it is necessary to define religious radicalism and its real impact and dimensions.

4.2.1.4. Reality of Religious Radicalism

Currently, “foreign countries’ support” for religious radicalism has a tendency of demise in the region. In other words, the increased Chinese pressures on Islamabad as well as the U.S intervention in Afghanistan reduced the extent of fundamentalism among Uyghurs. Even security checks at the Eastern Turkistan border gates are tightly conducted.²⁵¹ Furthermore, it is difficult to develop a radical influence in the region due to the tight Chinese control over religion. First, the Chinese government accepted only religious material published by the PRC’s

²⁴⁹ “East Turkistan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity,” *Beijing Review*, Vol. 45, Issue 5, (2002)

²⁵⁰ Erik Eckholm “ U.S. Labeling of Group in China as Terrorist Is Criticized,” *The New York Times*, September 13, 2002, p.2.
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9902E3DC1031F930A2575AC0A9649C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=2> (accessed March 12, 2008)

²⁵¹ Shichor, p.129.

Religious Affairs Bureau.²⁵² Another example of restrictions on religious freedoms is that there is only one religious school that trains Muslim clergymen in Eastern Turkistan, ‘the Xinjiang Islamic Religion Institute’ in Urumçi. Not only its curriculum but also the appointments of Muslim clerics are determined by the China Islamic Association, which is an official institution under state administration.²⁵³ *Hajj* pilgrimage was tightly controlled by the Chinese government and was permitted only for Uyghurs over 50 years of age.²⁵⁴ Actually, by the early 1990s, mosque construction and renovation were severely limited; in addition, religious education and the public broadcasting of sermons outside mosques were banned.²⁵⁵ All these situations demonstrate the reality of oppression by the Chinese government in Eastern Turkistan.

In sum, although the PRC’s official documents claim that religious radicalism in Eastern Turkistan has been increased, in fact, the role of Islam in the region has been exaggerated by the Chinese political oppression. “The struggle of the Chinese government against religious radicalism” has been used to justify human rights violations against Uyghurs’ non-violent political, religious, and cultural activities. Yitzhak Shichor explains the reasons of why the Chinese government has frequently exaggerated the Uyghur religious radicalism: First, the Chinese government would like to “preempt a likely deterioration in the ethno-religious power balance” in Eastern Turkistan.²⁵⁶ Second, the perception of religious radicalism can be used to justify and legitimize a further oppression campaign over

²⁵² Paul, p.8.

²⁵³ Shichor, p.128.

²⁵⁴ Paul, p.8.

²⁵⁵ Paul, p.8.

²⁵⁶ Yitzhak Shichor, “Fact and Fiction A Chinese Documentary on Eastern Turkestan Terrorism,” *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Silk Road Studies Program. China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly*, Volume 4, No.2(2006) p.107

Eastern Turkistan.²⁵⁷ Last, by virtue of demonstrating connection between the Uyghur secessionist movement and religious radicalism as a threat in connection with global “terrorism,” the PRC can gain potential foreign supporters such as the U.S. and the Central Asian Republics.²⁵⁸ In contemporary Uyghur secessionism, religion is regarded as one of the major components of Uyghur identity rather than an absolutely dominant factor in the movement. Therefore, it is necessary to remember the fact that Islam should not be considered as a source of unrest but as a method for the expression of increased social and political frustration from the Chinese rule.

4.2.2 Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile

4.2.2.1. Formation of Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile

As one of the most significant events in contemporary Uyghur history, the Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile (ETGE) was started with the desire of the independence of Eastern Turkistan. Émigrés from Eastern Turkistan established this “government” on September 14, 2004 in Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. with the supports of Eastern Turkistan Solidarity Foundation and Eastern Turkistan National Congress.²⁵⁹ Anwar Yusuf Turani, who was the Prime Minister of the government said, “The Eastern Turkistan people ask to control their own fate,”²⁶⁰ in a statement posted on the internet. According to his statement, the main purpose of this government is “to seek to join the international community of nations in openness and peace,” and the new government represented not only Uyghurs, but also other

²⁵⁷ Yitzhak Shichor, p.108

²⁵⁸ Yitzhak Shichor, p.108

²⁵⁹ The individual *e-mail interview* with İsmail Cengiz in May 22, 2008

²⁶⁰ “Uighur Form Govt-in Exile,” *Arab News*, September 18, 2004, <http://www.arabnews.com/?page=4§ion=0&article=51635&d=18&m=9&y=2004&pix=world.jpg&category=World> (accessed May 1, 2008)

minorities such as the Kazakhs and the Kyrgyz who inhabit in Eastern Turkistan.²⁶¹

ETGE press releases also included the goals of government as follows:

The Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile seeks to tell the world about Eastern Turkistan and to raise the cause of freedom and independence by, among other things, providing information to U.S. government officials and policy-makers, developing contacts with the press, fostering alliances with like-minded groups and individuals, and sharing the culture of Eastern Turkistan with all who may enjoy it.²⁶²

After about one month of the formation of ETGE, the government has issued a statement against the cultural oppression of Uyghurs by the PRC. According to its content, although the constitution of Communist Party includes ‘the party represents advanced culture,’ the so-called *Zhunghua* culture which is translated as the ‘Chinese culture’ in English is only centered on the Han Chinese culture, excluding the other 56 ethnic groups living in the PRC.²⁶³ The activities of ETGE are related not only with the Uyghur secessionist movement under the Chinese rule but also with other countries’ national issues. For example, on behalf of the Eastern Turkistan people ETGE recognized Kosovo as a sovereign and independent state and hoped peaceful future of the Kosovar people through a press release on February 18, 2008.²⁶⁴ Furthermore, ETGE continuously have informed the United Nations member states about the state of democracy and human rights issues in Eastern Turkistan and the condition of the ethnic minorities’ law in the PRC.²⁶⁵ With such activities, ETGE is trying to pursue a path for the realization of its original objectivity of full independence.

²⁶¹ “Uighur Form Govt-in Exile”

²⁶² ‘Press releases’ part of “the East Turkistan Government in Exile,” http://www.eastturkistangovernmentinexile.us/press_releases.html (accessed March 13, 2008)

²⁶³ Highlights: Uyghur-Language Media Sep-Oct 2004, *CHINA FBIS REPORT*, March 29, 2005 T21:13:19Z (Translated in English) available online at, <http://www.uygur.org/uchqun/arhip/sayilar/108/1/1.html>

²⁶⁴ ‘Press releases’ part of “the East Turkistan Government in Exile”

²⁶⁵ The individual *e-mail interview* with İsmail Cengiz in May 22, 2008.

Meanwhile, about the reason why ETGE was established and proclaimed in the U.S, İsmail Cengiz, the spokesman of ETGE, explained that “There were no other choices...Any other countries did not permit both the establishment and the proclamation of our government... Although we proclaimed ETGE in the building of parliament in Washington, we could not take direction or orientation from the U.S government... By using the expression of ‘exile,’ we wanted to remind Eastern Turkistan’s condition to the world. This is the reason.”²⁶⁶ In addition, he explained that the real aim of ETGE is clearly stated in the Article nine of the second part of the ETGE Constitution:²⁶⁷

Article 9: The essential task of the Government-in-Exile of East Turkistan is to call the entire international community-that adhere to the principles of freedom and democracy, law and order, peace and respect for human rights, as well as all international organizations including the United Nation that cooperate therewith, to support the independence movement of East Turkistan in order to prevent state terrorism under the regime of imperialist communist China against the people of East Turkistan.²⁶⁸

After the formation of ETGE, related countries’ responses to ETGE were quite negative. Inevitably, Chinese government had an immediate reaction to the establishment of ETGE. After the formal proclamation of the ETGE, various media in the PRC have developed an aggressive attitude against it. For example, state-controlled China News Service reported that the Eastern Turkistan issue was likely to play an irritant role in Sino-U.S relations in the future.²⁶⁹ Furthermore, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Kong Quan said at the regular press briefing, “We have said many times that the Eastern Turkistani organization is terrorist. We are

²⁶⁶ “İsmail Cengiz: “Doğu Türkistanda Cehennem Hayatı Yaşanmaktadır,” in the Interview section of Aylikdergi.com, <http://www.aylikdergi.com/roportajlar/Ismail%20Cengiz.html> (accessed March 13, 2008)

²⁶⁷ The individual *e-mail* interview with İsmail Cengiz in May 22, 2008

²⁶⁸ See also ‘Constitution’ part of “the East Turkistan Government in Exile,” http://www.eastturkistangovernmentinexile.us/et_constitution.html (accessed March 13, 2008)

²⁶⁹ “Uighur Form Govt-in Exile”

strongly opposed to this farce,” in 2004 and China hopes “U.S authorities will treat Beijing’s concerns seriously” related to the Eastern Turkistan.²⁷⁰ In the case of the U.S. position about this government, Chinese authorities strongly insists that “The U.S government does not recognize any Eastern Turkistan government in Exile, nor do we provide support for any such entity” in the report. However, in fact, the U.S government did mention neither the denial, nor the acceptance about the existence of ETGE formally until now.²⁷¹

4.2.2.2. Limits and the Future of ETGE

Currently, ETGE is often compared with the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), which was established on April 16, 2004 in Munich Germany. This organization’s purpose is also to protect “the right of the Uyghurs to use peaceful, nonviolent, and democratic means to determine the political future of Eastern Turkistan.”²⁷² However, some Uyghurs rejected the moderate civil society based attitude of the WUC. More politically motivated and independence oriented Uyghur groups decided to form the ETGE in Washington rather than to stay as the members of WUC.²⁷³

After the creation of ETGE, conflicting relations between ETGE and WUC have appeared. While ETGE accused the WUC by treason and of compromising the aim of independence for a virtual autonomy that Chinese government would not accept, WUC responded by saying that ETGE is an empty organization with radical

²⁷⁰ “China Protests Establishment of Uighur Government-in-Exile in Washington,” *Global Security.org*, September 21, 2004, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/china/2004/china-040921-3cf1a55f.htm> (accessed March 13, 2008)

²⁷¹ Adam Ereli, *Daily Press Briefing of U.S. Department of State*, November 22, 2004, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2004/38587.htm#china> (accessed March 13, 2008)

²⁷² ‘WUC’ part of “the World Uyghur Congress,” <http://www.uyghurcongress.org/En/AboutWUC.asp?mid=1095738888> (accessed March 13, 2008)

²⁷³ “Changing the Guard at the World Uyghur Congress,” *Accociation for Asian Research*, October 1, 2007, <http://www.asianresearch.org/articles/2986.html> (accessed March 13, 2008)

members whose objectives were not realistic.²⁷⁴ Actually, the mainstream Uyghur exile groups such as Uyghur American Association (UAA) of Washington, D.C. and the WUC in Germany did not attend the press conference related to the ETGE formation.²⁷⁵ Although these tensions between the moderates and the radicals among various Uyghur groups resulted with the revival of the secular nationalist Uyghur secessionism.

Like this, although the ETGE has developed a specific governing system with a president, a cabinet and a constitution, its outcome seems to have some limitations. First, this government is located in Washington D.C., so it is almost impossible to communicate with the Uyghurs at the motherland in a regular basis. Tibetians, on the contrary, have never left neighboring India for this reason of not loosing their regular contact with their motherland. Furthermore, the ETGE is destined to depend completely on the foreign policy agenda of the U.S. governments due to its geographical location. For example, in the ETGE website, Anwar Yusuf Turani places a great emphasis on the role of the U.S. in the “independence” of Eastern Turkistan as follows:

“We turn to the United States of America, as the leader of liberty, justice, and wisdom, hoping that the United States of America will recognize the just cause of freedom and independence of millions of Eastern Turkistanis. We turn to the United States of America and free world for compassion and leadership to put an end to the misery of so many innocent people.”²⁷⁶

In this respect, it would be likely to overlook the fact that the essence of the Uyghur problem should be resolved not by the influence of the hegemonic power, the U.S., but by inner voices of the Uyghurs themselves. Second, it is somewhat

²⁷⁴ “Changing the Guard at the World Uyghur Congress”

²⁷⁵ Stanley Cheung, “Uyghur Group Forms Government-In-Exile,” *Taipei Central News Agency WWW-Text in English 0657 GMT 16 Sep 04*, September 16, 2004. For more information about this, see the press release of October 4, 2005 in “the East Turkistan Government in Exile”

²⁷⁶ ‘About us’ part of “the East Turkistan Government in Exile”

doubtable that this government ultimately has any power to play a substantial role in the Uyghur independence cause. The ETGE is mainly consisted of representative officials who are not directly elected by the Uyghurs in the mainland. They are rather representatives from various Uyghur émigré organizations throughout the world. That is, to realize the desire of Uyghurs, independence of Eastern Turkistan, is needed not only the political activities of various intellectuals but also enough political support from the grassroots at home.²⁷⁷

Despite such vulnerabilities, the ETGE have played a leading role in the constitution of political elements for Uyghur secessionism. The creation of ETGE was a very meaningful attempt on the grounds that the ETGE provided an opportunity to remind the Eastern Turkistan question to the international society. If the ETGE can achieve a firm stand in diverse international platforms and gain internal political support from the motherland, the existence of ETGE will strengthen the foothold for the independence.

4.2.3 Cyber- Secessionism

4.2.3.1. Background

The 21st century has given Uyghurs a variety of opportunities to express their dissent and achieve their goal of independence. This is largely because the usage and development of the internet have allowed Uyghurs to distribute information on the activities of Uyghur émigré groups. They have also found new opportunities to develop an international public opinion on the situation in Eastern Turkistan. As a result, all these aroused international society's interests in this region

²⁷⁷ In the individual meeting with Erkin Ekrem who is a Ph.D of the Hacettepe University, he explained such limitations.

under the PRC rule. Dru C. Gladney named such conditions of the contemporary Uyghur secessionism as “Cyber-separatism.”²⁷⁸

There are many international Uyghur émigré organizations with secessionist orientations in İstanbul, Munich, Melbourne, New York, and Washington, D.C. The major problem aroused from the fact that all these émigré groups have lacked any healthy communication channels among themselves as well as with the motherland. Cyberspace has connected the small Uyghur émigré communities with the international society and has allowed them to overcome not only geographical limits but also the political censorship imposed by the PRC.²⁷⁹ In other words, in contemporary times, cyberspace has become a new platform for Uyghur leaders to present their unified goal of establishing an independent Eastern Turkistan.

The Chinese authorities have taken severe measures to prevent expression of dissent by blocking, monitoring, and filtering websites and e-mails in addition to some government-sponsored hacking and online propaganda. So, the Uyghurs in the motherland cannot easily access secessionist Uyghur websites from within China.²⁸⁰ Accordingly, this has left many Uyghurs in China who can use the internet unable to read the various websites of organizations directly linked with the independence cause.²⁸¹ This censorship even directed against some websites with pure Uyghur history contents. Although some Uyghur websites are accessible to individuals

²⁷⁸ Dru C. Gladney, *Dislocating China: Muslims, Minorities, and Subaltern Subjects*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), pp.229-259. For reasons of political correctness, the term secessionism is employed in this thesis.

²⁷⁹ Kristian Petersen, “Usurping the Nation: Cyber-Leadership in the Uighur Nationalist Movement,” *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.26, Issue 1, (2006), p.65..

²⁸⁰ Michael Chase and James Mulvenon, *You’ve Got Dissent!: Chinese Dissident Use of the Internet and Beijing’s Counter-strategies*, (CA: National Security Research Division Center for Asia Pacific Policy, 2002)

²⁸¹ Kristian Petersen, p.66. The availability of a website in China could be tested by adopting Real-Time Testing of Internet Filtering in China, a free service provided by the Harvard Law School’s Jonathan Zittrain and Benjamin Edelman. This system now exists for archival purposes only. <http://www.cyber.law.harvard.edu/filtering/china/test> (accessed April 12, 2008)

within China, these are the CCP's interpretation of the information.²⁸² Therefore, many Uyghurs within Eastern Turkistan do not know much about the international activities of the Uyghur secessionist movement.

Meanwhile, access to the internet in Western countries is unrestricted and convenient. This is why various websites related to Eastern Turkistan and Uyghurs are in English language with the limited usage of Turkish and Uyghur as well.²⁸³ These websites play a significant role in the communication and networking among émigré groups across continents. Most of their contents are about their organizations, news and in many cases inviting others to regular demonstrations. Furthermore, such activities through the internet ultimately have a great influence on the sentiments of Uyghur nationalism and secessionism under the rule of the PRC. Likewise, today the role of cyber- secessionism is remarkable on the ground that it rejects the control of the both national and international laws, and contingencies that have influence in the physical world.

One might also admit that, even severely restricted and filtered news about Uyghur secessionists' activities abroad in the web, when accessed somehow, would have an important impact on the compatriots' minds in Eastern Turkistan

4.2.3.2. Uyghur Websites

According to Gladney, there are at least 25 international organizations and websites supporting the independence of Eastern Turkistan.²⁸⁴ An examination of the content of some Uyghur websites might be helpful in learning the ways they are shaping the modern Uyghur identity. As one of the most representative Uyghur

²⁸² Dru C. Gladney, "Cyber-separatism and Uyghur ethnic nationalism in China," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, (June 5, 2003), p.8. <http://www.csis.org/china/030605gladney.pdf> (accessed March 1, 2007).

²⁸³ Petersen, p.66.

²⁸⁴ Gladney, p.239.

websites, the Uyghur American Association (UAA)'s website was established in 1998. The main mission of the UAA is explained as "to promote the preservation and flourishing of a rich, humanistic and diverse Uyghur culture, and to support the right of the Uyghur people to use peaceful, democratic means to determine their own political future."²⁸⁵ The UAA has also undertaken the Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP), which has the purpose of "promoting human rights and democracy for the Uyghur people and raising awareness of human rights abuses that occur in Eastern Turkistan."²⁸⁶ This website also indicates that it "does not take a position on independence for Eastern Turkistan, but instead focuses its goals on promoting human rights and democracy for Uyghurs and others living in Eastern Turkistan."²⁸⁷

As an international organization, the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) also plays a significant role in representing the collective interests of the Uyghur people both inside and outside Eastern Turkistan. After the Eastern Turkistan National Congress and the World Uyghur Youth Congress became one united organization, the WUC was established on April 16, 2004 in Munich Germany.²⁸⁸ The main purpose of the WUC is explained as in its website to promote the right of the Uyghur people through peaceful, nonviolent, and democratic ways to achieve the political future of Eastern Turkistan.²⁸⁹

Rebiya Kadeer and other Uyghur intellectuals in the U.S. established the International Uyghur Human Rights and Democracy Foundation (IUHRDF) in

²⁸⁵ "The Uyghur American Association,"
<http://www.uyghuramerican.org/categories/About-UAA/> (accessed April 19, 2008)

²⁸⁶ "The Uyghur Human Rights Project,"
<http://www.uhrp.org/pages/About?articlelive=25c8aab73ed86b12fab16c0e5bc2c078About> (accessed April 19, 2008)

²⁸⁷ "The Uyghur Human Rights Project"

²⁸⁸ "The World Uyghur Congress,"
<http://www.uyghurcongress.org/En/AboutWUC.asp?mid=1095738888> (accessed April 19, 2008)

²⁸⁹ "The World Uyghur Congress"

2005.²⁹⁰ The main mission of IUHRDF is explained as in its website to promote human rights, religious freedom, and democracy for the future of Uyghur people.²⁹¹ Moreover, the UHRDF is also trying to educate and raise awareness about the conditions of the Uyghur people living in Eastern Turkistan throughout the international community.²⁹² This website is notable in that it is trying to build a democratic Uyghur community by strengthening the understanding of the rights of women and children as well as the basic human rights of all people, and it stresses the importance of nonviolence in their activities.

As an important informational website, Radio Free Asia (RFA) provides various independent news and information to Asian countries whose governments restrict the right of access to free press.²⁹³ According to its website, the main aims of the RFA are to “retain the greatest confidence among its listeners and to serve as a model on which others may shape their own emerging journalistic traditions.”²⁹⁴ A number of worldwide institutions honored RFA with various journalism awards over the years.²⁹⁵ Currently, the content of RFA is in Burmese, Cantonese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, the Wu dialect, Vietnamese, Tibetan, and Uyghur. However, the Chinese government has regularly criticized and even blockaded its Uyghur service.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁰ “The International Uyghur Human Rights and Democracy Foundation,” <http://www.iuhrdf.org/> (accessed April 19, 2008)

²⁹¹ “The International Uyghur Human Rights and Democracy Foundation”

²⁹² “The International Uyghur Human Rights and Democracy Foundation”

²⁹³ “Radio Free Asia,” <http://www.rfa.org/english> (accessed April 19, 2008)

²⁹⁴ “Radio Free Asia”

²⁹⁵ As a recent award, its Cantonese service took top honors at Hong Kong’s 12th Annual Human Rights Press Awards for its reporting on forced abortions that led to riots in the southwestern Chinese province of Guangxi. See Human Rights Press Award for the Cantonese Service, 1 April 2008, section of Awards in “Radio Free Asia,” available online at, <http://www.rfa.org/english/awards/cantonese-award.html>

²⁹⁶ Dru C. Gladney, “Cyber-separatism and Uyghur ethnic nationalism in China,” *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, June 5, 2003, p.14.

Among other Uyghur websites, [meshrep.com](http://www.meshrep.com) focuses on the cultural and traditional aspects of Uyghur identity. As mentioned earlier, *meshrep* is a cultural gathering that is common among Turkic peoples of Central Asia. ‘[meshrep.com](http://www.meshrep.com)’ introduces itself as follows:

We named this page, as “[meshrep.com](http://www.meshrep.com)” from the perspective of introducing Uyghur culture, art, music, jokes and songs to those who are interested in Uyghur tradition and culture and hoping our effort will offer however small the connection between Uyghur and a larger audience in the Western world.²⁹⁷

Kanat, who himself is an Uyghur intellectual currently living in the U.S., argued that this website has “hosted heated debates among Uyghurs and Uyghur organizations from different parts of the world.”²⁹⁸ Furthermore, by providing huge amount of information not only on selective national history but also on important events and individuals, [meshrep.com](http://www.meshrep.com) is shaping the contemporary Uyghur identity by using cyberspace.

4.2.3.3. External and Internal Limitations

Meanwhile, on the issue of Uyghur cyber- secessionism, the Chinese government sticks to its traditional hard-line policy. According to the World Uyghur Network News in June 2004, Du Daobin, who posted articles on the internet advocating respect for human rights and democracy in China, was sentenced to four years of house arrest.²⁹⁹ The same article explains, “With a total of 61 cyber-dissidents detained, China is the world’s biggest prison for those who try to express themselves freely online. It is also the country where e-mail interception and online

²⁹⁷ “[meshrep.com](http://www.meshrep.com),” <http://www.meshrep.com> (accessed April 19, 2008)

²⁹⁸ Kılıç Buğra Kanat, “Ethnic media and politics: The case of the use of the Internet by Uyghur diaspora,” *First Monday*, Vol. 10, No 7, July 2005, p.1.

http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue10_7/kanat (accessed April 19, 2008)

²⁹⁹ Cyber-dissident Du Daobin sentenced to four years of house arrest, *The World Uighur Network News 2004*, 11 June 2004, http://www.uygur.org/wunn04/06_11.htm

censorship have been developed the most.”³⁰⁰ Furthermore, after the International Olympic Committee awarded the 2008 Olympic Games to Beijing in 2001, the Chinese government has intensified its persecution of internet users with dissident orientations. The internet is regarded by the Chinese government as an important strategic area that could not be left to hostile forces.³⁰¹ Currently, China’s blocking services in cyberspace include filter systems that block keywords considered “subversive” by censors.³⁰² Chinese law severely punished a number of internet users under the charges of “divulging state secrets,” “defamation” and “subversion”—charges which are regularly used to suppress the most outspoken critics.³⁰³

Actually, Uyghur cyber-secessionism has important limitations due to the Chinese government’s strict online censorship. Table 2 indicates an “Empirical Analysis of Internet Filtering in China” as of August-September 2002. For this analysis, Jonathan Zittrain and Benjamin Edelman conducted Google searches for the top 100 results for a list of terms. Related to each term listed, the middle column of the table indicates the proportion of the top 10 Google results found to be blocked in China while the right column shows the corresponding results as among the top 100 sites for each term.³⁰⁴ Regarding the proportion of the top 10 over the terms “Tibet,” “taiwan, china,” and “Equality” as 100%, we can understand the sensitivity of the Chinese government about factors such as independence, nationalism and secessionism. Although Table 2 cannot be an absolute indicator of Chinese

³⁰⁰ Cyber-dissident Du Daobin sentenced to four years of house arrest, *The World Uighur Network News* 2004, 11 June 2004, http://www.uygur.org/wunn04/06_11.htm

³⁰¹ See Charles Swett, “Strategic assessment: The Internet,” Project on Government Secrecy of the Federation of American Scientists July 17, 1995 <http://www.fas.org/cp/swett.html> (accessed June 22, 2008).

³⁰² “China: the world’s biggest prison for journalists and cyber-dissidents,” *Beijing 2008*, Reporters sans frontiers, http://www.rsf.org/rubrique.php3?id_rubrique=174

³⁰³ “China: the world’s biggest prison for journalists and cyber-dissidents”

³⁰⁴ Jonathan Zittrain and Benjamin Edelman, 2002, “Empirical Analysis of Internet Filtering in China,” Berkman Center for Internet & Society Harvard Law School, <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/filtering/china/block-kw.html> (accessed April 19, 2008)

censorship due to its empirical aspect, this is helpful to estimate the tendency and extent of the Chinese censorship, which can be also affiliated with the case of the Uyghurs.

Table 2. Empirical Analysis of Internet Filtering in China

Google search term	Proportion of Top 10 Sites Blocked	Proportion of Top 100 Sites Blocked
Tibet	100%	64%
taiwan china	100%	37%
Equality	100%	24%
democracy china	80%	42%
dissident china	80%	37%
Taiwan	70%	47%
Revolution	70%	21%
Dissident	60%	31%
freedom china	60%	32%
justice china	60%	30%
counterrevolution china	50%	21%
news china	40%	40%
liberty china	40%	17%
china blog	30%	11%
tibet china	20%	39%
Democracy	20%	34%
dissident blog	20%	11%
News	20%	43%
famine china	20%	23%
Liberty	20%	28%
counter-revolution china	20%	21%
AIDS china	10%	21%
sex china	10%	19%
revolution china	10%	18%
equality china	10%	15%
Counterrevolution	10%	9%
War	0%	32%
Justice	0%	26%

Freedom	0%	28%
war china	0%	24%
hunger china	0%	24%

Source: Jonathan Zittrain and Benjamin Edelman, 2002, “Empirical Analysis of Internet Filtering in China,” Berkman Center for Internet & Society Harvard Law School, <http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/filtering/china/block-kw.html>

In addition to the external limitations imposed by the Chinese censorships, there are also internal limitations caused by the problem of cyber-leadership between the nationalists in and out of the motherland. In other words, while purpose of the former has been to “enlist support, win recognition and promote solidarity for the cause of Eastern Turkistan independence,” in the latter, the objective of the cyber-leadership has been to “revive the memory of the two defunct Eastern Turkistan republics, and sustain Uyghur culture and language.”³⁰⁵ Moreover, as privileged Uyghur intellectuals administrate most of internet sites, such cyber space has tendency of overlooking all Uyghur’s voices.

Nevertheless, in modern times, the internet played an important role not only in broadening the range of the supporters for any cause but the audience for understanding the Uyghur cause in special. It also plays in the justification of the Uyghur demand for an independent state. Kılıç Buğra Kanat pointed out the significant impact of the use of internet in Uyghur secessionism. He pointed out that:

“...the use of the Internet by Uyghur migrant groups is providing new insights into understanding the relationship between ethnic migrant groups and the Internet...the Internet plays an important role in the creation of a new Uyghur identity and fostering of nationalist ideas among Uyghur migrant groups...”³⁰⁶

³⁰⁵ Yitzhak Shichor, “Virtual transnationalism: Uyghur communities in Europe and the quest for East Turkestan independence,” in *Muslim Networks and Transnational Communities in and Across Europe*, eds. Jorgen S. Nielsen and Stefano Allievi, Leiden: Brill, 2003, p.288.

³⁰⁶ Kanat, p.1.

There have been limited success in mobilizing the Uyghur secessionist movement over the internet. The development of cyber- secessionism is one of the most interesting aspects of the contemporary Uyghur secessionist movement. This basically shows that there is an increasing space for Uyghur's inner voices to be heard.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

According to the Olympic Charter, a sport must be “at the service of the harmonious development of man, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.”³⁰⁷ Although various democratic countries are hoping that the Olympic Games will be helpful in improving the human rights situation in the PRC relating to the issues of ethnic minorities, the realization of this hope seems unlikely and difficult. Although the Chinese government promised the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and international societies that, it would make improvements in human rights in order to win the competition for the 2008 Olympics for Beijing, their attitudes have changed after obtaining the Olympics. For example, after the IOC vote in 2001, Deputy Prime Minister, Li Lanqing, said that “China’s Olympic victory” must support the country to keep its “healthy life” by combating various factors that had “stirred up violent crime.”³⁰⁸ Actually, one report explained that after the decision to give Beijing the 2008 Olympic Games, Chinese authorities have oppressed not only the Tibetan and Uyghur people, but have also

³⁰⁷ Olympic Charter, International Olympic Committee, In Force As From 7 July 2007 http://multimedia.olympic.org/pdf/en_report_122.pdf (accessed May 2, 2008)

³⁰⁸ Quoted in “China: the world’s biggest prison for journalists and cyber-dissidents”

restricted the activities of foreign journalists.³⁰⁹ Furthermore, Hu Jintao, the current President of the PRC, asserted that it was “crucial to fight without equivocation against the separatist forces orchestrated by the Dalai Lama and the world’s anti-China forces.”³¹⁰ All these facts illustrate the Chinese government’s opportunistic political attitude towards the international society.

Chinese authorities explained that they have uncovered the plans of two Uyghur “terrorist” groups recently (in 2008). This operation included the uncovering of a plan by the Islamic Movement of East Turkestan (ETIM) as well. The result was to arrest some 45 Uyghurs on suspicion of planning of a suicide-bomb attack and kidnaping athletes to disrupt the Olympic Games.³¹¹ Wu Heping, the Public Ministry spokesman, claimed that the ETIM asked its members to do trial operations using poison gas and explosive devices. Heping declared the aim of all these was “to create an international incident with the goal of disrupting of the Olympic Games.”³¹²

The second terrorist group which was not named at all was accused with also the planning of suicide-bomb attacks in Urumçi. It is quite obvious that the Chinese government has been using the Olympic Games as an opportunity to crack down on Uyghurs under the guise of providing security for an international event. Events in Tibet also played an important role in increasing Chinese control over Eastern Turkistan. However, as an international event, the Olympic Games can be a valuable opportunity for Uyghurs to reach their long-term goal of taking the attention of world public opinion. That is, due to the international media’s interest in the ethnic

³⁰⁹ Erol Önderoğlu, “RSF 2008 Olimpiyatlarını Boykot Ediyor,” *BIA Haber Merkezi-Pekin*, January 8, 2003, <http://kadin.bianet.org/bianet/kategori/bianet/15813/rsf-2008-olimpiyatlarini-boykot-ediyor> (accessed May 12, 2008)

³¹⁰ Quoted in “China: the world’s biggest prison for journalists and cyber-dissidents”

³¹¹ “China: Officials Say Uyghur Group involved in Olympic Terror Plot,” *Homeland Security in Global Security.org*, Gulnoza Saidazimova, April, 2008, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/news/2008/04/sec-080411-rferl01.htm> (accessed May 12, 2008)

³¹² “China: Officials Say Uyghur Group involved in Olympic Terror Plot”

minority groups in the PRC, during the event, they can appeal to the world about the independence of Eastern Turkistan as well as about the protection of Uyghurs' human rights from Chinese political and cultural oppression through peaceful activities.

As an instance of such an attempt, Dolkun İsa, secretary general of the Munich-based World Uyghur Congress, has urged for a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, accusing Beijing of "cultural genocide" alongside its crackdown in Tibet. He said that China could not be a host of the Olympic Games because of its peaceful object."³¹³ In the history of Uyghur secessionism, the Olympic Games, just like 9/11 did, might open a new chapter on the Eastern Turkistan issue.

The origins of Uyghur secessionism could be understood in three contexts within a historical continuity from past to the Olympic Games. First, from a historical and cultural viewpoint, the fundamental differences between the Chinese and Uyghurs such as life-styles and languages have created a major reaction among Uyghurs against assimilation within the Chinese society.

From the religious point of view, the spread of religious radicalism in the Islamic world has also affected the Uyghurs who have a sincere faith in Islam. As a concrete example, some Uyghurs who received their education in some Middle Eastern countries has developed a jihadist secessionism.

Last, since the collapse of communism in other parts of the world in early 1990s, the spread of nationalism worldwide encouraged Uyghurs to seek to their independent state. As an international influence, the independence of former Soviet and Yugoslavian countries imbued the Uyghurs into the blueprint that they can also establish their independent state. In addition, the atmosphere of the increased

³¹³ "Dünya Uyghur Kurultayı Genel Sekreteri İsa Çin Kültürel Soykırım Uyguluyor." *Hür Gökbayrak: Doğu Türkistan'ın Sesi*, May 3, 2008, <http://www.hurgokbayrak.com/> (accessed May 12, 2008)

Chinese nationalism through the radical development of the Chinese economy and the extended military budgets of the PRC have accelerated the Uyghur nationalism. Combining all these elements, Uyghur secessionist movement has been an attractive choice for the dissident Uyghurs in the PRC.

It is likely that the modern Uyghur secessionism has different characteristics from the past versions due to the new wave of tensions between Eastern Turkistan and the center. First, various activities of the secessionist movement have been extended from domestic ethnic minority issues to an international scale. The support of the expatriate groups such as the ETGE and the WUC strengthened this characteristic. These organizations have played a significant role in integrating the political and cultural Uyghur identities. Second, by virtue of the newly developing attraction of the Western media to the Eastern Turkistan problem, after 9/11, Uyghurs have had the opportunity to appeal to the international community about human rights violations in the PRC. Last, as one of the most significant factors of contemporary Uyghur secessionism, the creation of cyber communities inside and outside of Eastern Turkistan developed the concept of cyber- secessionism. Also, the expansion of the internet user population among Uyghurs strengthened the influence of cyber- secessionism. Despite the strict censorship of the Chinese governments, Uyghur secessionism in cyberspace has bound together Uyghur émigrés all over the globe.

Just as the aspects of the Uyghur secessionism have changed throughout history, the contemporary situation of conflict between the Uyghurs and the Chinese government has also entered to a new phase. The Chinese government's hold on Eastern Turkistan is more strict than ever in the new age of the "global war on terror." In the international context, various sources from a number of international

media, human rights groups and expatriate dissidents has been playing an important role in challenging the information of the official Chinese version.³¹⁴ The uprisings of Barın in 1990 and Gulca in 1997 are representative cases of how the Chinese government provided vague information related to the scale and significance of events.

Likewise, the reality of contemporary Uyghur secessionism is all about the new position occupied by Eastern Turkistan both within the PRC and at the international platforms. The words of Rebiya Kadeer, a “Uyghur Dalai Lama,” in her interview represent not only the reality but also the ideal of long-term Uyghur secessionism. “If the Chinese government does not respect it (non-violence), as time goes by, the international community and others will recognize it... If the repression goes to a point where we cannot control it, things may happen. So it is the interest of the Chinese government to recognize our peaceful efforts and negotiate.”³¹⁵

The future of Uyghur separatism depends on two aspects largely: the Chinese response to Uyghur secessionism and the influence of various Uyghur organizations that have sought to the secessionism. Currently, the Chinese suppression against secessionist movement in Tibet indicates that the Chinese government will not change its firm policies about the ethnic minorities in China. Furthermore, despite the increased pressures from the international society including the U.S., the Chinese government has maintained its position that denies the improvement of political and human rights policies for the minorities. Accordingly, the Chinese oppression against the secessionist movements of Eastern Turkistan will be maintained in the future.

³¹⁴ Millward, p.355.

³¹⁵ Joshua Kucera, “Uyghur Activist: China is Making ‘A frontal Attack on Our Ethnic Identity.’” of A EurasiaNet Interview with Rebiya Kadeer, *Eurasia Insight*, March 7, 2008, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav030708.shtml> (accessed May 4, 2008)

From the inner viewpoint of Uyghur secessionism, the Uyghur organizations seeking to establish an independent Uyghur state have been not unified, resulting in the splits among themselves. The disharmony of Uyghur organizations such as the ETGE and the WUC might reduce the legitimacy of Eastern Turkistan struggle against China. Also, the inner splits among the Uyghur organizations reduce their prestiges in the international society. The absence of a major Uyghur leader who can lead a secessionist movement like the Dalai Lama of Tibet might bring about more breakups among Uyghur groups.

In sum, it will be very difficult for Uyghurs to achieve their goal in the foreseeable future because of the strict suppression of Chinese government about the secessionism of minorities and the inner splits of Uyghur organizations.

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APPENDIX A

Map of Eastern Turkistan



Source: About Uyghurs of the Uyghur American Association.

<http://www.uyghuramerican.org/categories/About-Uyghurs/>

APPENDIX B

Coins of Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan and Republic of Uyghurstan



Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan



Republic of Uyghurstan

APPENDIX C

“Why are we fighting?”

(Early Rebel Pamphlet of 1944-1949)

Our fathers and our fathers' fathers called the place where we are living "East Turkistan."

From ancient time there have lived in this place Uighurs, Taranchis, Kazaks, Uzbeks, and Tatars; at the present time also it is the place of their habitation. In this territory, there are counted to be four million people; more than three million of them are of these nations (that we have named); for that reason the area—East Turkistan—was called the heart of the Turkish nations. Our nearest blood relations are Kazaks, Kirghiz, Uzbeks, and Tatars. In the Soviet Union each of these races has organized its own Government and its members are living free and joyful lives. Let us listen to the white bearded old men among us while they tell us, as they alone can, what was the beginning of the history of our East Turkistan nations, and how it began.

Who are we? Who and where are our near and far relations? Where are the burial grounds—so so dear to us—of our beloved and renowned ancestors?

In answer to these questions, any man who seeks the truth and whose heart is right can not fail to say that the root of our nation and soul is not in China, but in Central Asia, in Kazakhstan, Kirghizistan, Uzbekistan, and Tataristan. Our native

place is East Turkistan; we are the eastern branch and part of the race—bound to us by blood relationship—the other parts of which lie within the Soviet Union; we are the part that is fighting.

Two hundred years ago from Astrakhan and the borders of the Caspian Sea there came to our East Turkistan several Kalmuk families and from that time forward they lived among us as friends without friction. Thus we see that their roots also not in China but sprung from the Russian Kalmuks. If they are asked they themselves will confirm this.

The (White) Russians now resident in East Turkistan can also make the same statement about themselves [i.e., that they came not from China but from Russia].

Of the fourteen nations living in East Turkistan, the ten nations accounted the most numerous have had no national, racial, or cultural relationship nor any community of blood with the Chinese, nor did any ever exist.

But through the sands of the desert from remote China there came Chinese to our East Turkistan. With the help of sabers and whips and taking advantage of our love of peace, the whiteness of our hearts, and our trustfulness, they took into their hands the control of the whole government; they exacted from us heavy taxes and many kinds of contributions; they oppressed us until we had no more rights than animals. And they were at that time the least enlightened people in the world; they could not give to us brighter lives, they could not increase our knowledge or culture, they could not improve the ordinary living conditions of the people; instead they robbed us of light, held us in slavery, kept us illiterate and plunged us in darkness. From that time forward our territory was called "West China" or "Sinkiang" and it was forbidden to pronounce the name "East Turkistan" which the land had borne for years without end throughout history.

Our fathers and grand fathers were for hundreds of years oppressed by the savage Chinese. To understand the nature of that oppression, we need only regard the way in which our people are being oppressed by the Chinese at the present time.

Many times in the past our people have been unable to further to endure this oppression; their patience exhausted, they have turned on their savage oppressors and fought with great heroism. These battles are known to history. The beloved names of our heroic grandfathers who died in these struggles should serve us as banners calling us forward to do battle against the Chinese who enslave us!

In the year 26 and 27* the savage policies of Sheng Turpan began to be put in operation, at the time same time that fascism started.

In the same way that fascism counts as its enemies all people who love peace and freedom, thus did Sheng Turpan and savage Chinese who surrounded him count us, the native people of East Turkistan, as their enemies and as an inferior race. They oppressed us with every kind of cruelty. In 26 and 27 and subsequent years Sheng Turpan arrested Ha Jeeneeya, Sherif Jan, and over four thousand others of vanguard, of those who were most liked, of those who knew the most, of those who were most clever, of those who were outstanding for leadership. Can we forget them?

After he had arrested them, Sheng Turpan put them in torture cells, beat them until their bones were broken, strangled them and poisoned them, until they were dead. Their crime in the eye of the Turpan was that he accounted them our representatives, who sought for our people freedom and good fortune.

Very few of these men who were arrested at that time are still alive. Those few are in dark prisons waiting for the coming of death to end their tortures at the hand of the Tupan's executioners. Their condition is so pitiful that their best friends

would not know them if they saw them, and their mothers, wives, or children would go mad at the sight of them.

These helpless, unfortunate people are Uighurs, Taranchis, Kazaks, Kirghiz, Uzbeks, and Tatars. But they are more than representatives of the races to which we belong: they are our fathers, our elder brothers, our younger brothers and our relatives.

Hai, people! Let all men know well:

That these helpless, unfortunate people in the prisons of Sheng Turpan, drawing their last breaths of life before dying, turn upon us the eyes of their souls and in their moaning say to us: "For the suffering which we have endured at the hands of savage Chinese, you must avenge us. We are pouring forth our blood and yielding up our souls for our people: for this also you must avenge us."

At the present time, in our territory of East Turkistan, all of the ruling power is in the hands of the Chinese alone. We are a people who have lost all human rights. It should be known by every man of knowledge that when the rule is in the hands of the Chinese, there is no equality and no justice. Only when the throats of Chinese fascist oppressors have been cut and they have bled to dead will we come again in to the life of light.

Chinese administrators plan to move from far-away China a million Chinese and Chinese bandits in to our territory. Some of them, in guise of soldier and of refugees, have already come to Tihwa [Urumçi]; they are being dispersed among the several district among the several district and hsien [Xian]. It is the aim of the Chinese to drive us out thereafter from our native East Turkistan and to remove us by force to the east. This thing which the Chinese seek to do us is for us the same thing as the most horrible death: every one should understand this. Our bones will rot

unburied on either side of the long road across the Chinese steppe to far away China; Chinese and Chinese bandits will live in our houses, take over our goods, enjoy our riches, be masters in our stead; by force they will go into our wives and our daughters. Because of our fear and our docility and our trustfulness they will mock us with contemptuous laughter.

The progressive, forward looking people among us, who give thought to our future welfare and fortune, have in every place organized illegal groups in order to fight against the savage Chinese, because the Chinese are dragging us toward a bottomless well, into which they mean to fling us.

Our fighters for the people's freedom will unite our forces in friendship and under right leadership to rise against the Chinese in order to destroy that savage mastery and power; therefore there have been formed in every locality the illegal "National Freedom Groups."

Our aim in forming the "National Freedom Groups" is to free our people from enslavement to the savage Chinese and thereafter to make it so that these people, who have been oppressed by the Chinese, strangled by them, crushed down by them, may arise again as national races in possession of freedom, equality before the law, wealth, culture, and a fortunate life.

Our national freedom groups and all the members of the every group have taken an oath in the name of One God, before the souls of our heroic grandfathers and in the presence of all the people, to achieve, through enthusiasm and heroism, by legal and illegal means, by words and by force of arms, by night and by day and without resting the objectives set forth below.

1. We are fighting to do away with Chinese rule in all our East Turkistan [Sinkiang] and to destroy for all times the root of Chinese tyranny in our territory.

East Turkistan belongs to the real master of the territory, the Uighur, Taranchis, the Kirghiz, the Kazaks, the Tatars, the Uzbek together, with all those who live among them in peace and friendship and who alike suffer Chinese oppression, such as the Mongols and other non-Chinese nations. There is no place in East Turkistan for Chinese colonial government or Chinese colonists.

2. The National Freedom Groups and all of their members are fighting to establish in East Turkistan a real equality of rights between all races one with the other.

3. We are fighting for the organization of National Political Alliance, that is, a Congress composed of elect representatives of the people living in East Turkistan; the representatives comprising this National Political Alliance should be elected in numbers proportionate to the total numbers of their respective races. We should ourselves be the real master of this National Political Alliance and not the Chinese. Thereafter the Chinese will have no way to deride and ill treat us: we will make our own lives and our own happiness according to our own desires and not according to those of the Chinese.

From among the elected representatives to the National Political Alliance we will select the most intelligent, the most just, and those who most love the people, and with them we will organize our own new government.

4. The National Freedom Groups and their members are fighting in the interest of the people of all races except the Chinese so that in the future the district, town, village and small village administrations and organizations will be composed of trusted, energetic, capable, just members elected according to the popular will by the locally resident people themselves.

5. The National Freedom Groups and their members are fighting for the cultural development of every racial nation [in Sinkiang] and for the establishment of lower and middle schools in their respective languages for the Children of every nation, these schools to be supported by the government.

6. The National Freedom Groups and their members are fighting to reestablish the separate national contingents of troops, such as those comprised respectively by Uighurs, Kazaks, Mongols, and members of other national races, which were disbanded by Sheng Turpan because of his fear that they might oppose his political policies.

7. Sheng Turpan running, wild, took all military and civil rule in to his own hands; throughout the entire East Turkistan all rule became military; in the cities martial law was declared, and as soon as it became evening all movement in the streets was absolutely forbidden; it was impossible to leave the city without permission. After nightfall you were prevented not only visiting your friends, but you could not go to see your closest relatives on the most urgent business, because the moment you stepped out your door, a Chinese would seize you and begin: "Where are you going?" "For what reason?" "What have you said?" and [he would ask you] many other questions. Each person was obliged to spy on everyone else and inform the police. At the present time East Turkistan [Sinjiang] has become one vast prison; the nations are captives in it and the Chinese are the executioners. The Chinese themselves account the situation to be one of the happiness and a fortunate life for natives!

The National Freedom Groups and their members are fighting to overthrow the prison system set up by the oppressor, Sheng Turpan; to wrest the military and civil powers from the rule of one man, and to free unoffending people from captivity.

8. The National Freedom Groups and their members are fighting to give freedom to such among the number of those natives who (because of their interest in the welfare of the people) were arrested and imprisoned by Sheng Turpan as many yet to be still alive and still suffering from the Chinese oppression; these persons are the most trusted of our people, possess naturally the most authority, are the foremost among us and most dear to us.

9. There previously existed friendly trading relations between the people of East Turkistan [Sinjiang] and Soviet Government; this relationship was disrupted by the Chinese administrations; this cessation of trade worked great hardship in our lives, checked the growth of peasant holdings in the villages, and brought to a standstill the trading in the bazaars; for each family the daily life hood became difficult. In every locality those who were starving, who were without clothing, who could not find employment, and those conditions were all together piteous, became more and more numerous. Big merchants became small; the small became bankrupt; the bankrupt became beggars. For skilled workers also there are no jobs because there is no one who needs to employ them. As a result they too have fallen into dire poverty. The number of people who have met this kind of misfortune mounts up higher every day. In the market there are no buyers for cattle, for the various kinds of wool, skins, or grains, or for the other products of the small village holdings, nor for the production of the cattle raisers. The powerful Sovsintorg, a large purchase, went out and away from East Turkistan [Sinjiang] as a consequence of the inside-out political policies of Sheng Turpan. The price of the food supplies and other products of the village holdings and of cattle and sheep husbandry are too cheap: the husbandman cannot buy any of the things he needs for his family's livelihood with the money he realizes from the sale of his products. From this money the Chinese

authorities also forcibly take all kinds of taxes and exactions, for which reason no one can spend for his own needs or as he likes in a carefree way the money he receives. The life of the peasants, of the cattle and sheep herder, of the whole generality of the population, thus becomes progressively more difficult day by day. The people of East Turkistan [Sinjiang] are like an orphaned child, without father or mother or any one heeds his cries. The savage Chinese have torn the child from his mother that bore it (the Soviet Government) and seek to give it to the foster mother (the Three Peoples Principles) for the latter to trample it under foot. For the people of East Turkistan the severance of their mutually friendly relations with the Soviet Union and their subjection to the discipline of the Three People's Principles by the savage Chinese is the same thing as death by torture.

The National Freedom Group must fight to free all people from the claws of death by hunger, to establish anew strong and truly sincere relations of friendship with our great, freedom-loving friend and neighbor, the Soviet Union, and to develop wide and full trading relations between all our trading men and the Sovsintorg. We are to do away with fixed market prices set by the Chinese by proclamation and to destroy the other systems of regulations harmful to the people.

10. The National Freedom Group must fight to procure the abatement and lightening of the unbearable load of taxes and exactions imposed upon the people by the Chinese. We demand of the Chinese that they decrease the endless and growing number of police and soldiers.

11. The National Freedom Group must fight to secure the freedom of religion and will oppose all restraints placed upon religious practices.

12. The National Freedom Group must offer strong and merciless opposition to the policy of moving Chinese and Chinese bandits in to our East Turkistan and of

driving us, the people of the place, by force from our native soil to the East. Even if the Chinese, with false and sweet words, attempt to receive us, we will not move anywhere at all from our own soil, nor shall the Chinese enter into our land , because we know very well that for us these things would be the same as death.

13. The National Freedom Groups must fight to procure the increase and expansion of irrigated lands, rivers, and (artificial) waterways and must direct the attention of our new government to such useful projects and assist(in their realization).

14. The National Freedom Groups must oppose all of the many kinds of heavy and difficult forced labor imposed on the native peoples by the Chinese(such as the digging of completely useless trenches and so forth) because these things are no benefit to the people and are necessary to no one.

The oppression of the savage Chinese has turned into Fascist rapacity; for this it is not possible to sit with quiet and patience, only watching. Every one must know that the time has come when he must choose one of two lives: to live a really happy life in freedom, or to be crushed in slavery beneath the boot of savage Chinese.

The National Freedom Group and their members give to all people this warning: If because of our fear we improvidently let this moment pass, the Chinese will bring into our land million of Chinese bandits and they will be settled among us. Then we shall be strangled, robbed of all our belongings, and humiliated; then we shall be powerless to liberate ourselves from the claws of the Chinese Fascists.

The National Freedom Group clearly understand this situation and we have sworn an oath not to permit a single moment to pass unused from this time forward, but rather to start now to fight against the rule of savage the Chinese oppressors, for

the sake of a bright life for the people, their freedom, their fortune, and their wellbeing.

We call upon every man who takes thought for the happiness of his own family and of his people, upon all men of learning, of justice and courage, upon our heroes and all our youth, upon our brave soldiers, each and every one of them, not to let a single moment pass, to stand in our ranks as one of us to resist with us the oppressor Chinese. There is no single person who could possibly doubt that the help of the one God is on our side and his kindness is with us.

Brothers! Each of us must rise with the heroic bravery against the Chinese. Our lives and our happiness are for this moment in our hands: If we are afraid we will lose them both.

Enroll yourself as a member of the National Freedom Group! Organize in every separate place a local National Freedom Group! Let all people arise and resist the savage Chinese! The time of our triumph will certainly come!

The National Freedom Group

Source: U.S. Department of State, Office of Strategic Services File XL 32642. "Rebel Objective in Sinkiang," September 25, 1945, enclosure no. 1 to dispatch no. 23, from the American Consulate in Urumçi.

APPENDIX D

“Struggle for the Motherland” (Later Rebel Pamphlet of 1944-1949)

Originally East Turkistan, our Motherland, was the real territory of the Turkish race. We consist of seven million people. This land is our birthright left by our brave ancestors and it is our duty and responsibility to guard their heritage. The Chinese oppressor and usurpers came to this land two hundred years ago, like savage and bandits, seizing our territory, enslaving us, making our land a colony and dishonoring our holy religion. In brief, we became like men who have eyes but are blind, ears but are deaf, tongues but are dumb, and legs but are lame. Such treachery and barbarous treatment. How can they be endured? ponder over these things. Which of them can be gain said? If you are not a spy or a quisling; if you are born of your mother; if the blood from your umbilical cord wet this soil; if your father owns you as his legitimate son then you cannot deny the truth of what has just been said!

You must not forget how our country flourished of old under the leadership of such heroes of our race as Sultan Sokushbora Khan, Harun Khan, Abdul Raschid Khan, Mohamet Khan, Sudduk Khan, and Osman Khan. During the times of these great men we were master of our territory and maintained the luster of our culture equal to any others. Within the last two hundred years we have lost our bright-right

and live like animals under the cruel sway of the Chinese who are filthy and barbarous.

Why did the İli uprising occur? It was because we have the right to rise up against oppression for the sake of our liberty, the happiness and prosperity of our sons, and the renaissance of our religion. We also believe that the Allah has said to us, "I shall punish all oppressors." We also are fully convinced that the power of the masses is the power of Allah. In this faith we fought and over-throwing the treacherous Chinese sovereignty in the thee districts established a free Muslim East Turkistan State. At the same time we raised the flag that was handed down from our forefathers.

Ho, fellow countrymen, Men of the faith and members of the same blood. Fear not. Strengthen your hearts and courage and consciences.

After an abundance of bloodshed we won a compromise peace which consisted of eleven articles of agreement. In order to preserve this agreement in full, the people must be willing to sacrifice everything.

The crafty foxes, with their swinish snouts, seeking to obtain what is not theirs, the shameless and oppressive Chinese, using these eleven article as a blind, are seeking again to trap us in their net. The cunning Chinese serve us with a wooden plate (which can be used once only and then must be thrown away). "May Allah protect us from falling once more into the Chinese hands." If we do so again the people know how they will be treated. People, you must remember the past. The land is ours and invaders have no claim to it.

Now, the military heads of these oppressors at Urumchi are trying to prolong their already exhausted life. Their aim to reestablish their old barbarous methods. Together with them are a few running dogs, conscienceless fools and sycophants,

playing a quisling role with the Chinese. The eleven articles of the agreement will not allow the oppressors any road to regain their former suzerainty if its terms are fulfilled.

Ho, shameless beasts and devils. You must know that you are already caught in Hell. We, people of the same blood, must not let you quislings dance to the Chinese music.

The present is an era of democracy, justice, and liberty—no longer of absolute dictatorship. This is no more a time for slumber but a brightening period of the Twentieth Century. We must struggle unceasingly with our belts still tightened.

Let these oppressors depart quickly from our East Turkistan.

Let these spies, traitors and puppets also leave at once.

Let these running dogs of the Chinese and their coterie get out also.

Long live free East Turkistan.

Long live our Muslim Republican Government.

Long live the great, the heroic warriors. Long live the crescent calling for our thirty days of holly fast.

Long live the star calling for our five daily prayers.

Away with, away with, away with these oppressors, these spies, these pro-Chinese.

If you do not depart there is no room for you above the ground.

The Bubbling Spring

Source: U.S. Department of State, Division of Chinese Affairs, “Signs of Unrest in Tihwa,” American Consul J. Hall Paxton to the Secretary of State, Urumçi, January 13, 1947, enclosure no. 2.

APPENDIX E

Main Figures' Photographs in Historical Background of the Uyghur Secessionism

Yakub Beg



Zuo Zongtang



Yang Zengxin



Jin Shuren



Osman Batur



Ahmetcan Kasimî



Alihan Töre



Sheng Shicai



Hoca Niyaz



Ma Chung-ying



Muhammad Emin Buğra



İsa Yusuf Alptekin



Sun Yat-sen



Chiang Kai-shek



Mao Zedong



Deng Xiaoping



Erkin Alptekin



Rebiya Kadeer



İsmail Cengiz



Dolkun İsa



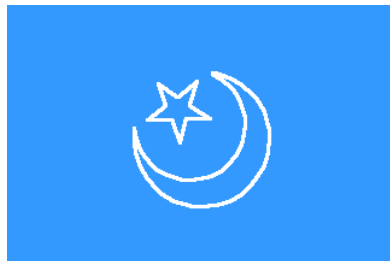
APPENDIX B

FLAGS OF EASTERN TURKISTAN

Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan



Eastern Turkistan Republic



Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile



APPENDIX G

Eastern Turkistan Regulations on the Management of Religious Affairs (2001)

(Adopted by the Chairman's Committee of Xinjiang People's Regional Congress on July 16, 1994; amended July 16, 2001)

Article 1 (new) These regulations are formulated to protect citizens' freedom of religious belief, regulate religious activities according to law, strengthen the management of religious affairs, and guide religion to adapt to a socialist society. The regulations are drawn up in accordance with the Constitution, the relevant laws and statutes, and in light of the actual conditions prevailing in the autonomous region.

Article 5 (new) Religious organizations and religious affairs must not be controlled by foreign religious forces. The principles of independence, acting on one's own and operating by oneself must be upheld. Self-Government, Self-Propagation and Self-Support must be practiced. Foreign organizations and individuals carrying out religious activities within the Autonomous Region shall be administered pursuant to the "People's Republic of China: Regulations on the Supervision of the Religious Activities of Foreigners in China." Religious organizations and individuals from outside the Autonomous Region must also abide by these regulations.

Article 7 (new) The religious affairs bureaus of people's governments above the county level together with the *xiang* (township) people's governments are responsible for the administration of religious affairs within their respective jurisdictions. The relevant departments of people's governments above the county

level should, in accordance with their own responsibilities, work together with the religious affairs bureaus, so as to manage religious affairs successfully. The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps should, in accordance with these regulations, assume responsibility for handling religious affairs within its jurisdiction.

Article 11 (new) Religious seminaries and schools and scripture (bible) classes approved by the people's government should strengthen the training of patriotic religious personnel. No organization or individual may operate religious seminaries, schools or scripture (bible) classes without approval. Clergy may, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the autonomous region and with approval (by the relevant authority), teach scripture students, and train young patriotic clergy. No organization or individual may secretly teach scripture students without approval.

Article 12 (new) Clergy enjoy the following rights and privileges. They may:

- (1) engage in religious and church (mosque) activities according to law;
- (2) participate in the management of the place for religious activities where he or she belongs;
- (3) receive religious education, engage in religious academic research and exchange.

Article 13 (new) Clergy shoulder the following responsibilities. They must:

- (1) love the country and the faith, abide by the laws and statutes of the state;
- (2) accept the supervision of the religious affairs bureaus of the people's government, the religious organization(s), and the democratic management organization of the places for religious activities.
- (3) protect the buildings, cultural objects, facilities and the environment of the places for religious activities.

Article 15 (new) Religious activities must not interfere with social order, production order, or work or life order.

Article 16 (new) Religious activities must be carried out according to the on-the-spot principle. No organized mass religious activity which spans different localities is allowed. Clergy is not allowed to administer religious activities in different localities. Missionary work in any form by non-clergy personnel is prohibited.

Article 17 (new) Pilgrimage activities are to be organized by the religious affairs bureaus of the people's government and religious organizations. No other organization or individual may organize such activities.

Article 23 (new) (2) Members of the democratic management organization of a place for religious activities are democratically elected from among the citizen believers and the clergy who belong to the place for religious activities, under the guidance of the local religious organization.

Article 24 (new) The democratic management organization of a place for religious activities may operate economic entities for the purpose of self-support. It may sell religious objects, religious art and legally published religious literature on the premises of the place for religious activities. No organization or individual is allowed to sell illegal religious publications or illegally imported religious publications. Distribution of religious leaflets or religious publications that have not been approved by the relevant department of the people's government is prohibited everywhere.

Article 27 (new) Religious organizations enjoy the following rights:

- (1) protection of the rights and interests of citizen believers, the clergy and the places for religious activities, guidance and supervision of the operation of the places for religious activities;
- (2) confirmation and supervision of clergy and other personnel;
- (3) enjoyment of the ownership and the right to use their buildings and other property according to law; independently dispose of their economic income;
- (4) management of economic entities for self-support.

Article 28 (new) A religious organization must perform the following duties:

- (1) abide by the laws and statutes of the state, accept control and supervision by the religious affairs bureaus and other relevant departments of people's governments at various levels;
- (2) propagate and carry out the policy of freedom of religious belief;
- (3) reflect the aspirations and demands of citizen believers;
- (4) educate citizen believers in patriotism, law-abiding and living in harmony;
- (5) engage in training activities to enhance the capabilities of the clergy;
- (6) assist the religious affairs bureaus of people's governments in successfully managing religious affairs;
- (7) guide citizen believers to participate in building socialist modernization.

Article 32 (new) Bringing in religious publications or other religious objects from abroad is regulated by the relevant rules of the state and the autonomous region. Religious publications containing substance that endangers the state security of the People's Republic of China or the public interest of society may not be brought into the country. Religious publications or other religious objects illegally carried into the country from abroad discovered by public security, frontier defense or customs must

be documented and handed over to the religious affairs bureau of the local people's government for investigation and disposal.

Article 36 (new) Personnel of government organs, who in the course of managing religious affairs, are found to have neglected their duty, abused power, or engaged in malpractice for personal gain shall be administratively punished within his unit or by the department overseeing said unit; where the misconduct constitutes a criminal offense, the offender shall bear criminal liability.

Article 37 (new) Law-enforcement officers from religious affairs bureaus of the people's government must show their credentials when performing their official duties. The relevant executive department must not punish the same violation twice for the same reason. Those who violate these regulations and are given administrative penalty must be issued a copy of the administrative penalty decision. In cases of fines and confiscations, bills printed by the finance department of the autonomous region must be issued, and the money turned over to the treasury according to stipulated procedures.

Source: "Devastating Blows: Religious Repression of Uighurs in Xinjiang," *Human Rights Watch*, Vol. 17, No. 2(C), p.84.
<http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/china0405/> (accessed April 12, 2008).

APPENDIX H

The Constitution of Government-in-Exile of East Turkistan Republic

(Adopted by the members of parliament that convened in Washington on 21st of November, 2004, and was announced on 22nd of November, 2004 at the National Press Club in Washington, DC)

Part One

The Name, Size, Character, Flag, National Emblem, National Anthem, National Motto, National Music, Pledge of Allegiance, Official Language, Religion, Capital City, and Political Party of the State.

Article 1 The name of the state is East Turkistan Republic. The size of the state is 1,828,418 square kilometers.

Article 2 The People and Character of the state: The people of East Turkistan consisted of Turkic people including Uyghurs, Qazaqs, Qirghiz, and Farsi speaking Tajiks and Monguls who have adopted Turkic culture throughout history. All intentional or unintentional acts which provoke disunity among these indigenous people of East Turkistan are prohibited. This is because these types of acts are considered to be a contribution to the “Divide and Rule” policy of the enemy-the Chinese that has applied against the people of East Turkistan. The state-East Turkistan which belongs to these Turkic people may not be divided under any circumstances, accordingly. The character of the state is a democratic, unified and fully legal state that respects all human rights.

Article 3 The Flag of East Turkistan is Blue Flag with a Crescent moon and Star. The blue represents the sky whilst the crescent moon and star represent Islam. The States prohibits the import or export of any goods or technologies in any of the following circumstances.

Article 4 The National Emblem of the State is a feature that includes nine points on both the right and left sites of the Crescent moon with the “Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim” in Arabic (In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate Source of all Mercy) Formula inscribed in the middle of the Crescent. The three stars above the mouth of the Crescent, with a cordon joining the points there below. The eighteen points represents the eighteen Turk clans living in East Turkistan, while the three stars symbolize the States of Kokturk, Uyghurs and Qarakhanids that were previously founded in East Turkistan.

The National Song and Music of East Turkistan are the “Uyghur Twelve Muqam” and other Folk Music of East Turkistan. The Independence Song of East Turkistan is “Shadiyane.”

Article 5 The National Anthem of the State is the following poem entitled “Qurtulush Yolida Sudek Aqti Bizning Qanimiz (Our Blood Has Run as a River on the Way of Salvation), which was written in 1933 by Memtil Ependi Tokhtaji Tewpiq”. [Known as the most talented educator and a charismatic leader of the “Jedid (Reform) Movement” in East Turkistan in the 30’s of twentieth century, Memtil Ependi called the people of East Turkistan to stand up to fight the Chinese rule of East Turkistan. Memtil Ependi was killed in 1937 at the age of 36 along with his thousands of followers by the Chinese.”]

National Music is the “Uyghur on Ikki Muqami (Uyghur Twelve Muqam)” and other Folk Music including the “Shadiyane” played in all types of National Festivities or National Holidays.

The Pledge of Allegiance is the following poem written Abdul Eziz Mehsum Abdul Qadir. [Devoted his entire life (1901-1982) for the cause of independence of East Turkistan and spend half a century in the Chinese prison cell. Abdul Eziz Mehsum has been recognized by the people of East Turkistan as the determined unshakable symbol of challenging the Chinese authority in East Turkistan.]

Article 6 The Official Language of the state is Uyghur. Qazaq and Qirghiz are used as national languages. The Religion is Islam. The State respects and protects other religions and fully guarantees the rights of practice of other religions. The Capital city of the State is Urumchi. The National Festivities or the National Holidays of East Turkistan are Nowruz, Ramadan, and Qurban Heyt (Sacrifying Festival).

The National Day of East Turkistan is November 12. [It is the Independence Day of the two East Turkistan Republics established in 1933 in Kaşgar and in 1944 in Ghulja.]

The Memorial Day is August 27. [This date is set to commemorate the martyrs--the leaders of the East Turkistan Republic who were announced death after the so called "Plane Crash Incident" reportedly occurred on August 27, 1949, after the plane took off for Beijing.]

The October 1st which was set as the Independence Day for Communist China on 1949 will be remembered as the National Grieving Day for the people of East Turkistan till East Turkistan attains its independence.

The Political Party of the State is the "National Party." However, till East Turkistan attains its independence, the Government-In-Exile will be run under the leadership of the "East Turkistan National Liberation Party." All citizens of East

Turkistan who recognize and defend this Constitution of East Turkistan are considered to be the member of these parties.

Article 7: The foregoing Articles—Article 1, 2, 3, 4, 4, 5, and 6 may not be changed by any means, nor can any proposal be set forth or attempt made for the amendment thereof.

Source: The Official Websites of the Eastern Turkistan Government in Exile.
http://www.eastturkistangovernmentinexile.us/etr_archive.html
(accessed in January3, 2008).