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China's "War on Terror" in Xinjiang: Human Security and the Causes of Violent Uighur Separatism

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The paper argues that violent Uighur separatism and terrorism conforms in a number of important respects to the human security theory of terrorism, particularly in the realm of political and civil rights. However, it argues that impetus has been given to the various separatist organisations in the region by the development of interconnections between the largely internal aspects of China's policy of integration in the region and the wider Central and South Asian dynamic of Islamic radicalism since 1990.

Keywords Central Asia, China, terrorism, Uighurs, Xinjiang

Since the events of 11 September 2001, the issue of Uighur separatism in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has been cast in the general media and by some scholarly observations regarding the region as being intimately connected to Islamist insurgencies/movements in neighbouring Central Asia and Afghanistan. Moreover, due to the diplomatic endeavours of the Chinese government, a number of allegedly "terrorist" Uighur organisations have been linked to Central Asian groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda network. In particular, the Bush Administration's decision of December 2002 to place the "East Turkestan Islamic Movement" (ETIM) on its official list of "international terrorist organisations" has done much to obscure the picture of developments in Xinjiang over the last decade and a half. The picture portrayed by the Chinese government is that China has faced, and continues to face, a concerted and violent Uighur "terrorist" threat to its security in Xinjiang. This scenario was put forward by the Chinese authorities in its January 2002 report, "East Turkistan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity," China's first official account of Uighur separatist "terrorism" in Xinjiang since 1990.¹ Since then China has consistently, in reference to both the development of Xinjiang and the wider "War on Terror," asserted the ongoing threat of Uighur "terrorism."² The key problem that is the central concern of this paper is to determine whether there has been or continues to be a terrorist threat

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to the Chinese state in Xinjiang. Evidently, the Chinese and U.S. governments assert (although with different degrees of enthusiasm) that there is a contemporary terrorist threat to China's security in Xinjiang. This paper aims to provide answers to three important questions stemming from this development:

- 1) What has been the extent of violent Uighur opposition to Chinese rule?
- 2) Can this opposition be defined as constituting terrorism and is there evidence of connections between Uighur organisations and such groups as Al Qaeda and the IMU?
- 3) Is the case of Xinjiang and the Uighur consistent with the human security theory of terrorism?

In this latter respect, the case of China's purported "War on Terror" in Xinjiang, and the identification and targeting of ETIM in particular, also presents an interesting test for the recent body of scholarship that asserts the predominance of human security in determining the development of political violence including ethnic violence and terrorism.³ Indeed, Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens, for example, argue that, "When looking at the genesis of terrorism around the world it *always* occurs in conjunction with the denial of basic human rights."⁴ More specifically it is suggested that terrorism is more likely to occur when three major sets of rights—political and civil rights, security rights, and subsistence rights—are systematically violated by the state in conjunction with the effect of "international factors." This latter point is deemed to impinge upon the development of terrorism in two major ways: historically, in terms of political development, and contemporarily, in terms of the distribution of power in the international system.⁵

The article is presented in five parts. The first section will briefly outline the theoretical framework of the human security perspective on terrorism that suggests a causal link between human rights violations and terrorism. The second section, given this human security approach, will then place the issue of Uighur terrorism into historical context by providing an account of the course of Chinese policy in the region since its incorporation into the People's Republic in late 1949. The third section will provide an account of the known violent incidents of Uighur or other ethnic minority opposition to the Chinese state in Xinjiang and Central Asia since 1990 based on the Chinese government's 2002 account, media reports (both Chinese and international), and scholarly observations. The fourth section will evaluate the alleged connections between ETIM and Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda "network" in light of the available evidence. Finally, the paper will conclude by assessing the veracity of the human security theory of terrorism in the context of Xinjiang. The paper argues that violent Uighur separatism/terrorism conforms in a number of important respects to the human security theory of terrorism, particularly in the realm of political and civil rights. However, I suggest that impetus has been given to the various separatist organisations in the region by the development of interconnections between the largely internal aspects of China's policy of integration in the region and the wider Central and South Asian dynamic of Islamic radicalism since 1990. As will become evident in the following discussion, this does not imply that Uighur separatism/terrorism originates external to Xinjiang. Rather it is to suggest that international factors have converged at distinct points in the history of the region since 1990 to stimulate latent tensions generated by the state's integrationist approach to the governance of Xinjiang.

Human Security as a Determinant of Terrorism

In contrast to the Chinese government, the pre-eminent imperative for the various pro-independence Uighur émigré organisations has been to demonstrate not only the indigeneity of the Uighur to the region currently defined as Xinjiang but also to highlight their history of political independence from Chinese-based states. In the post-Cold War era, these efforts have been supplemented by a greater focus on portraying the image of a Uighur population repressed by an authoritarian, Communist regime. Thus many Uighur émigré organisations have explicitly framed their struggle for an independent "East Turkestan" within a discourse of "democracy and human rights."⁶ This imperative has of course become more urgent for such groups in the wake of 11 September 2001 and China's endeavours to paint all Uighur pro-independence organisations as radical "Islamists" who seek to make Xinjiang an Islamic state à la the Taliban.⁷ The significance of this is that, as noted in the introduction, some contemporary scholarship asserts a causal link between violations of human rights—understood as political and civil, security, and subsistence rights—and ethnic conflict or terrorism.⁸

In particular, the work of the critical security studies scholars of the "Copenhagen School" has explored the relationship between human security, ethnic conflict, and terrorism. For one prominent theorist of this perspective, the notion or concept of security goes beyond the traditional concern with military security to encompass political, economic, societal, and ecological security "sectors."⁹ Buzan also suggested that although the individual was the "irreducible base unit" for the exploration of security, it was in fact the state that was the referent object for the analysis of international security.¹⁰ The state, however, remains the dominant referent object in this approach due to three major reasons: it is the state that has to come to grips with the "substate-state-international problematic"; the state is the primary agent for alleviating insecurity; and the state remains the dominant actor in the international system.¹¹ For other Copenhagen School scholars, in particular Waever, concerns regarding state sovereignty became increasingly embedded in the post-Cold War era in the realm of societal security.¹² Roe, building upon this approach, suggests that while the state may be the primary agent for alleviating insecurity, it can also play a role in undermining the security of some segments of its population.¹³

At this point the security dilemma commonly conceived of in IR theory as operating at the level of sovereign states in the international system is brought "into" the state in order to account for sub-state conflict. The security dilemma as it stands in IR theory rests upon the notion that the actions of a state to enhance its security produce reactions that can make it less secure via inducing insecurity in other states regarding its intentions in the acquisition of arms, for example. Therefore, the security dilemma is primarily concerned with the juxtaposition of the actors' intentions—security—and the outcome of their policies/actions—insecurity. According to Waever et al., there is, however, a distinction between state security and societal security: state security is generally conceived of as concerned with protecting the sovereignty of the state from external threats, while societal security is concerned with threats to identity.¹⁴ Both, however, relate to survival: if a state loses its sovereignty it will not survive as a state, while if a society loses its identity it will not survive as a society. But a key question then arises: How is a given society's identity threatened? Roe, for instance, argues that societal security is threatened when a society believes that its "we" identity is being put in danger, whether this is objectively the case or

simply perceived, arguing that, “Those means that can threaten societal identity range from the suppression of its expression to interference with its ability to reproduce itself across generations.”¹⁵ Thus a wide range of state action may threaten the reproduction of identity, from restrictions on the use of language or dress, control or closure of places of education and worship, to the deportation or killing of members of the community.

This perspective is useful in the context of Xinjiang, given that there has emerged within the Uighur émigré community a tendency to portray the Uighurs as experiencing a form of “cultural genocide” at the hands of the Chinese state. Erkin Alptekin, the president of the World Uyghur Congress, for example, has stated that, “The Chinese want to replace us with their own people as colonists, and assimilate those of us who remain, *wiping out our culture*.”¹⁶ Therefore, at least a part of the Uighur émigré community certainly perceives that the societal security of the Uighur in Xinjiang, in terms of its “we” identity, is being threatened by the actions of the Chinese state. Indeed, Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens suggest terrorism will most likely occur when a population’s political/civil, security, and subsistence rights are violated by the state. They hypothesise that:

...terrorism is likely to be carried out by individuals in states with medium levels of repression as these citizens feel justified in responding to state terror with terrorist acts. Further in states with medium levels of subsistence, citizens are more likely to feel deprived relative to others and that sense of injustice fosters terrorism. Finally, terrorism is likely to ferment in these areas particularly when individuals feel that other options of dissent are limited due to the relatively closed political system within the state.¹⁷

The question remains, however, as to whether these conditions prevail in contemporary Xinjiang.

The Weight of History: Xinjiang Under the People’s Republic of China

According to Martha Crenshaw, “Both the phenomenon of terrorism and our conception of it depend on historical context—political, social and economic—and on how the groups and individuals who participate in or respond to the actions we call terrorism relate to the world in which they act.”¹⁸ Any evaluation of Uighur separatist violence in Xinjiang must take into account the historical record of the region, particularly its relation to the current Chinese state. Although this paper is focused on the development of Xinjiang in the post-1949 period, and in particular with the post-1990 period, it must be stated that resistance from the Uighur (and other ethnic groups) to the imperial, republican, and communist Chinese states was evident from at least the eighteenth century onward.¹⁹ Significantly, the precedent of an independent “East Turkestan” is fresh in the collective memory of both the ethnic minorities of Xinjiang and the Chinese state, with two such incipient states proclaimed by Uighur independence movements in 1933 at Kashgar and a more enduring one in Ili between 1944 and 1949 that was supported by the Soviet Union.²⁰ The cause and evolution of Uighur separatism in the region has thus been profoundly shaped by these historical precedents, as has the Chinese state’s perceptions of and responses to autonomist ethnic minority demands and movements. In light of the Chinese

state's contemporary struggle against Uighur "terrorism" in Xinjiang and the post-9/11 international political environment, the nature of these two independence movements—particularly the relationship between the separatists and external influence from Russian/Soviet Central Asia, and the role of Islam in the rebellions—weighs especially heavy on Chinese perceptions of the causes and potential outcomes of such movements. Thus it is interesting to note the current Chinese government's account of the pre-1949 Uighur separatist movements. Instructively, the most germane aspects of the two ETRs in China's 2003 "White Paper on the History and Development of Xinjiang" was the perceived connection between the separatist demands of Uighurs, external forces, and religious and nationalist ideologies. The view that such past, and by implication current and future, separatism in Xinjiang was generated by a combination of malevolent external forces and radical Islamist or nationalist ideologies is clearly expressed:

*They incited all ethnic groups speaking Turki and believing in Islam to join hands to create a theocratic state. They denied the history of the great motherland jointly built by all ethnic groups of China. They clamored for "opposition to all ethnic groups other than the Turks" and for the "annihilation of pagans", asserting that "China had been the enemy of the 'East Turkistan' nation for 3000 years."*²¹

This account of the development of Uighur separatism in Xinjiang very clearly projects into the past the Chinese state's contemporary concerns and fears regarding Uighur separatism in the region. Indeed, there is a clear tendency to link internal unrest with external forces and religious extremism:

*In the 1990s, under the influence of extremism, separatism and international terrorism, part of the "East Turkistan" forces inside and outside Chinese territory turned to splittist and sabotage activities with terrorist violence as the main means, even brazenly declaring that terrorist violence is the only way to achieve their aims.*²²

This discourse is but one element in the continuation of the post-1949 Chinese state's attempt to portray Uighur separatism as going against the tide of history via its opposition to the multi-ethnic, unitary state that is the PRC. Indeed, the theme that is evident throughout the documents cited above is that the very notion of a separate, independent "East Turkestan" is not only "reactionary" but has no historical basis as Xinjiang "has been part of China since ancient times" and the Uighur members of "the great family of the Chinese nation." As Gardner Bovingdon has remarked, "How, other than by showing that Xinjiang had never separated from China, could it demonstrate that it was inseparable?"²³

This task has arguably underpinned China's approach to the region and its peoples since the PLA's "peaceful liberation" of Xinjiang in October 1949. A brief survey of the development of Chinese rule in Xinjiang between 1949 and 1990 is necessary in order to contextualise the problematic relationship between the state and Xinjiang's major non-Han ethnic group, the Uighur. It will become clear in the following discussion that the sources of Uighur dissent stem largely, although not exclusively, from the contours of Chinese policy in Xinjiang after 1949. Indeed, the intended and unintended consequences of Chinese policy toward the region since

1949 have played a major role in generating amongst the Uighur (and other ethnic groups) a perception of their ethnic and cultural identity being existentially threatened by the increasing dominance of Han Chinese within the bounds of their own “autonomous region.” The accomplishment of such a task in the context of Xinjiang, however, has been far from unproblematic given the historical and cultural linkages of the region’s major ethnic groups with peoples and states to the west. But it has also been a contest over the authorship, content, and form of Uighur identity between the “party-state” bent on solidifying the unitary, multi-ethnic state of the PRC and an ethnic group with unsurprisingly different aspirations. This tension was evident from the initial projection of CCP power into Xinjiang. Key elements in the formation of modern Uighur ethnic identity—language, religion, and culture—not only highlight the non-Chinese orientation of the region but have also been the subject of a program of state action.²⁴

The task of making Xinjiang an “inseparable” part of China therefore goes beyond the Chinese state’s historiographic project to encompass the “nuts and bolts” of Chinese administration in the region. The program of state action in Xinjiang since 1949 can be characterised as one of integration, albeit integration that theoretically ensures the “autonomy” of the officially recognised ethnic minorities.²⁵ From the absorption of Xinjiang into the PRC in October 1949, there have been sporadic episodes of overt ethnic minority opposition to Chinese rule. Yet the most intense periods of unrest in Xinjiang correlate to the fluctuating policies and actions of the state in the region.²⁶ This is particularly accurate with regard to the Maoist period (1949–1976) in Xinjiang, where the policies, campaigns, and crises induced by the ideological vicissitudes of national politics produced opposition from the region’s ethnic minorities. Another constant of the pre-1990 history of Xinjiang was that the opposition thus produced was susceptible to manipulation by the Soviet Union, which as noted above, had played a major role in the region’s history prior to 1949. The constant instruments of Chinese rule between 1949 and 1990 were the establishment of military-agricultural colonies—through the instrument of the paramilitary Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, encouragement of Han colonization, state control and management of religious expression and institutions, and cooptation of ethnic minority elites. The intensity with which individual components of this strategy were pursued varied due to both internal political considerations and the dynamics of China’s relations with the Soviet Union.²⁷

As in the rest of China in the post-Mao era, Xinjiang experienced an initial “liberalisation” and “reform” dynamic in terms of the state’s approach to the region. The CCP’s policies toward Xinjiang in the early 1980s were marked by increased liberalisation, particularly toward religion.²⁸ The implementation of these policies were, however, hampered by the development of conflict within the provincial leadership and the central government as to the political and security implications of such relatively liberal policies.²⁹ These implications primarily concerned the provincial leadership’s conviction that increased economic and cultural autonomy for the region’s ethnic minorities would generate demands for greater political autonomy. Furthermore, the provincial and central government’s perception of the Soviet and Islamic threat to Xinjiang had been significantly heightened by the Soviet’s continuing involvement in Afghanistan and the impact of Iran’s Islamic revolution in 1979.³⁰ The remainder of the 1980s was punctuated by various social and ethnic disturbances, including protests against the use of Xinjiang for nuclear tests in November 1985, demonstrations in June 1988 against the publication of a book

allegedly containing racial slurs against Uighurs and Kazaks,³¹ and the May–June 1989 student demonstrations in sympathy with those in Tiananmen Square.³²

The state's reformist economic strategy, as in other regions of China, produced contradictory developments in Xinjiang. In particular, the de-centralisation of economic decision-making and the spatial differentiation of the Chinese economy through the channelling of central government investment toward the eastern coastal regions by the late 1980s, encouraged the development of a fledgling attempt to re-orient Xinjiang's economy toward Soviet Central Asia.³³ This period also witnessed the beginnings of the dynamics that would come to characterise Chinese rule of Xinjiang and China's relations with the neighboring states into the 1990s. The provincial leadership's linkage of internal instability and external influences took on greater significance with China's involvement in supporting the *mujahideen* in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union.³⁴ The radicalised Islamic movements in Afghanistan and post-Soviet Central Asia that Soviet defeat would spawn would prove to be of enduring importance for not only such states as the U.S. and Pakistan but also China. These three factors would converge in the 1990s to make Chinese governance of Xinjiang and China's foreign relations with the region increasingly problematic.

China's strategy to manage these dynamics since 1990 has rested upon the development of what has been termed a "double-opening" approach to simultaneously integrate Xinjiang with Central Asia and China proper in economic terms, while establishing security and cooperation with China's Central Asian neighbors. Internally, this agenda has resulted in increased central government investment, particularly regarding construction and infrastructure projects (especially energy-related), and enhanced government control and management of ethnic minority religious and cultural practices.³⁵ Externally, China's foreign policy in Central Asia has reflected the ascendancy of this goal of integration for Xinjiang, with an emphasis placed on the establishment of political, economic, and infrastructural links with the Central Asian states, particularly Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The major challenge for Chinese policy in this respect has been to reconcile the perceived need for strengthened integration and security of the province with the economic and political opportunities accruing to China presented by the relative retreat of Russian power from Central Asia after 1991.³⁶ However, these opportunities to increase Chinese power and influence in Central Asia generated by the collapse of the Soviet Union also stimulated a resurgence of ethnic minority opposition to Chinese rule in Xinjiang.

Although some observers have emphasized the importance of external developments in generating such opposition, it is clear that Chinese policy has also played a key role in this regard.³⁷ In particular, the parameters of China's "double-opening" strategy and economic reform program have inter-acted with the external dynamics of Central Asian independence and ethnic and religious renewal to pose challenges to Chinese control of Xinjiang. However, although the establishment of political, economic, and cultural linkages with Central Asia are seen as vital to the success of the state's development and integration strategy for Xinjiang, they are simultaneously viewed with suspicion as a potential source of threat to this very process due to the region's recent history of trans-border ethno-religious movements such as the "Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan" (IMU) and the Taliban.³⁸ The contradictory nature of this position compelled China to seek a broader regional approach to issues of regional economic cooperation, ethnic separatism, drugs and weapons trafficking, radical Islam, and border security that culminated in the creation of the

“Shanghai Five” in 1996 and its eventual transformation into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in June 2001.³⁹

Chinese policy to address these challenges to its position in Xinjiang since 1990 has been characterized by five major strategies: (1) Re-centralisation of economic decision-making; (2) Han in-migration; (3) Exploitation of Xinjiang’s potential energy resources; (4) Greater political and economic links with Central Asia; and (5) Reinforced state control of ethnic minority religious and cultural expression/practice.⁴⁰ Key aspects of this agenda—particularly increased in-migration of Han and increased state control/management of ethnic minority religious and cultural expression—are often cited by external observers and Uighur émigré organisations as major sources of Uighur grievances against the state.⁴¹ The issue of population transfers to ethnic minority regions has been particularly evident in ongoing controversies regarding Chinese policy towards Tibet, although recent research suggests that such claims have been over-stated by Tibetan exile organisations.⁴² In the context of Xinjiang, the claim that the Uighur and other ethnic groups were being diluted by Han in-migration has also been evident for some decades. Although in Xinjiang the dynamic of Han in-migration to the region has undergone fluctuations, generally correlated to changing state policy. For example, the Han proportion of the population actually fell during the 1980s with the relaxation of the coercive population transfers of the Maoist period, from 5.32 million or 40.45% of the province’s total population of 13.16 million in 1982 to 5.69 million or 37.6% out of a total population of 15.16 million in 1990. The Han proportion of the population, however, rose over the following decade to stand at 7.49 million or 40.6% of the total provincial population of 18.45 million in 2000.⁴³ Significantly, Han in-migration during the 1990s was largely voluntary and prompted by the economic opportunities presented by the state’s development strategy.⁴⁴ However, the issue of a “floating” population of largely Han “seasonal migrants” attracted to the region by the employment opportunities derived from infrastructure developments, the cotton industry, and the energy industry has also had a significant impact.⁴⁵ While the 2000 census estimated that there were up to 790,000 of such “sojourners” in Xinjiang, a number of external observers have asserted that such figures are understated.⁴⁶ Such an assessment appears to be correct with local governments in other provinces beginning to subsidise travel costs of such seasonal migrations to Xinjiang.⁴⁷ Moreover, the head of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, Li Dezhu, has acknowledged the impact that the state’s Great Western Development campaign (launched in June 1999) will have on regions such as Xinjiang, suggesting that “there will be some changes in the proportions of the nationalities” and “contradictions and friction in their contacts.”⁴⁸

The economic development strategy of the state has resulted in the widening of inter-ethnic and regional disparities within Xinjiang. Although the central government has invested much in Xinjiang since the 1990s, such investment has been channelled to large infrastructure projects, with Beijing reporting in 2003 that 70 billion yuan (US\$8.36 billion) had been invested in building highways, power plants, and telecommunications.⁴⁹ One observer notes that while economic stimulus has been provided by the direction of state investment toward large-scale infrastructure or mineral extraction projects, it has also led to competition for resources and jobs in which the region’s ethnic minorities are at a disadvantage.⁵⁰ A rural-urban economic disparity has also been noted by a number of observers, with the annual urban GDP per capita in 2003 standing at 14.3% (7300 yuan) compared to 8.8% (1861 yuan) in

rural areas. Significantly, urban populations in Xinjiang are predominantly Han while the rural population remains predominantly ethnic minority, most particularly Uighur.⁵¹ In recent times the state has also attempted to "cash in" on the multi-ethnicity of China, particularly in such remote and "exotic" regions such as Xinjiang, through the promotion of tourism.⁵² The impact of this process in Xinjiang appears to be somewhat contradictory for the state and the ethnic minorities. On the one hand, the acceleration of infrastructure development and the quest for tourist dollars has led to the destruction of the traditional, Uighur centres of major cities and their distinctive architecture such as Kashgar, in favour of modern shopping precincts and apartment developments.⁵³ Yet, simultaneously the opening of the region's economy since the early 1990s to Central Asia and the foreign tourist market has presented opportunities for Uighur entrepreneurship.⁵⁴ However, Uighurs and other ethnic minorities remain, "intimidated by the process of securing licenses and approvals and have greater difficulty obtaining financing" in the endeavor to establish new businesses.⁵⁵ Perhaps more interestingly, Gladney has noted that the state's attempt to portray the southern oases of Xinjiang, in particular Kashgar, as the centre of "traditional" Uighur Islamic culture to the foreign tourist market—even though historically the eastern oasis of Turpan is generally believed to be the centre of Uighur culture—has reinforced a Uighur identity at odds with the state. Indeed, he highlights the contradictory outcome of this process:

The re-creation of Uyghur ethnicity has come full circle: the Chinese state has identified a people who have in the past fifty years taken on that assigned identity as their own, and in the process, those who have accepted that identity have sought to define it and exploit it on their own terms.⁵⁶

The issue of the state's control and management of religious and cultural expression in Xinjiang is a long-standing and problematic one. China under the rule of the explicitly atheist Chinese Communist Party has constantly exhibited a concern to manage the Islamic confession of the majority of Xinjiang's ethnic minority populations, in particular the Uighur. Mackerras highlights the major problem for the state in this regard:

Islam is intrinsic to Uygur identity. Many Uygurs believe they should be loyal Muslims simply because they are Uygurs, even though Islam is a universal religion that commands adherence among peoples of many nationalities, both in Xinjiang and worldwide. This link between Uygur ethnic identity and Islam is one of the reasons the Chinese state is suspicious of Islam.⁵⁷

This has led to the development of a cycle of what a number of observers have termed "soft" and "hard" policies toward religion in the region.⁵⁸ The "soft" approach has been characterised by a relative tolerance and even encouragement of institutionalised Islam—through such measures as state-funding for mosque construction and the activities of the state-controlled Chinese Islamic Association—when it is perceived as necessary to gain the acquiescence of the Uighur population. Meanwhile, the "hard" policies in contrast have been characterised by campaigns against religious education outside of state-sanctioned institutions, "illegal" mosque construction, and the "re-education" and "reform" of religious leaders when the state perceives Islam to be a threat to security. The close link between Islam and

Uighur identity has meant that any attempt by the state to regulate religious practice and expression is ultimately a cause of resentment for the Uighur and is often perceived as an attempt to weaken Uighur identity. For the state, however, heightened Islamic consciousness, if not adequately managed, is perceived to be at the root of outbreaks of opposition and violence.⁵⁹ Rudelson, commenting in the late 1990s, highlighted the Catch-22 situation that this entails for the Chinese state:

Government religious reforms were intended to quell Uyghur disaffection with Chinese rule and cause Uyghurs to develop more harmonious sentiments for the Han Chinese. However, the Chinese are caught in a dilemma: when they allow or encourage it, Uyghurs become more content with the government but their strengthened Islamic practice leads them to feel more separate from and apathetic towards Chinese society.⁶⁰

This cycle was evident throughout the 1990s, with the authorities instituting regular “Strike Hard” campaigns in the region. In the rest of China “Strike Hard” campaigns are focused upon achieving accelerated arrests, trials, and sentencing of criminals, but in Xinjiang they are directed to a substantial degree against “national separatists” and “illegal religious activities.”⁶¹ Moreover, this cycle has continued into the early twenty-first century, with the “hard” approach and associated “Strike Hard” campaigns re-implemented from late 2001 onward after the events of 9/11.⁶²

Another long-standing factor that has led to the dominance of the Han in Xinjiang, and the increasing political marginalisation of the Uighur, is the system of “national regional autonomy” practiced in the region. In contrast to the Soviet Union which established a system based on federal republics with a theoretical right to secession for its national minorities, the PRC offered its ethnic minorities a system of limited territorial autonomy. Three levels of “autonomous government” were established in the region between 1952 and 1955: the autonomous region (equivalent to provincial status), autonomous districts, and autonomous counties/prefectures. Autonomous government could be established in a particular locality: (i) when inhabited by one national minority, (ii) when inhabited by one large national minority including certain areas inhabited by other smaller nationalities and (iii) when jointly established by two or more areas each inhabited by a different national minority. The second designation was applied to Xinjiang given, as we noted earlier, that the region’s population constitutes thirteen ethnic groups. The population of Xinjiang in 1955 (the year “regional autonomy” was implemented) was estimated to stand at four and a half to five million, of which seventy to seventy-five percent were Uighur, while the Han accounted for five percent.⁶³ Thus, power and representation within the proposed autonomous government was divided amongst thirteen constituent ethnic minorities even though the Uighur were evidently in the majority. Moreover, the titular ethnic group in seventeen out of the twenty-seven “autonomous” units established in Xinjiang after 1955 accounted for less than fifty percent of the population of the autonomous unit.⁶⁴ Thus the CCP achieved two major goals, “to reinforce the idea that Xinjiang belonged to thirteen different *minzu* and to counter-balance the overwhelming political and demographic weight of the Uyghurs.”⁶⁵

Furthermore, while the state’s policy on regional autonomy explicitly states that the head of an autonomous region, prefecture, or county must be a member of the ethnic group exercising autonomy, in actuality it is the CCP that wields real power in the region with Mackerras recently noting that ethnic minorities comprise around 37

percent of the 958,000 CCP members in Xinjiang.⁶⁶ That the CCP apparatus in Xinjiang is dominated by Han is also suggested by the fact that all first Party secretaries across the one hundred and twenty-four prefectural, municipal, and county levels of the Party in the region; none are from an ethnic minority.⁶⁷ As a strategic region with a substantial ethnic minority population with a history of opposition to Chinese rule, Xinjiang thus experiences a much higher degree of central government control compared to other province-level units, further illustrated by the September 2002 promotion of Xinjiang's first Party secretary, Wang Lequan, to the Politburo in Beijing.⁶⁸

The Extent of Uighur "Terrorism" in Xinjiang and Central Asia

An important starting point for an exploration into "terrorism" in any given socio-political and historical context is to establish a workable definition of the phenomenon. Thus, this section will briefly discuss some prominent definitions of the phenomenon in order to establish a workable definition with which to evaluate the record of "terrorist" incidents that will be documented below. "Terrorism" is, of course, notoriously difficult to define due in large measure to the political consequences or effects of particular interpretations. As Laqueur has noted, perhaps oversimplifying the issue, "a comprehensive, generally accepted definition of terrorism does not exist and is unlikely to come into existence, if only because terrorists and their victims will not agree on the matter."⁶⁹ Indeed, perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to the formulation of such a definition of terrorism is that the term has been defined by numerous observers as encompassing an array of violent actions by a wide variety of actors. For example, "terrorism" has been defined as politically motivated violence by small groups,⁷⁰ covert violence for political ends,⁷¹ and as premeditated violence aimed to "create a climate of extreme fear or terror."⁷² Thus it can be said that the majority of definitions contain similar emphasis on a linkage between violence, political ends/motives, and "innocent" victims.⁷³

Left unstated, however, in many of these definitions is the general tendency to privilege the state in terms of establishing an almost one-way trajectory of culpability for political violence. That is to say it is generally conceived of that "terrorism" is nearly always perpetrated against the legitimate political community of the state by a small group of malcontents. Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens, for example, attempt to overcome this problem by utilising Bueno de Mesquita's definition of terrorism as, "any act of violence undertaken for the purpose of altering a government's political policies or actions that targets those who do not actually have the personal authority to alter governmental policy."⁷⁴ Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens maintain that this means "terrorism can be distinguished from other forms of conflict by its target" and that terrorism thus "involves conflict where non-governmental entities target civilians, as opposed to other forms of conflict where the targets are elements of the government."⁷⁵ Cooper, however, proposes a more straightforward definition of terrorism, which he defines as, "the intentional generation of massive fear by human beings for the purpose of securing or maintaining control over other human beings."⁷⁶ Cooper's thrust is that regardless of the target or indeed the nature of the perpetrator, it is the act itself that matters:

It must be stressed that there is a basic antinomy here: What *you* do is terrorism. From the point of view of definition, this is not a question

of degrees such as dogs, for example, the term *high crimes and misdemeanors*, in the impeachment realm. What is asserted is a difference in kind; *I* don't commit terrorism, *you* do... From a definitional perspective, it ought not to matter who does what to whom. Terrorism should be defined solely by the nature of what is done.⁷⁷

These particular definitions of terrorism, however, restrict the applicability of it to "non-governmental" or sub-state actors, thus raising the contentious point that sovereign states, or institutions thereof, cannot perpetrate acts of terror. The significance of this in the context of exploring the issue of terrorism in Xinjiang of course stems from some Uighur émigré organisations accusations of Chinese "state terrorism" in Xinjiang.⁷⁸ This issue will only be dealt with tangentially, as the central focus of the paper concerns whether incidents of violent Uighur opposition in the region can first, be defined as terrorism and second, whether the perpetrators of such acts have connections with such organisations as Al Qaeda and the IMU, as the Chinese government maintains. Thus, Bueno de Mesquita's definition of terrorism as, "any act of violence undertaken for the purpose of altering a government's political policies or actions that targets those who do not actually have the personal authority to alter governmental policy," will be utilised as it encompasses the linkages between violence, political ends/motives, and the targeting of civilians that is common to most definitions of terrorism.

The remainder of this section presents the available evidence on incidents of violence in Xinjiang first, from Chinese government sources and second, from international media reports, émigré sources, and scholarly observations regarding Xinjiang. According to the first official Chinese account of "terrorism" in Xinjiang, "East Turkestan Terrorists Exposed" released on 21 January 2002, "East Turkistan terrorist forces" were responsible for over 200 "terrorist incidents" between 1990 and 2001 that claimed the lives of 162 people and injured 440.⁷⁹ The report claims that these "terrorist forces" carried out "explosions," "assassinations," "attacks on police and government officials," "crimes of poison and arson," and "established secret training bases" in order to create an "atmosphere of terror" in Xinjiang.⁸⁰ The cases outlined in the document, "East Turkestan Terrorists Exposed," are presented under headings describing the type of "terrorist" action undertaken. Thus, as noted above, there are six such categories: explosions, assassinations, attacks on police and government institutions, crimes of poison and arson, establishment of secret training bases, and plotting and organising disturbances. Moreover, this report is the sole source of material regarding incidents of assassinations and attacks involving poison and arson.

It is evident from the enumeration of the "terrorist" incidents outlined in this document, and tabulated below, that there are a number of discrepancies regarding the number of incidents and the number of deaths and injuries for which evidence is provided. Moreover, the nature and method of some of the incidents detailed raise questions as to whether they can indeed be defined as constituting a "terrorist" as opposed to a merely criminal act. For example, from the data supplied in this document the total number of deaths directly attributed to "terrorism" in Xinjiang between 1990 and 2001 is 56, while the number injured is 362. These figures are substantially less than those enumerated in the introduction to the report, while it is also interesting to note that the report takes pains to state that the victims of "terrorism" in Xinjiang have come from "all ethnic groups" as well as government officials, resulting in the deaths of 162 people and injuries to 440.⁸¹

As outlined in Tables 1–7, the report details 39 incidents of “terrorist” activity, well below the figure of “over 200” stated in the comments cited above. Moreover, the document leaves the relatively substantial number of 106 deaths and 78 injuries unaccounted for. It should also be noted that the injury figure of 362 from Tables 1–7 is significantly bolstered by the inclusion of the “more than 200” injured figure given in Table 6 for the incident in Yining (Kulja), of 25–27 February 1997. If this figure is removed, the report details only 162 injuries. Does this mean that the remaining deaths and injuries for which evidence is not supplied, but nonetheless claimed as the result of “terrorist” actions, were not deemed to be politically significant? Interestingly, the Chinese report also omits the May and June 1998 bus bombings in Osh, Kyrgyzstan, that killed five people, even though the Kyrgyz authorities subsequently arrested and sentenced a Turk, a Russian, and two Uighurs (Chinese citizens) in connection to these attacks.⁸²

There have also been a number of events and incidents linked to Uighur separatism that have taken place outside of Xinjiang in the neighbouring Central Asian states of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan that bear upon the discussion of Uighur “terrorism” and its impact on China’s relations with the Central Asian states. On June 9, 2001, the body of Dilbirim Samasakova, a prominent Uighur activist, was found near a reservoir outside of Almaty, Kazakhstan.⁸³ According to an Amnesty International report, Samasakova was head of the charitable Nuzugum Foundation that provided assistance to Uighur refugees from Xinjiang, and suggests that her death was politically motivated.⁸⁴ In Kyrgyzstan in March 2001, two Uighurs were sentenced to death after being accused of taking part in the May and June 1998 bus bombings in the town of Osh noted above.⁸⁵ In June the following year, two gunmen killed the Chinese ambassador to Kyrgyzstan, Wang Jianping, his driver, and a prominent Uighur businessman, Umar Nurmukhamedov, in the capital Bishkek.⁸⁶ According to eyewitness accounts, the two gunmen approached the diplomat’s stationary Mercedes and opened fire at close range with handguns.⁸⁷ Although there was immediate speculation that Nurmukhamedov was the real target of the attack, Kyrgyz and Chinese authorities linked it to Uighur “terrorism,” with the two suspects subsequently arrested and eventually extradited to China in August 2002 over the attack identified as members of ETLO.⁸⁸ An explosion at a Bishkek market on 27 December 2002 and the bombing of a bank in Osh in May 2003 were also blamed on Uighur “terrorists.”⁸⁹ Although the first of these was initially reported to be the result of a container of fireworks,⁹⁰ Uzbek and Kyrgyz authorities subsequently apprehended a number of suspects, including three Uighurs, who were said to be members of the IMU.⁹¹ Finally, in March 2003, a bus en route from Bishkek to Kashgar in Xinjiang was attacked by a group of armed men with twenty-one passengers, including nineteen Chinese citizens, killed.⁹² The Kyrgyz Interior Ministry subsequently identified two of the attackers as members of ETLO, although they were said to have subsequently escaped to Turkey.

Significantly, there were no violent incidents in Xinjiang or Central Asia between 2003 and 2006 that have been attributed, by media reports or official Chinese government statements, to any of the above named Uighur “terrorist” groups.⁹³ During this period, however, there were a number of developments related to China’s ongoing campaign against Uighur “terrorism” in the region. Significantly, Pakistani authorities reported in October 2003 that Pakistani troops had killed ETIM’s leader, Hasan Mahsum, during an anti-Al Qaeda operation in South Waziristan. Subsequently, in October 2005 authorities in Xinjiang stated that they

Table 1. Explosions¹⁴²

Target(s)	Group identified	Date & location	Casualties
1) Bombing of a "video theatre"	"East Turkistan terrorist organisation"	28 February, 1991 – Kuqa County/Aksu	Deaths: 1 Injuries: 13
2) Bombing of two buses	"terrorists"	5 February, 1992 – Urumqi	Deaths: 3 Injuries: 23
3) Ten "explosions" at department stores, markets, hotels & "places for cultural activities"	"East Turkistan terrorist organization"	17 June to 5 September 1993 – "southern Xinjiang": Kashgar and Khotan specified	Deaths: 2 Injuries: 36
4) Bombing of three buses	"East Turkistan terrorist organization"	25 February, 1997 – Urumqi	Deaths: 9 Injuries: 68
5) Six explosions	"East Turkistan terrorists"	22 February to 30 March 1998 – Yecheng County/Kashi [Kashgar] Prefecture	Deaths: 0 Injuries: 3
6) Eight explosions – targets included home of director of Public Security Bureau	"East Turkistan terrorists"	7 April 1998 – Yecheng County/Kashi [Kashgar] Prefecture	Deaths: 0 Injuries: 8

Table 2. Assassinations/attempted assassinations

Target(s)	Group identified	Date & location	Casualties
1) Abliz Damolla: executive committee member of county CPPCC & imam	“East Turkistan terrorists”	24 August 1993 – Yecheng County, Kashi [Kashgar] Prefecture	● Deaths: 0 Injuries: 1
2) Hakimsidiq Haji: vice-chairman of Islamic Association of Xinhe County	“terrorists”	22 March 1996 – Xinhe County, Aksu Prefecture	○ Deaths: 1 Injuries: 0
3) Qavul Toqa and family: member of CPPCC National Committee and deputy of XUAR People’s Congress	“terrorists”	29 April 1996 – Qunas village, Alaqaqha township, Kuqa County	○ Deaths: 5 Injuries: 1
4) Arunhan Aji and son: executive committee member of the Islamic Association of China, vice-chairman of the CPPCC Xinjiang Regional Committee and chairman of Kashi [Kashgar] Islamic Association	“East Turkistan terrorist organization”	12 May 1996 – Kashi [Kashgar]	● Deaths: 0 Injuries: 2
5) Omarjan and wife—manager of a reclamation area	“terrorists”	23 March 1997 – Jinyinchuan, Aksu Prefecture	* Deaths: 2 Injuries: 0
6) Turdi Niyaz: village official	“terrorists”	3 July 1997 – Bashereq, Avat County	* Deaths: 2 Injuries: 0

(Continued)

Table 2. Continued

Target(s)	Group identified	Date & location	Casualties
7) Yunus Sidiq Damolla: member of the Islamic Association of China & Xinjiang, chairman of Islamic Association of Aksu and Imam of Baicheng mosque	“terrorist group acting on the orders of East Turkistan organization abroad”	6 November 1997 – Baicheng, Aksu Prefecture	◦ Deaths: 1 Injuries: 0
8) Muhammad Rozi Muhammat: village official	“terrorists”	4 June 1997 – Huangdi village, Aqik township, Moyu County, Khotan Prefecture	● Deaths: 1 Injuries: 0
9) Abliz Haji: executive committee member of the CPPCC Yecheng County committee & Imam	“terrorist group acting on the orders of East Turkistan organization abroad”	27 January 1998 – Yecheng, Kashi [Kashgar] Prefecture	◦ Deaths: 1 Injuries: 0
10) Hudaberdi Tohti and family: political instructor	“terrorists”	23 August 1999 – Bosikem township, Zepu County, Kashi [Kashgar] Prefecture	◦ Deaths: 2 Injuries: 1
11) Muhammadjan Yaqup: official of a People’s Court	“gang of terrorists”	3 February 2001 – Shufu county, Kashi [Kashgar] Prefecture	● Deaths: 1 Injuries: 0

● Denotes attack with knives (4).

◦ Denotes attack with knives and small arms (5).

* Denotes unknown form of attack (2).

Table 3. Attacks on police & government institutions

Target(s)	Group identified	Date & location	Casualties
1) People's Government office building	"terrorists"	27 August 1996 – Yecheng County, Kashi [Kashgar] Prefecture	Deaths: 6 Injuries: 0
2) Police station	"terrorists"	24 October 1999 – Saili township, Zepu County	Deaths: 2 Injuries: 2

had arrested nineteen "foreign militants" who, according to Xinjiang Party Secretary Wang Lequan, "were sent to Xinjiang for violent sabotage," although no further information regarding the origin of these militants has since become available.⁹⁴ However, Chinese authorities officially stated on 9 January 2007 that People's Armed Police (PAP) had engaged in a "fierce battle" with alleged ETIM fighters at a "secret training camp" on 5 January 2007 in Akto County in the remote Pamir mountain region of Xinjiang. Xinjiang authorities asserted that they had also captured significant amounts of weaponry and explosives at the "training camp" that had been "smuggled" into the region from Central Asia.⁹⁵ Although this was subsequently reported in Western media reports, no further information regarding this clash has come to light.⁹⁶ If the camp and militants are in fact established as having clear links to ETIM, it will be the first major ETIM-related incident since the reported death of the group's leader Hasan Mahsum late in 2003. Moreover, given Mahsum's death, this development may also be the first confirmation that ETIM is operational within Xinjiang.

Table 4. Crimes of poison & arson

Act & target	Group identified	Date & location	Casualties
1) 23 cases of poisoning: domestic animals	"East Turkistan Liberation Organization" (ETLO)	30 January to 18 February 1998 – Kashi [Kasghar] city	Deaths: 1 Injuries: 4
2) 15 cases of arson: Huada Plaza, Daximen, two clothing and one timber market, Urumqi Hotel & "Business and Trade Center"	ETLO	23 May 1998 – Urumqi	Deaths: 0 Injuries: 0
3) 3 cases of arson: cotton purchasing station of the Khotan City Cotton & Hemp Company	"terrorists"	11 October 1999 – Khotan city	Deaths: 0 Injuries: 0

Table 5. Training/arms manufacturing bases

Group	Base location	Purpose(s)	Date
1) “Shock Brigade of the Islamic Reformist Party”	Basheriq township, Yecheng County	“Terrorist” training	1990 to 1993
2) “East Turkestan Islamic Movement” (ETIM)	“Dozens” throughout Xinjiang	“Terrorist” training, weapons manufacture and storage	1998 onward
3) Unidentified	Poskam township, Zepu County	“Underground hideout”, weapons manufacture and storage	Discovered by police, 30 December 1999
4) Unidentified	Kachung township, Shache County	“Underground bunker”: weapons and explosive storage	Discovered by police and seven “terrorists” arrested 25 February 2000
5) Unidentified	Seriqsoghet village, Uzun township, Kuqa County	Weapons manufacture and explosive storage	Discovered by police August 2001

Regarding the method, nature, and identity of the perpetrators of the incidents detailed above in section two, it is difficult to ascertain whether some had any political purpose, are simply acts of crime, or are linked to an identifiable “terrorist” organisation. This is evident, for example, in Table 4, “Crimes of Poison or Arson,” where two of the three cited cases involve “arson” of such targets as a department store and a cotton purchasing station. Moreover, the details of incidents 3 and 4 in Table 7, “Violent ‘East Turkistan’ Terrorist Incidents Outside of China” are not particularly convincing as acts of terror against China, its citizens, or interests. Just as significant in light of China’s explicit targeting of ETIM is the fact that of the incidents detailed only one—regarding the development of “terrorist bases and weapons manufacture”—is directly labelled as the result of the machinations of this organisation. Meanwhile other groups such as the “Uighur Liberation Organisation” (ULO), “East Turkistan Islamic Party,” “East Turkistan Islamic Party of Allah,” and the “East Turkistan Liberation Organisation” (ETLO) are also directly labelled as responsible for only a handful of incidents both in Xinjiang and Central Asia. For example, as presented in Table 7, “Violent ‘East Turkistan Terrorist’ Incidents Outside China, 1997–2000,” ETLO has been held responsible for the murder of Nigmat Bazakov, head of the Uighur “cultural” organisation Ittipaq, based in Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan) in March 2000, for refusing to contribute financially to the group’s operations.⁹⁷ Meanwhile, the ULO were identified as being behind a number

Table 6. Plotting & organizing disturbances/riots and creating terror

Group	Date & location	Action(s)	Casualties
1) "East Turkistan Islamic Party"	5 April 1990 – Baren township, Akto County	Declared jihad and advocated establishment of a "East Turkistan Republic"; took ten people hostage & "besieged government functionaries"	Deaths: 6 policemen
2) "East Turkistan Islamic Party of Allah"	5 February to 8 February 1997 – Yining [Kulja]	Instigated a "serious riot" during which they called for the establishment of an "Islamic kingdom"; attacked/destroyed stores and vehicles	Deaths: 7 Injuries: "more than 200"

of incidents in Kyrgyzstan in April and May 2000. These included two alleged arson attacks on the Tour Bazaar in Bishkek, which specialised in Chinese commodities, and an attack on a Chinese delegation that had been sent to investigate the first arson attack.⁹⁸ Moreover, the "East Turkistan Islamic Party" and the "East Turkistan Islamic Party of Allah" were only credited with one act of "terrorism" each, with the former held responsible for the 1990 Baren Incident and the latter for the February 1997 Yining (Kulja) Incident.⁹⁹

As we have seen, both the incidents identified as being connected to "East Turkestan terrorist forces," both in Xinjiang and Central Asia, and the groups that have allegedly carried them out, do not resemble a coherent and focused campaign against Chinese interests. Moreover, although a number of these events (most notably attacks on government officials) could be deemed to constitute "terrorism" in relation to Bueno de Mesquita's definition of terrorism outlined above, many also resemble either ordinary criminal acts or spontaneous acts of dissidence. For example, we know from other sources that the Yining Incident of February 1997, which the Chinese government charges as being the work of the "East Turkistan Islamic Party of Allah," was largely a spontaneous protest against contemporary government restrictions on certain cultural practices.¹⁰⁰ Another prominent problem with the Chinese government's account, as noted by James Millward, is its tendency to group all incidences of violence or opposition together as the work of "East Turkestan terrorist forces," rather than identifying specific groups as perpetrators.¹⁰¹ Indeed, the Chinese government's report, "East Turkestan Terrorists Exposed," asserts that, "most of the explosions, assassinations, and other terrorist incidents that have taken place in Xinjiang in recent years are *related* to these organizations."¹⁰²

The evidence for a clear link between such organisations as ETIM and the incidents of violence documented in the Chinese government's account is also belied

Table 7. Violent “East Turkistan terrorist” incidents outside China, 1997–2000

Group	Date & location	Action(s)	Casualties/ result
1) “East Turkistan terrorists”	March 1997 – Istanbul, Turkey	Fired gunshots at the Chinese embassy & attacked the consulate-general, burning the Chinese flag	None specified
2) Same as above	5 March 1998 – Istanbul, Turkey	“Launched” a “bomb attack” against the Chinese consulate-general	None specified
3) “East Turkistan Liberation Organization” (ETLO)	March 2000 – Kyrgyzstan [presumably in the capital Bishkek]	Assassination of Nigmat Bazakov, president of the “Uyghur Youth Alliance” based in Kyrgyzstan	Deaths: 1
4) “Uyghur Liberation Organization” (ULO)	May 2000 – Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan	Kidnap of a “Xinjiang” businessman, murder of his nephew and arson of “Market of Chinese commodities”	Deaths: 1 & ULO “extorted” US\$100 000 in ransom
5) ULO	25 May to September 2000	Attack representatives of XUAR government in Kyrgyzstan; flee to Kazakhstan where “they” kill two Kazakh policemen	Deaths: 2

by the fact that such incidents occurred in distinct clusters. For example, of the thirty-nine incidents documented, twenty-six or some sixty-six percent of these incidents occurred between 1996 and 2000, with only two incidents documented for the 2001–2002 period. It will be recalled from section two that from 1996 onward, the authorities instituted regular “Strike Hard” campaigns against what were termed “national separatists” and “illegal religious activities.” This period between 1996 and 2000 is also significant in terms of region-wide Central Asian developments and dynamics. The geopolitical competition and cooperation amongst the Central Asian states, Russia, China, Iran, and the U.S. for Central Asia’s oil and gas, as previously noted, developed simultaneously with the emergence of cross-border phenomena of weapons and drugs trafficking, and Islamic insurgency. The epicentre

of these phenomena was Afghanistan which had, since the Taliban's capture of Kabul in 1996 and subsequent offensive against the Northern Alliance the following year, become a haven for political opponents of the region's secular (and often authoritarian) regimes.¹⁰³ By 1997 the regimes of the Central Asian presidents Islam Karimov (Uzbekistan), Sapuramat Niyazov (Turkmenistan), Imomali Rahkmonov (Tajikistan), Askar Akayev (Kyrgyzstan), and Nursultan Nazarbayev (Kazakhstan) had systematically silenced secular and moderate political opposition.¹⁰⁴ The generally perilous socio-economic conditions in the region combined with this political climate to create conditions conducive to the spread of radical or "fundamentalist" Islamic movements. By the late 1990s living standards throughout the region remained below pre-1991 levels, with the majority of the population living in relative poverty. This socio-economic situation was exacerbated by endemic governmental corruption, as well as lack of economic and political reform.¹⁰⁵ This was particularly the case in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan who shared the strategic Fergana valley, the historic "heartland" of Central Asia.¹⁰⁶ These regional developments provided the primary impetus for the transformation of the Shanghai Five into the nascent Shanghai Cooperation Organisation by the close of 2000. China, along with Russia, played a leading role in shifting the forum's original focus on confidence-building measures and border demarcation toward issues of trans-national security threats that affected all participants, such as Islamic radicalism, terrorism, arms, and drug trafficking.¹⁰⁷ For China this was in significant measure due to its concerns regarding the security of Xinjiang, and the potential for cross-border linkages between Uighur separatists and other Islamist forces in Central Asia.

Most significantly China, through the emerging SCO process, succeeded in the late 1990s in obtaining assurances and cooperation from the Central Asia states that share borders with Xinjiang, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, regarding China's struggle with separatism. Since the events of 9/11, China has sought to re-establish its position in Central Asia through forging new bilateral security agreements and cooperation with the states of the region and bolstering the role of the SCO. China's strategy has been to present itself as a real and reliable security partner for the states of Central Asia and thus provide them with a viable alternative to closer security and military relations with the United States. Thus since 2002 China has concluded a number of significant military and security cooperation agreements with the Central Asian states, including joint military exercises with and extension of military aid to Kyrgyzstan in July 2002 and 2003, the conclusion of a Sino-Kazakh Mutual Cooperation Agreement in December 2003, the opening of the Regional Anti-Terrorism unit of the SCO in Tashkent in 2004, and bilateral agreements on cooperation in combating "extremism, terrorism and separatism" with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in September 2003.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, in 2002 and 2003 China, by virtue of bilateral security agreements and police cooperation, extradited alleged Uighur "separatists and terrorists" from neighboring Central Asian states, particularly Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and from as far afield as Nepal.¹⁰⁹

Two other events in the wider Central Asian region have also had an impact on China's approach to Xinjiang and the Uighur. In March 2005, Kyrgyzstan experienced the Tulip Revolution that toppled President Askar Akayev, who had been in power since independence. In May the same year, Uzbekistan also experienced a wave of violent unrest precipitated by the Andijan Incident in which approximately 4000 people rioted and were subsequently violently suppressed by the Uzbek military. These events significantly soured Central Asian perceptions of the U.S. role

in the region, with Uzbek President Islam Karimov, but also other Central Asian leaders, severely criticizing the U.S. government's promotion of democracy and human rights as opposed to "stability." Indeed, China's emphasis on common interests in economic development, security, stability, and "anti-terrorism" through its bilateral relations with Central Asia and the SCO combined with China's emphasis on "non-interference" in other states' internal affairs to make China appear as a reliable partner from the perspective of the region's remaining authoritarian leaders.¹¹⁰ This was underlined with President Karimov's state visit to China barely two weeks after the Andijan Incident, during which a Sino-Uzbek bilateral security agreement was signed.¹¹¹ Such agreements with the Central Asian states continued to bear fruit as far as the Chinese authorities are concerned, with Uzbekistan arresting Uighur political activist, Huseyin Celil (a Canadian citizen), in March 2006.¹¹² Celil has subsequently been extradited to China, where he has been trialed and convicted to life in prison for "separatist activities" by a court in Xinjiang's capital, Urumqi.¹¹³ Meanwhile, the influence of the Tulip Revolution on Xinjiang's ethnic minorities, in particular the Uighur, can be said to be of some significance. As noted above, China had exerted considerable influence on former Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev to keep a tight rein on the Uighur émigré community in Kyrgyzstan, and with his removal from office in March 2005, Uighurs hoped for greater freedom to promote the pro-separatist cause.¹¹⁴ It remains to be seen whether the Tulip Revolution's effect will amount to much within Xinjiang, although it nonetheless serves as an example for the Uighur. Such sentiment was also expressed by perhaps the most prominent Uighur dissident now exiled in the U.S., businesswoman Rebiya Kadeer, when she said that, "When I heard the news about what happened in Kyrgyzstan, I was so excited. . . Whatever happens to our brothers and sisters in Kyrgyzstan affects people in East Turkistan."¹¹⁵

The East Turkestan Islamic Movement: Al Qaeda's China Connection?

Q: Why did you receive rifle training?

A: We have one billion enemies, we need to be ready.

Q: When you say enemies, you are referring to the Chinese?

A: Yes.¹¹⁶

Although the government report identifies ten Uighur groups as being linked with violence in Xinjiang and Central Asia—ETIM, ETLO, ULO, the United Revolutionary Front of East Turkestan (URFET), the East Turkestan Party of Allah, the Shock Brigade of the Islamic Reformist Party, the East Turkestan Opposition Party, the Islamic Holy Warriors and the East Turkestan International Committee—it only relates nine actions documented in its report to just five of these groups: ULO, ETLO, ETIM, the East Turkestan Party of Allah, and the Shock Brigade of the Islamic Reformist Party.¹¹⁷ Most significantly in the context of the post-9/11 environment, however, it has been ETIM that has been singled out as having links to Central Asian groups such as the IMU and the international Al Qaeda terrorist network. Accordingly, the Chinese government asserts that:

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 Turkistan" terrorist forces in Xinjiang launch a "holy war," with the aim of setting up a theocratic "Islam state" in Xinjiang.¹¹⁸

This document subsequently claims that Mahsum met personally with Osama bin Laden in 1999 and 2001 in Kandahar and Kabul to receive "instructions" and financial assistance without providing any corroborating evidence.¹¹⁹ The question as to whether ETIM has connections (and to what extent) with such groups as the IMU and Al Qaeda is a problematic one due to the fact that there is little available information regarding the organization, its development, and goals beyond that provided by the Chinese government. This has not, however, prevented a number of observers from accepting Chinese claims wholesale.¹²⁰ Articles by Gunaratna and others are based almost entirely upon an uncritical reading of China's 2002 report and other Chinese media releases. In particular, Gunaratna and Pereire inaccurately assert that ETIM was responsible for numerous incidents from 1996 onward, including assassinations and explosions, based on "East Turkestan Terrorists Exposed," even though this document only identifies ETIM as responsible for establishing "training bases" from 1998 onward.¹²¹ They also assert that Chinese reports of capturing large quantities of explosives and weaponry in February 1996 is "illustrative of ETIM's rather sophisticated capability to access financing and a logistics network and indicative of closely cemented ties with Al Qaeda."¹²² Furthermore, they also imply that ETIM was behind the Yining (Kulja) incident of February 1997, despite the fact that, as noted above, a number of other reputable sources clearly indicate that it was a mass demonstration that then deteriorated into a riot as a result of a heavy-handed response by Chinese security forces.¹²³

The extent and timing of ETIM's connection to Al Qaeda is, however, not as straightforward as such accounts would have us believe. According to a TV documentary televised in Xinjiang in August 2002 titled, "On the Spot Report: The Crimes of Eastern Turkestan Terrorist Power," Hasan Mahsum left Xinjiang in 1997 and then joined or established ETIM *thereafter*.¹²⁴ Moreover, the alleged vice-chairman of ETIM, Abdullah Kariaji,¹²⁵ interviewed by the *Wall Street Journal* in 2004, stated he joined ETIM in 1997 after he had been released from a two-year prison term for operating a secret Qur'anic school in Kashgar during the early 1990s.¹²⁶ More importantly, the accounts of ETIM's subsequent development provided by the Chinese "On the Spot" documentary and Abdullah Kariaji appear to confirm some links with both the Taliban and Al Qaeda. According to the Chinese documentary, Hasan Mahsum found refuge in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan after leaving Xinjiang in 1997 and established a "training camp" and began to recruit Uighurs to carry out a *jihād* in Xinjiang.¹²⁷ Abdullah Kariaji stated that he met a "Muslim cleric" who had formed ETIM in 1997, which he was told had opened camps in Afghanistan to train Uighurs to fight China. Moreover, he claims that members of ETIM had met bin Laden earlier in 1997 and received his permission to open a camp near Khost. According to this account ETIM, with the cooperation of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, established three Uighur camps in Afghanistan between 1997 and 2001, which sheltered "up to five hundred" Uighur families.¹²⁸ Moreover, Kariaji claims that ETIM has sent Uighurs trained in small arms and explosives back to Xinjiang to carry out attacks against the Chinese in the future.¹²⁹

The relationship between bin Laden, the Taliban, and ETIM, however, was also according to Kariaji not particularly close:

There were tensions over ETIM's focus on attacking China, he says. In 1999, Mr Kariaji says he and a half-dozen others went to Kandahar for an audience with Mr bin Laden. In a lengthy speech, the Saudi militant spoke about the oppression of Muslims in Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Chechnya. He didn't mention Xinjiang Mr Kariaji recalls.¹³⁰

This lack of support for the Uighur cause apparently greatly disappointed Mr. Kariaji and his compatriots.¹³¹ However, Kariaji's admitted membership of ETIM and time spent in Afghanistan would suggest that his account should be treated with caution.

Yet, the general contours of Mr. Kariaji's story and the known information on Hasan Mahsum, involving persecution in Xinjiang prior to flight to neighbouring countries such as Afghanistan prior to active participation in such groups as ETIM, is also a common thread in the testimony of the majority of the twenty-two Uighurs held by the U.S. at Guantanamo Bay.¹³² Although the Chinese government has made much of the fact that twenty-two Uighurs were captured in Afghanistan and Pakistan late in 2001, their subsequent interrogation and trials by U.S. military authorities at Guantanamo Bay has not, in the majority of detainee cases, revealed evidence that corroborates China's allegations. Five of these men were subsequently released and transferred by the U.S. to Albania in May 2006 after the U.S. military determined that they were not "enemy combatants."¹³³ Lawyers from the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights also appealed to the U.S. Circuit Court in Washington in September 2006 on behalf of a further ten of the Uighur detainees held in Guantanamo concerning their ultimate destination after their release.¹³⁴ Thus it appears, as of February 2007, that it may be that only seven of the original twenty-two detainees' fate is yet to be decided by the U.S. government.

Human Security as a Determinant of Uighur Terrorism?

I travelled there because I had two reasons. Number one was to escape from the torturing, darkness and suffering of the Chinese government. Lately, the Chinese government was putting too much pressure on Uighurs. We wanted to go to some other country to live in peace.¹³⁵

Overall, the available evidence suggesting a clear and significant links between ETIM, Al Qaeda, and the Taliban is circumstantial and fragmentary. Many of the Uighur detainees' testimony during their "Combatant Status Review Tribunals" (CSRT) suggested that: (a) most had not heard of ETIM's existence prior to being brought to Guantanamo Bay; (b) most had arrived in Afghanistan via Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan in 2000 and 2001; (c) most had stayed at a Uighur camp outside Jalalabad with up to "fifty Uighur families" according to one detainee; (d) most received minimal "training" with small arms; and (e) the Uighurs received little or no assistance from Al Qaeda or the Taliban.¹³⁶ The primary motivations stated by the detainees for being in Afghanistan in 2001 almost uniformly stress repression or persecution by the Chinese authorities in Xinjiang and the desire to fight for "East Turkestan's" independence.¹³⁷ Moreover, it appears from the testimony of some of the Uighur detainees that the increasing cooperation of the Central Asian

states with the Chinese authorities by the late 1990s, noted above, particularly Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, prompted many to travel to Afghanistan. One detainee's testimony, for example, highlighted the pressure placed on Uighurs who left Xinjiang for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan:

If you go to Kazakhstan, they will not let us get property, training or anything. They will not let us in; as soon as they know we are in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, they will return us back to the Chinese. That is the reason we went to Afghanistan.¹³⁸

Thus, it emerges as a possibility that those Uighurs apprehended in Afghanistan by U.S. and coalition forces in late 2001 were simply in transit from either Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan. Given the evidence presented in the last two sections, it is possible to suggest that while there does appear to have been a connection between ETIM and Al Qaeda and the Taliban, it has been greatly amplified by the Chinese government. Furthermore, the record of violent incidents has evidently *decreased* since the 1996 to 2000 period due to the convergence of three factors. First, Uighur separatist organisations evidently possess limited capabilities to actively threaten Chinese rule in Xinjiang. Second, ETIM, if indeed it remains operational after the reported death of its leader, Hasan Mahsum, is not the sophisticated, Al Qaeda surrogate organisation that has been portrayed by the Chinese government. Third, Chinese efforts in the sphere of security and intelligence cooperation with the Central Asian states have been successful in clamping down on overt Uighur opposition.

It will be recalled that Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens hypothesised that terrorism was likely to be carried out by individuals in states with: (i) "medium" levels of repression, (ii) "medium" levels of subsistence and (iii) where avenues for political participation or dissent are unavailable due to the "closed political system within the state."¹³⁹ As the preceding discussion has highlighted, the contemporary situation in Xinjiang is arguably characterised by medium levels of repression of *overt* acts of dissent and a relatively closed system of political participation. While there are also identifiable economic disparities between ethnic minorities, such as the Uighur, and the Han, there is certainly no evidence of under-nourishment of the population.¹⁴⁰ However, as highlighted by the comments of a Uighur detainee at Guantanamo Bay noted above, the perception that the Uighur are being threatened by the domination of Xinjiang, politically, economically, and increasingly demographically, by the Han Chinese is certainly apparent. However, I conclude that the extent or intensity of China's violation of the three sets of rights identified by Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens is neither strong enough nor consistently felt across these three sets of rights to generate widespread anti-China terrorist activity in Xinjiang. One long-term scholar of Xinjiang has recently suggested a similar assessment of the situation in the region in relation to the issues of terrorism and Uighur separatism:

In sharp contrast to war zones or "real" separatist conflicts – such as northern Iraq, the Palestinian West Bank, Kosovo, Sudan and Chechnya–Xinjiang looks peaceful and quiet to the occasional visitor. Traveling from one place to another, military units can hardly be seen, although one can feel the tension between Uyghurs and Han. Yet this tension is not necessarily or directly related to separatism. It is a typical relationship in any colonial situation. Xinjiang is no exception. While there have been

a number of violent confrontations, there is no real threat to Chinese rule in Xinjiang. And while those who try to undermine Chinese rule in Xinjiang are not only Uyghurs but also Muslim, Islamic radicalism is a marginal phenomenon at best.¹⁴¹

Notes

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2. See for example, "Combating terrorism, we have no choice," *People's Daily*, December 18, 2003, <http://www.peopledaily.com.cn> and Information Office of the State Council of the PRC, White Paper on the History and Development of Xinjiang (Beijing: March 2006), <http://www.peopledaily.com.cn>

3. See for example, Rhonda L. Callaway and Julie Harrelson-Stephens, "Towards a Theory of Terrorism: Human Security as a Determinant of Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29 (2006): 773–796; Paul Roe, *Ethnic Violence and the Social Security Dilemma* (London: Routledge, 2005); and Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era* (London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

4. Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens (see note 3 above), 774. My emphasis.

5. Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens (see note 3 above), 776–780.

6. See for example, Eastern Turkestan Information Center, <http://www.uyghur.org>, whose website is headed by a banner bearing the slogan, "Freedom, Independence and Democracy for East Turkestan!"

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8. See for example, Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens (see note 3 above), 773–796; Roe (see note 3 above), 52–55; and for a less assertive account, see E. Newman, "Exploring the 'Root Causes' of Terrorism," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29 (2006): 749–772.

9. Buzan (see note 3 above).

10. Steve Smith, "The Contested Concept of Security," in Ken Booth, ed., *Critical Security Studies and World Politics* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reiner, 2005), 32.

11. Ibid.

12. O. Waever, B. Buzan, M. Kelstrup, and P. Lemaitre, *Identity, Migration and the New Security Agenda in Europe* (London: Pinter, 1993), 24–25.

13. Roe (see note 3 above), 52–55.

14. Waever (see note 12 above), 24–25.

15. Roe (see note 3 above), 48.

16. Quoted in Stephen Schwartz "Beleaguered Uyghurs: Oppressed minority, terrorist recruits, or both?," *Weekly Standard* 9, no. 39, 21 June 2004, posted online at Uyghur American Association, <http://www.uyghuramerican.org/articles/59/1/Beleaguered-Uyghurs-Oppressed-minority-terrorist-recruits-or-both.html>. My emphasis.

17. Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens (see note 3 above), 779–780.

18. Martha Crenshaw, "Thoughts on Relating Terrorism to Historical Contexts," in Martha Crenshaw, ed., *Terrorism in Context* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 3.

19. For example see, Joseph F. Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia ca. 1800," in Denis Twitchett and John K. Fairbank, eds., *The Cambridge History of China, Vol. 10, Late Ch'ing, 1800–1911, Pt 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 35–106; James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity and Empire in Chinese Central Asia, 1759–1864* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Andrew D. W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

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21. Information Office of the State Council of the PRC, "East Turkistan Terrorist Forces" (see note 1 above), 8. My emphasis.
22. *Ibid.*, 9. My emphasis.
23. Gardner Bovington, "The History of the History of Xinjiang," *Twentieth Century China* 26, no. 2 (April 2000): 97.
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26. James A. Millward, "Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment," *Policy Studies* 6 (Washington: East-West Center, 2005), 3.
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30. Ahmad Lufti, "Blowback: China and Afghan Arabs," *Issues and Studies* 37, no. 1 (January/February 2001): 172.
31. Michael Dillon, "Central Asia: The View from Beijing, Urumqi and Kashgar," in Mehdi Mozaffari, ed., *Security Politics in the Commonwealth of Independent States: The Southern Belt* (London: MacMillan, 1997), 136–137.
32. June Teufel Dreyer, "The PLA and Regionalism in Xinjiang," *Pacific Affairs* 7, no. 1 (1994): 49–50.
33. See Christoffersen (see note 28 above), 132–133; Yueyao Zhao, "Pivot or Periphery? Xinjiang's Regional Development," *Asian Ethnicity* 2, no. 2 (September 2001): 200–201; and Clifton Pannell and Laurence J. C. Ma, "Urban Transition and Interstate Relations in a Dynamic Post-Soviet Borderland: The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China," *Post-Soviet Geography and Economics* 38, no. 4 (1997): 206–229.
34. Lufti (see note 30 above), 172.
35. For example see Nicolas Becquelin, "Xinjiang in the Nineties," *The China Journal* 44 (2000): 75–98.
36. See Michael Clarke, "Xinjiang and China's Foreign Relations with Central Asia, 1991–2001: Across the 'Domestic-Foreign Frontier,'" *Asian Ethnicity* 4, no. 2 (June 2003): 207–224.
37. See, for example, Colin Mackerras, "Xinjiang at the Turn of the Century: The Causes of Separatism," *Central Asian Survey* 20, no. 3 (2001): 289–303.
38. See Kenneth Weisbrode, "Central Eurasia, Prize or Quicksand? Contending Views of Instability in Karabakh, Fergana and Afghanistan," *Adelphi Papers* 338 (2001): 1–85; M. Eshan Ahrari, "China, Pakistan and the 'Taliban Syndrome,'" *Asian Survey* 40, no. 4 (July/August 2000): 658–671; and Sean R. Roberts, "A 'Land of Borderlands': Implications of Xinjiang's Trans-border Interactions," in S. Frederick Starr, ed., *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2004), 216–237.
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42. See for example, Barry Sautman, "Colonialism, Genocide and Tibet," *Asian Ethnicity* 7, no. 3 (October 2006): 243–265 and Barry Sautman, "Tibet and the (Mis-) Representation of Cultural Genocide," in Barry Sautman, ed., *Cultural Genocide and Asian State Peripheries* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006), 165–213.

43. Mackerras, "Ethnicity in China" (see note 41 above): 8. Data quoted come from official Chinese statistics from the censuses of 1982, 1990, and 2000.

44. See for example, Pannell & Ma (see note 33 above): 206–229 and Mackerras, "Xinjiang at the turn of the century" (see note 37 above): 291–294.

45. Nicolas Becquelin, "Staged Development in Xinjiang," *China Quarterly* 178 (June 2004): 369–370.

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50. *Ibid.*

51. Becquelin, "Staged Development in Xinjiang" (see note 45 above): 371 and David Bachman, "Making Xinjiang Safe for the Han? Contradictions and Ironies of Chinese Governance in China's Northwest," in Morris Rossabi, ed., *Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 161–173.

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55. Weimer, "The Economy of Xinjiang" (see note 49 above): 180.

56. Gladney, *Dislocating China* (see note 52 above), 225.

57. Mackerras, "Ethnicity in China" (see note 41 above): 10.

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112. Gulnoza Saidazimova, "Uyghurs Hit By Autocratic States' Cooperation with Beijing," *Eurasianet*, April 29, 2006, <http://www.eurasianet.org>

113. Geoffrey York, "Celil Appeal Rejected by Chinese Court," *Globe and Mail*, July 10, 2007, posted online at the Uyghur American Association <http://uyghuramerican.org>. China does not recognise Celil's Canadian citizenship as it asserts he left Xinjiang illegally in the mid-1990s.

114. Nury Turkel, "People Power Sends a Message to Oppressive Regimes," *Wall Street Journal*, April 21, 2005, posted online at the Uyghur American Association <http://uyghuramerican.org>

115. Cited in *Ibid.*

116. Yusef Abbas, "Summarized Transcripts of Detainee Combatant Status Review Tribunal," 24, http://www.dod.mil/foi/detainees/csrt/Set_20_1606-1644.pdf.

117. See Tables 4, 5, 6, & 7 above.

118. *Information Office of the State Council of the PRC*, "East Turkistan Terrorist Forces" (see note 1 above).

119. *Ibid.*

120. For example Rohan Gunaratna and Kenneth G. Pereire, "An Al-Qaeda Associate Group Operating in China?," *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* 4, no. 2 (2006): 55–61 and John Z. Wang, "Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement: A Case Study of a New Terrorist Organization in China," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 47, no. 5 (2003): 568–584.

121. See Gunaratna and Pereire (see note 120 above): 59 and Table 5 above.

122. Gunaratna and Pereire (see note 120 above): 59.

123. For example see, Millward, "Violent Separatism" (see note 26 above): 16–17; Dillon, "Central Asia" (see note 31): 133–148; Amnesty International, "Gross Violations of Human Rights" (see note 31 above); and "Yining (Kulja) Massacre, an Eyewitness Record" (see note 31 above).

124. Yitzhak Shicor, "Fact and Fiction: A Chinese Documentary on Eastern Turkestan Terrorism," *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* 4, no. 2 (2006): 97.

125. China identified Abdullah Kariaji as "vice-chairman" of ETIM in December 2003—see Xin Dingding, "Terror List with Links to Al-Qaida Unveiled," *China Daily* (Hong Kong Ed.), 16 December 2003, <http://chinadaily.com.cn>.

126. David S. Cloud and Ian Johnson, "Friend or Foe: In Post-9/11 World, Chinese Dissidents Pose US Dilemma," *Wall Street Journal* (Eastern Ed.).

127. Shicor, "Fact and Fiction" (see note 124 above): 98.

128. Cloud and Johnson (see note 126 above).

129. *Ibid.*

130. *Ibid.*

131. *Ibid.*

132. Examples from detainee testimony will be used in the next section.

133. "Albania Takes Guantanamo Uighurs," *BBC News*, 6 May 2006, <http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk>

134. Michelle Chen, "Gitmo Prisoners Fight for Control of Post-Release Fate," *Newstandard*, 15 September 2006, posted online at Uyghur American Association, <http://uyghuramerican.org/articles/549/1/Gitmo-Prisoners-Fight-for-Control-of-Post-Release-Fate.html>

135. Emam Abdulahat, "Summarized Transcripts of Detainee CSRT," http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/detainees/csrt/Set_43_2811-2921.pdf, 100.

136. The transcripts of the detainees "unclassified" CSRT hearings can be found through the U.S. Department of Defense website, <http://www.dod.mil.com>

137. See for example the CSRTs of Arkin Mahmud, "Summarized Transcripts of Detainee CSRT," 22–24, http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/detainees/csrt/Set_19_1561-1605.pdf, Ahmad Tourson, "Summarized Transcripts of Detainee CSRT," 2–14, http://www.dod.mil/foi/detainees/csrt/Set_38_2608-2628.pdf, and Yusef Abbas, "Summarized Transcripts of Detainee CSRT," 18–25, http://www.dod.mil/foi/detainees/csrt/Set_20_1606-1644.pdf.

138. Hozaifa Parhat, "Summarized Transcripts of Detainee CSRT," http://www.dod.mil/foi/detainees/csrt/Set_18_1463-1560.pdf, 46.

139. Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens (see note 3 above), 779–780.

140. Mackerras, "Why Terrorism Bypasses China's West" (see note 66 above).

141. Yitzhak Shicor, "Blow Up" (see note 50 above), 123–124.

142. The following tables are adapted from data supplied in "East Turkistan Terrorists Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity," *People's Daily*, 21 January 2002, 3–6, http://www.peopledaily.com.cn/200201/21/print20020121_89078.htm.