

2009

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Vladislav Shchukin

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Recommended Citation

Shchukin, Vladislav (2009) "Uighurs in Xinjiang: A General Assessment of the Roots of Unrest," *Human Rights & Human Welfare*: Vol. 9: Iss. 1, Article 49.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/hrhw/vol9/iss1/49>



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Uighurs in Xinjiang: A General Assessment of the Roots of Unrest

Abstract

Chinese governmental repression in Xinjiang against the Uighur *minzu*, or ethnic group, constitutes a significant infringement on human rights. The atmosphere of repression in Xinjiang is perhaps unmatched even by that of Tibet, and it is virtually the only region in China where execution of political prisoners is still common. Uighurs are subject to severe censorship, arbitrary arrest and the denial of due process, torture and inhumane treatment, and punishment disproportionate to their crimes.

Keywords

Human rights, China, Uyghurs, Ethnic repression, Religious persecution

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Uighurs in Xinjiang: A General Assessment of the Roots of Unrest

By Vladislav Shchukin

Introduction

Chinese governmental repression in Xinjiang against the Uighur *minzu*, or ethnic group, constitutes a significant infringement on human rights. The atmosphere of repression in Xinjiang is perhaps unmatched even by that of Tibet, and it is virtually the only region in China where execution of political prisoners is still common. Uighurs are subject to severe censorship, arbitrary arrest and the denial of due process, torture and inhumane treatment, and punishment disproportionate to their crimes. The Chinese government justifies its actions as measures taken to maintain stability in the face of terrorist activity. Though the capability of Uighur terrorist groups is uncertain, it is clear that China has extended its “anti-terrorist” measures to combat any form of dissent by Uighurs and has instituted what amounts to the criminalization of the Uighur culture. State repression in Xinjiang stems from the ethnic tensions in the region, which play on China’s fear of losing control of that crucial territory. Resolving these tensions and ameliorating China’s fears will improve the human rights situation and lessen Chinese repression.

Human Rights Abuses in Xinjiang

Since the incident in Baren in 1990, the Uighurs in Xinjiang have been exposed to repressive policies. Protesters are treated severely. After the incident of July 5th, scores of persons, mainly Uighur, have been imprisoned; China has already executed twelve of these prisoners, eleven of them Uighur. Many protesters get long prison terms and others are summarily killed in group executions. In addition to legal executions, rioters are frequently killed by the police in *extra-judicial executions*—on the scene of the crime when it is unclear that they pose a danger. The Chinese government has admitted to twelve such fatalities in the July 5th riot.

Repression, however, is not limited to post-riot measures. The majority of the judicial punishments handed out in Xinjiang are to Uighurs for crimes related to “splittism.” Through the manipulation of the “War on Terror,” China has equated any form of criticism or dissent with terrorism, separatism, and extremism. In these terms, advocating independence and calling Xinjiang Eastern Turkistan are both considered forms of terrorism. Many Uighurs have been arrested for practicing Islam “illegally,” and scores have been arrested for publishing, writing, or expressing thoughts publicly and privately that are against the Chinese party line.

The Chinese government justifies its policies in the region as anti-terrorist. According to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), violent outbreaks like the July 5th riots are attributed to a small number of instigators who want to disturb unity among ethnic groups and undermine China’s territorial integrity. It must be admitted that there are Uighur terrorist groups and that some have connections to al-Qaeda. However, these groups are small in number, resources, and capacity. They do not constitute a common front and are not able to bring about Uighur independence. The connection these groups have to Muslim extremism and groups such as al-Qaeda are tenuous and indirect. Most importantly, it seems that violent activity by these organizations has actually diminished since the 1990s.

A serious reaction to events such as the July 5th riot is understandable. Yet the Chinese response is cruel, oppressive, illegal, and does not resolve the root of the problem. The violence in Xinjiang is not, as the Chinese government claims, brought about by a handful of extremists, but stems from a general sentiment of the Uighur population. The July 5th riots came about from a peaceful demonstration to protest a brawl that took place in a toy factory, in which Han residents killed several Uighurs and injured others.

History of Uighurs in Xinjiang and Uighur Identity

The unrest in Xinjiang is undoubtedly ethnic in nature. The PRC official line is that Xinjiang has been a part of China for two millennia and that the Uighurs are not autochthonous. The Chinese claim, however, that anyone possessed the territory as a coherent unit before the eighteenth century is contentious. Xinjiang contains the vast majority of the Uighur population, and no comparable Uighur concentration exists outside of the region. Thus, Uighurs consider Xinjiang their native homeland.. Though the Chinese downplay this fact, Uighurs had two independent republics within living memory of the older generations, the second of which was still very much in existence when the communists annexed the territory.

In large part, this unrest is due to careless policies of the PRC. First, Uighur identity was solidified by the state. The term “Uighur” was not common until the twentieth century, and by recognizing this group the Chinese government gave it legitimacy and made it into an umbrella identity for non-recognized groups in Xinjiang. Furthermore, the strife with this group was created by policies that disregarded its members. Initially, Mao recognized *minzu* identities and promised them significant benefits, but upon securing political power in the region, he broke these promises. This renegeing of promised autonomy, along with the unfulfilled political and civil rights promised to *minzu* in the Chinese constitution and wide inequalities between Uighurs and Han in Xinjiang are what make Uighurs feel exploited and angry.

Current Factors Motivating Violence

Minzu are granted significant political and cultural freedoms in the Chinese constitution, and since 1955 Xinjiang has been established as a Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR).. The Chinese official stance is that the *minzu* in XUAR are content and united, and the Chinese party line has been that development will mollify the region. However, the violence on July 5th calls into question the success of Chinese policies there.

Though Xinjiang has had a rapid pace of growth since the 1990s—its economy is number one among non-coastal provinces in China—the majority of Uighurs have been excluded from development. The creation of new jobs has been centered in cities, while the majority of Uighurs live in rural areas. Much of the economic improvement has been in the government center from which Uighurs are largely excluded. The new private businesses owned by Han people tend not to hire Uighurs, whom the owners see in a negative light. The educational system, though undergoing improvement, gives Uighurs significantly less education than their Han counterparts. Further, since Mandarin is the language of upward mobility and Mandarin language schools are better equipped, the improvement of the educational system has been detrimental to Uighur culture.

Despite overall institutional progress, the health of Uighurs is especially dismal in Xinjiang. Endemic alcoholism, drug abuse, and HIV/AIDS (caused by sharing needles) associated with poor

living conditions in the region have caused the Uighur life expectancy to plummet. Moreover, most clinics are run in Mandarin and located in areas of Han concentration, thus making them inaccessible to Uighurs.

Development has removed many Uighurs from traditional ways of money making. Economic improvement has caused a deluge of Han immigration. This not only has made Uighurs a minority in their homeland, but it is also possibly causing irreversible environmental damage.

Most problematically, Uighurs do not actually have autonomy. Though the PRC has made efforts to hire Uighur cadres, they are underrepresented in the regional government in comparison to their population, and those hired do not have equal standing to their Han counterparts. The regional government is headed by a Uighur, but Chinese divide-and-rule tactics curtail that government's power, thus subordinating it to the Han party structure. Because of its jockeying with the Han party structure, the Uighur government has little legitimacy in the eyes of the people. It is powerless to enforce the policies nominally granted to the Uighur *minzu*. Most importantly, this imbalance of power makes the Uighurs feel unable to control their future and impotent in the face of their problems. This structure makes them feel like abandoned denizens of a colonizing power that aims at the exploitation (rather than the improvement) of their homeland and its inhabitants.

Resolutions and Their Feasibility

The Chinese government has justified its policies in Xinjiang by claiming that it is battling separatism, terrorism, and extremism there. This is true if one defines these terms (as the PRC does) as any action on the part of Uighurs *perceived* as dissent. However, this claim could be clearly contested when considering that Uighur demands come from a very specific political and economic context of detrimental policies towards them. The Chinese government is not suppressing a small number of extremists, but rather a major portion of the Uighur population. These policies may work indefinitely in suppressing unrest, but they do not address its underlying causes. Until the Chinese government effectively addresses the reasons behind the Uighurs' protests, offers some type of meaningful autonomy to the region, or at least begins to treat Uighurs with human dignity, the problem will not be resolved.

Annotations

Amnesty International. 1999. "People's Republic of China: Gross Violations of Human Rights in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region." London. Available online:
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/018/1999>

Annotation: This rather lengthy report by Amnesty International insightfully details the human rights abuses in Xinjiang. In particular, its focus is on many of the abuses Uighurs suffer due to the Chinese government's aim to create stability and crack down on separatism. Among these abuses are arbitrary arrest, inordinate punishments, torture, mass executions, and the so-called "extra-judicial" executions—arbitrary murder by state forces. The report goes into great detail, particularly describing the abuses following the Gulja and the Khotan incidents, in addition to having numerous firsthand accounts of the mistreatment.

Bachman, David. 2004. "Making Xinjiang Safe for the Han? Contradictions and Ironies of Chinese Governance in China's Northwest," in M. Rossabi (ed.), Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Annotation: Bachman's chapter is an intriguing new look into the policy in Xinjiang as a manifestation of China's internal or economic imperialism. This point is argued through a comparison between the economic structure of the coastal areas and that of Xinjiang. Compared to the coastal areas, the economy in Xinjiang is largely state-owned, despite years of economic reform; the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps can be seen very clearly as a colonial apparatus used to resettle Han and to initiate production in the less inhabited areas of Xinjiang. The nature of development has done little to improve manufacturing in the province, and instead has been focused on exportation and exploitation of its resources. Despite the fact that the overall GDP of the province has improved, the major beneficiaries have been Han Chinese immigrants.

Becquelin, Nicolas. 2004. "Criminalizing Ethnicity: Political Repression in Xinjiang." *China rights forum*. Available online: www.hrichina.org/public/PDFs/CRF.1.2004/b1_Criminalizing1.2004.pdf.

Annotation: In this brief and insightful article, the author demonstrates how the Chinese government has used the guise of the "War on Terror" to overhaul its strategy of suppression of Uighurs in Xinjiang. In three public relations "offensives," the Chinese government has attempted to gain the acceptance and sympathy of the world community by equating Uighur "splittism" with terrorism. This has had a degree of success with the United States, which added the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (likely chosen solely for its name's symbolic value) as a terrorist organization, as well as with China's Central Asian neighbors, including Russia, which joined the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. However, as it has gathered world approval for battling terrorism, China has not only equated terrorism with any type of dissent, but has used this strength to approve laws to criminalize Uighur culture.

Benson, Linda. 2004. "Education and Social Mobility among Minority Populations in Xinjiang," in S. F. Starr (ed.), Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This chapter describes the historical developments of the educational system in Xinjiang from the late nineteenth century to the present. Although it demonstrates the CCP's tangible accomplishments in education, Benson's chapter reveals serious problems in the area when it comes to minorities. In addition to the fact that minorities get less education on average than do the Han, the quality of the education itself is problematic. First, Uighur parents face a serious choice between sending their children to *minzu* or to Chinese language schools. Further, school completion is contingent upon familiarity with the curriculum dictated by the state. The government has offered affirmative action programs to aid minority education and the acceptance of minorities into government positions; however,

the minority cadres in the government apparatus are not seen as equals of the Han. The chapter concludes by adding that in addition to the problems in education, the lack of priority of social problems in the government's development plan is a source of tension in Xinjiang.

Bovingdon, Gardner. 2002. "The Not-So-Silent Majority: Uyghur Resistance to Han Rule in Xinjiang." *Modern China* 28 (1): 39-78. Available online: <http://mcx.sagepub.com/cgi/content/refs/28/1/39>

Annotation: In this article, Gardner Bovingdon, a widely cited Xinjiang scholar, uses his in-depth personal experience in the region to outline the non-traditional forms of political resistance to Han rule on the part of the Uighurs in Xinjiang. Since open political disagreement is severely punished by the Communist state, Uighur discontent has taken place deep within Uighur culture: in songs, literature, jokes, and idioms.

———. 2004. "Contested Histories," in S. F. Starr (ed.), *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland*. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This book section explores the various perspectives on the Xinjiang conflict by examining the incompatible histories that Beijing officials and Uighur scholars have authored. Both versions are full of extravagant claims. Though incompatible, both histories make largely the same claims for the same reasons: that each respective ethnic group has been in Xinjiang since time immortal (and that those from the other side are newer arrivals) and that these historical roots legitimize their current presence.

———. 2004. "Heteronomy and Its Discontents: "Minzu Regional Autonomy in Xinjiang," in M. Rossabi (ed.), *Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Annotation: In this book section, Bovingdon discusses Chinese actions in Xinjiang in terms of two goals: maintaining the province as an integral part of China and mitigating ethnic hostilities. After discussing how China has achieved its first goal through military and population policies, Bovingdon begins a multifaceted approach to evaluate its success on the second goal. He concludes that ethnic unity, especially with the Uighurs, has not been accomplished; rather, it has been often rejected through central and local policies. Most importantly, the chapter finds that instead of fostering autonomy in Xinjiang, the Chinese government has imposed a heteronomy through its policies and alienated the Uighurs. Despite the fact that some preferential policies make the treatment of Uighurs in Xinjiang better compared to their treatment in the rest of China, Bovingdon stresses that their treatment is not what was promised by the creation of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

Congressional-Executive Commission on China. 2005. "China's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law: Does it Protect Human Rights." Washington, DC. Available online:
<http://www.cecc.gov/pages/roundtables/041105/index.php>

Annotation: This is a roundtable between three scholars of Chinese Regional Autonomy Law. The speakers discuss the implementation of three autonomous regions: Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia. Gardner Bovington, the speaker on Xinjiang, concludes that the so-called autonomy law in the region ironically precludes Xinjiang from being autonomous. This is the result of implementation procedures and not of the law itself, which gives significant nominal freedoms to the three ethnic groups.

———. 2005. "China's Changing Strategic Concerns: The Impact on Human Rights in Xinjiang." Washington, DC. Available online:
<http://www.cecc.gov/pages/roundtables/111605/index.php>.

Annotation: This document includes the minutes of a roundtable, including speeches, the question and answer segment, and the prepared statements of three scholars, including Fredrick Starr and James Millward, on the subject of human rights in Xinjiang. The statement of James Millward outlines the historical reasoning and the (perhaps irrational) mindset of the Chinese government, which is shared by many of the Han, and which it uses to justify its actions in Xinjiang. Fredrick Starr outlines a list of ten points guaranteed by the Chinese constitution that are not implemented in Xinjiang. Daniel Southerland outlines the repression directly aimed at curbing separatism; however, his conclusion is that the goal of the Uighurs is not independence and that much of the unrest would cease if the promises of the Chinese constitution were implemented.

Conner, Walker. 1994. "Ethnonationalism," in W. Conner (ed.), Ethnonationalism: The quest for understanding. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Annotation: This article seeks to properly define the phenomenon of ethnonationalism. It takes an in-depth look at the non-rational essence of ethnonational underpinnings, the differences between ethnic and interest groups, and the emotional depth of ethnic attachment. The article also describes the manifestation of ethnonationalism within a state's minority population and scrutinizes the options of independence and autonomy.

Dautcher, Jay. 2004. "Public Health and Social Pathologies in Xinjiang," in S. F. Starr(ed.), Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This chapter reveals that although the Chinese healthcare system has grown in tandem with the development of Xinjiang, it has failed to meet expectations in that region. Though general health in Xinjiang is on the level of the national average, there are meaningful distinctions between ethnic groups. The Uighurs are discriminated against by the health system because facilities operate in Mandarin and are not found in areas with Uighur

concentrations. Alcohol consumption, heroin abuse, and the concomitant HIV/AIDS epidemic are severe problems in Xinjiang.

Davis, Elizabeth Van Wie. 2008. "Uyghur Muslim Ethnic Separatism in Xinjiang, China." *Asia Affairs: An American Review* 35 (1): 15-30.

Annotation: This article outlines the form of Uighur resistance in Xinjiang. The PRC government policy is that separatism in Xinjiang is confined to a small group of foreign and domestic perpetrators and is thus inseparable from extremism and terrorism. To cut down the support for such groups, the PRC government has moved to develop the infrastructure and increase the standard of living in the region. The effect of this policy is questionable, since greater connection between Xinjiang and Central Asia may facilitate greater connections to terrorist groups. Further, the economic development has been responsible for a deluge of Han Chinese in Xinjiang and the sharpening of economic distinction between Han and other groups.

Dillon, Michael. 2006. "Uyghur separatism and nationalism in Xinjiang," in B. Cole (ed.), Conflict, Terrorism and the Media in Asia. London: Routledge.

Annotation: Though the presence of typographic errors undermine its academic credibility, this piece offers a unique (though brief) discussion of the role of the media in the Xinjiang conflict, as well as a useful general summary of the development of the conflict. Starting with the formation of the autonomous region, it relates in some detail the major developments in the Uighur question. These include outbreaks of violence (starting with the 1954 Khotan riots), China state policies, and major figures in the conflict.

Gladney, Dru C. 2004. "Responses to Chinese Rule: Patterns of Cooperation and Opposition," in S. F. Starr (ed.), Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This chapter outlines the reactions of the Uighurs to Chinese rule. Gladney divides the responses into three categories: loyalty, voice, and exit. The first reaction was more common in the period right after the Maoist era, during the Deng reforms. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Uighurs began to voice their concerns more, and major outbreaks of violence ensued. In the current period, violent resistance to CCP has decreased. Yet the number of groups concerned with the treatment of Uighurs, both abroad and within the region, shows that China will not be able to easily rid itself of the Uighur question. Gladney warns that without a significant change in policy, it is likely that ethnic issues will escalate and latent tensions will become manifest.

———. 2004. "The Chinese Program of Development and Control, 1978-2001," in S. F. Starr (ed.), Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This chapter describes the PRC's policy in Xinjiang. Although it is somewhat of a misnomer, since it deals with a period that starts in the 1940s, the chapter is nevertheless a worthwhile overview. It describes how the CCP's initial policy was to pay heed to ethnic groups in order to gain their support in the revolutionary period. Once the CCP established its power, it moved to begin integrating and assimilating minorities. Yet, since the 1980s, the regime had become increasingly open to the world community, and this has put major restrictions on its ability to assimilate its minorities. Additionally, the article remarks that although the recognition of minority groups may have been utilized only as a temporary strategy by the CCP, it has had permanent consequences in solidifying and emboldening groups such as the Uighurs.

Kuhn, Anthony. 2009. "Racial Tensions High After Riots In Western China." *National Public Radio*. Available online: <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=106358235>.

Annotation: This article outlines the ethnic unrest in Urumchi following the July 5th riots. Ethnic Han Chinese took to the streets organized in bands and wreaked havoc on Uighurs and their property. In some places, the riot police had to separate the Han and Uighur protestors to prevent them from clashing. The Uighurs were out protesting the government action in response to previous unrest, including the jailing of over one thousand Uighurs.

Lee, Joy R.. 2006. "The Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan and the Formation of Modern Uyghur Identity in Xinjiang." MA Thesis: Kansas State University. Available online: <http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA455923>.

Annotation: The piece is a thesis by a Master's student from Kansas State University. Although at times Lee lacks the academic clarity of more experienced writers, the thesis offers a valuable historical approach to the formation of the Uighur identity. The piece is divided into three chapters dealing with the formation of the Uighur identity from the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth. Lee describes the role of pan-Islamism, pan-Turkism, Turanianism, and Jadidism in the formation of the Uighur identity in the rebellions against Chinese rule.

Millward, James A., and Nabijan Tursun. 2004. "Political History and Strategies of Control, 1884-1978," in S. F. Starr (ed.), *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland*. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This chapter deals with the history of Xinjiang province starting in the late nineteenth century during the reconquering of Xinjiang by the Qing and the annexation of the territory as an official province. This event started a period of more direct rule in the province. The chapter gives a good illustration of China's control over Xinjiang in the period of the Civil War (1911-1949) and the rise and demise of the two Eastern Turkestan republics

during this period. It ends with a description of the CCP's policies in Xinjiang up to the end of the Maoist era.

Millward, James A., and Peter C. Perdue. 2004. "Political and Cultural History of the Xinjiang Region through the Late Nineteenth Century," in S. F. Starr (ed.), Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This chapter looks in-depth at the convoluted history of control in Xinjiang. First, it addresses the historical origins of the Uighur identity in the Uighur and the Karakhanid kingdoms. Second, it debunks the theory that Xinjiang has belonged to China since the Han dynasty by presenting the complex history of rule in its vast terrain. Lastly, it describes the beginning of formal Chinese rule in the territory in the middle of the eighteenth century.

Rahman, Anwar. 2005. Sinicization Beyond The Great Wall: China's Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Leicester, UK: Troubador Publishing.

Annotation: This work offers a unique inside perspective on the Uighur situation in Xinjiang. The author is a Uighur born in Xinjiang who lived there for thirty-four years before seeking political asylum in Switzerland. Though the book has an obvious bias and at times fails to meet a high academic standard of writing, it is a worthwhile source of information. Rahman draws on Chinese state documents and his own personal experience as a Uighur in China as well as an employee of Chinese civil service in Xinjiang. The work attempts to give a comprehensive review of the relevant issues on Xinjiang, yet its most illuminating contribution is the anecdotal description of what it means to be a Uighur in Xinjiang.

Roberts, Sean R. 2004. "A 'Land of Borderlands': Implications of Xinjiang's Trans-border Interactions," in S. F. Starr (ed.), Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This section describes the consequences of Xinjiang's unique geopolitical situation. Xinjiang is where Central Asia merges into the Middle East. Because of its location, Xinjiang is susceptible to various influences and has had a history of interaction with Russia and Russia's central Asian republics, as well as the Middle East. The dilemma that the chapter deals with is that, on the one hand, such a location is an economic advantage for China. On the other hand, it is a serious liability. China's program to develop the west and Xinjiang's economic viability hinges on trade with near neighbors. However, as China moves to create infrastructure to integrate Xinjiang into the region, it may facilitate the entrance of undesired influences into the province.

Rossabi, Morris (ed.). 2004. Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Annotation: This book focuses on the repercussions of the expansionism of the Qing dynasty, which put under Chinese rule many persons who are not ethnically Chinese. Upon gaining power, the Chinese Communist Party accepted the boundaries of the Qing Empire. This work discusses the problems in policies of the Chinese government in Mongolia, Tibet, and Xinjiang. In Tibet, the policies have been mainly military; in Mongolia, control was cemented through Han settlement. Xinjiang experienced a combination of the two. In all these regions, China used its economic capability to expand its influence, domestically by investing in infrastructure and globally by using its economic weight to move neighbors into amiable positions.

Rudelson, Justin, and William Jankowiak. 2004. "Acculturation and Resistance: Xinjiang Identities in Flux," in S. F. Starr (ed.), Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This brief chapter deals with the prospects of Uighur acculturation. As things stand, Uighurs can neither fully acculturate nor become independent. The authors describe differences that prevent Uighur acculturation in spite of the improbability of political independence. In describing the Chinese government policies and Uighur responses, the most valuable insight the chapter offers is the reactionary nature of Uighur identity. As it demonstrates, the role of the Chinese state in aggregating the various component peoples under the Uighur umbrella identity was indispensable.

Starr, S. Frederick (ed.). 2004. Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This book provides a detailed analysis of the various facets of the problems in Xinjiang, including historical developments, education, economy, government policy, and cultural issues. It is a compilation of articles from many of the best scholars on the region and represents a tremendous amount of work as a comprehensive whole. It is an invaluable source to those searching for breadth on the Xinjiang situation. The majority of the chapters are annotated in detail in this bibliography.

Toops, Stanley W. 2004. "The Demography of Xinjiang," in S. F. Starr (ed.), Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This chapter offers a plenitude of charts and tables to explain the historic trends and the current situation of the demography in Xinjiang province. According to the author, there are currently two major demographic trends in Xinjiang: a deluge of Han immigration and a move from the rural to the urban areas. The article states that it is possible that the Han outnumber the Uighurs in Xinjiang and that the current demographic trends leave only a few select areas where the Uighurs constitute a majority. Significantly, however, the current migration of Han is circular (growth in the Han population happens because the inflow

outnumbers the significant outflow) and is not necessarily permanent; a change of the conditions in Xinjiang could significantly reduce Han proportions in the region.

Wiemer, Calla. 2004. "The Economy of Xinjiang," in S. F. Starr (ed.), Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland. London, England: M. E. Sharpe.

Annotation: This article is a clear account of the history of the Xinjiang economy as well as its particular characteristics and its significance to China. The economy of Xinjiang is ranked number one among the inland provinces in China (twelfth overall). Although its staggering economic growth has been on par with China's national growth, the source of its income is different from China's: it is based significantly on extractive resources and trade with the central Asian republics. Despite its robust growth, Xinjiang's economy remains a source of tension because of ethnic disparities.

Wong, Edward. 2009. "China Says Its Forces Killed 12 in Xinjiang." *The New York Times*, (July 20). Available online:
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/21/world/asia/21china.html?_r=3&scp=3&sq=july%2008%20xinjiang&st=cse.

Annotation: In this article, the Chinese government confirms that its security forces were responsible for the deaths of twelve out of the 200 people killed in the July 5th riot. Uighurs claim that the number of Uighur deaths is underestimated and does not account for the actions of roving bands of Han Chinese subsequent to the incident. The Chinese government states that caches of simple weapons were pre-made, yet witnesses claim they saw no traces of organization in the riot. Rabiya Kadeer, whom the PRC government has dubbed responsible for the orchestration of the riot, denied the allegation.