

**The New Silk Road Diplomacy: A Regional Analysis of China's Central Asian Foreign
Policy, 1991-2005**

Hasan Haider Karrar

**Department of East Asian Studies
McGill University, Montréal**

April 2006

**A Thesis Submitted to McGill University in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

© Hasan Haider Karrar 2006



Library and
Archives Canada

Bibliothèque et
Archives Canada

Published Heritage
Branch

Direction du
Patrimoine de l'édition

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

ISBN: 978-0-494-27796-6

Our file Notre référence

ISBN: 978-0-494-27796-6

NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.


Canada

Contents

Abstract

English i

French iii

Acknowledgments v

Abbreviations viii

Introduction 1

1. The Enduring Reach of History

Introduction 27

Human and Historical Geographies in Chinese Central Asia 31

Foreign Incursions in Qing Xinjiang 40

Changes in Chinese Administration in Xinjiang 47

Party Rule and the Securing of the Periphery 57

The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and Implications for China 67

Conclusion 76

2. China's Initial Central Asian Diplomatic Considerations, 1992-1996

Introduction 79

The Soviet Legacy in Independent Central Asia 84

Sino-Russian Diplomacy as a Precursor to Sino-Central Asian Relations 93

Sino-Central Asian Diplomacy until 1996 101

Central Asia's Invigorated War Economy 111

Russian Rule in Central Asia 120

The Tajik Civil War and Uzbekistan's Chronic Unrest 131

Assessing China's Silk Road Diplomacy 142

Conclusion 148

3. Broadening the Scope of Sino-Central Asian Relations, 1996-2001

Introduction 151

The Development of Multilateral Diplomacy 156

Central Asian Energy: Fuel for the Future or Fuel for Containment? 173

China's Evolving Energy Needs 191

Internal and External Dimensions of Instability in Xinjiang 201

The Strike Hard Campaigns of 1996 and 1997 213

Conclusion 225

4. New Challenges and New Opportunities in Sino-Central Asian Relations, 2001-2005

Introduction 228

The SCO and the Conceptualization of Regional and Global Security 234

Developing a Chinese Discourse of Victimization, Strengthening the SCO 248

The Growing Estrangement Between the United States and China 262

Deepening and Broadening Multilateral Cooperation 278

Prospects and Challenges for Cooperation in the SCO 295

Conclusion 312

Conclusion 316

Bibliography 325

Appendix

Research Ethics Board I: Certificate of Ethical Acceptability
of Research Involving Humans 362

Abstract

This thesis explores China's relations with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, from 1991 to 2005, contributing to the body of knowledge by arguing that China's relations with post-Soviet Central Asia were shaped by security and economic imperatives in Xinjiang, home to Muslim Turkic nationalities who have historically challenged Beijing's jurisdiction.

As discussed in Chapter One, after 1949, the Communist Party sought to bring Xinjiang firmly within Beijing's orbit, ending a 150-year long period during which Beijing's hold over Xinjiang periodically faltered. The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, coupled with instability in Afghanistan, led to new challenges to Beijing's authority.

Chapter Two examines China's relations with Central Asia from 1992 to 1996. In the post-Cold War order characterized by US primacy, China envisioned Central Asia as an arena of cooperation between China, Russia, and the independent republics. However, the republics became fertile ground for transnational Islamist movements. China feared spillover into Xinjiang; consequently, China extended economic cooperation to the impoverished republics with the understanding that they would suppress émigré Uighur organizations. Bilateral economic cooperation was also important for Xinjiang, which benefited from cross-border trade.

Chapter Three examines Sino-Central Asian relations from 1996 to 2001, exploring the development of the Shanghai Five mechanism in 1996 between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, which initially addressed confidence building, but after 1998, focused on regional security. This was important for China, since in 1996/1997, Xinjiang experienced instability that was exacerbated by the independence of Central Asia. Competition over the region's energy is also examined, which contributed to international rivalry.

Chapter Four examines Sino-Central Asian relations from 2001 to 2005. In June 2001, the Shanghai Accord signatories, and Uzbekistan, established the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). While envisioned as a forum for wide-ranging cooperation, combating "terrorism, separatism, and extremism," was an immediate

priority. Following the attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States sought a military presence in Central Asia that temporarily undermined China's influence, heightening China's concerns over energy security. China's response was to gradually deepen relations with the republics in the energy and security fields.

Résumé

La présente thèse étudie les relations entre la Chine et le Kazakhstan, le Kirghizistan, le Tadjikistan, le Turkménistan et l'Ouzbékistan entre 1991 et 2005, et soutient que les relations entretenues entre la Chine et l'Asie centrale depuis la chute de l'Union soviétique furent façonnées par les impératifs de l'économie et de la sécurité du Xinjiang, foyer de groupes ethniques musulmans turcs qui historiquement défièrent la juridiction de Beijing.

Après 1949, le Parti Communiste chercha à consolider son autorité, défaillante depuis 150 ans, dans Xinjiang. Mais la dissolution de l'Union Soviétique en 1991, conjuguée à l'instabilité afghane, occasionnèrent de nouvelles contestations contre Beijing.

De 1992 à 1996, dans l'ordre mondial de l'après-guerre froide caractérisé par la suprématie des États-Unis, la Chine eut souhaité transformer l'Asie centrale en arène de collaboration entre la Chine, la Russie et les républiques indépendantes. Cependant, le climat politique des républiques devint propice à la prolifération de mouvements islamistes. Craignant un débordement au Xinjiang, la Chine élargit sa collaboration économique pour soutenir les républiques appauvries. En contrepartie, celles-ci devaient supprimer les groupes ouïghours émigrés dans la région. Xinjiang y profita dans son commerce transfrontalier.

En 1996 la Chine, la Russie, le Kazakhstan, le Kirghizistan et le Tadjikistan constituèrent le mécanisme du groupe de Shanghai. Ce groupe visait d'abord à renforcer la confiance, mais l'instabilité de Xinjiang en 1996–1997, exacerbée par l'indépendance de l'Asie centrale, fit de la sécurité régionale son objectif principal en 1998. Pendant cette période, les ressources énergétiques régionales attisèrent des rivalités internationales.

En juin 2001, les signataires de l'Accord de Shanghai et l'Ouzbékistan constituèrent l'Organisation de coopération de Shanghai. Bien que conçu comme carrefour polyvalent de collaboration, la lutte contre « le terrorisme, le séparatisme et l'extrémisme » devint la priorité immédiate de cet organisme. Suite aux attentats du 11 septembre 2001, les États-Unis chercha à établir une présence militaire en Asie centrale, ce qui mina temporairement l'influence de la Chine et renforça les préoccupations de ce

pays entourant la sécurité énergétique. Par conséquent, la Chine approfondit graduellement ses relations avec les républiques dans les domaines de l'énergie et de la sécurité.

Acknowledgements

During the course of my graduate studies, I have incurred many debts; it is my pleasure to acknowledge them here. The research presented in this thesis would not have been possible without the supervision of my dissertation committee, which I am honored to have studied under at McGill University: Professor Sam Noumoff of the Department of Political Science, Professor Robin Yates of the Department of History and East Asian Studies, and Professor Üner Turgay of the Institute of Islamic Studies.

My interest in China's relations with Central Asia dates back to the year 2000, when I first undertook an exploration of a similar topic while enrolled in a graduate seminar on Chinese politics taught by Professor Sam Noumoff. Since that time, Professor Noumoff has patiently read through and commented on a multitude of proposals, papers, and chapters prepared by me. He gave me the intellectual freedom and space to formulate the current problematic, while simultaneously enriching my appreciation of the issues under consideration by offering valuable insight. His vast knowledge of China has deeply influenced my own understanding of modern Chinese history and politics. My first course with Professor Noumoff was over a decade ago, and I will always be indebted to him for his mentorship, wise council, and all that he has taught me since that time.

Likewise, Professor Robin Yates has had a strong influence on my research interests. His supervision allowed me to conceptualize the issues raised herein within a broad historical perspective, which not only deepened my appreciation for the complexity of the study, but also made this exercise extremely enjoyable. In particular, I am privileged to have spent a year under his tutorship exploring Sino-Inner Asian relations over a two thousand year time span, which deepened my appreciation of the richness of historical exchanges along China's vast Inner Asian frontiers. I have also benefited from Professor Yates' insightful comments following his thorough reading of an earlier version of this study, for which I am extremely grateful.

I would also like to thank Professor Üner Turgay, who has helped me develop a deeper understanding of Soviet and post-Soviet Central Asia. In particular, his graduate seminar on Muslims in Central Asia, one of the first of its kind in Canada, provided a

forum where some of the ideas presented in this thesis first took form. I am grateful for his constant encouragement and keen interest in this study.

I also wish to acknowledge the interest shown in my research by Professor Kenneth Dean, Professor Grace Fong, Professor Thomas Lamarre, and Professor Thomas Looser of the Department of East Asian Studies. Though I have not had the pleasure of working directly under their supervision, over the years, they have always had words of encouragement, which I have greatly appreciated.

I am also thankful to Suan Ong, the Graduate Student Coordinator at the Department of East Asian Studies, who has patiently helped me with administrative details and answered endless queries over the past six years. Helen Wilicka, of the Department of Political Science, and Georgii Mikula, of the Department of History, were resourceful in providing me with teaching opportunities, an experience I have enjoyed and found immensely fulfilling.

Field research for this thesis was undertaken in China in 2003; during a subsequent visit to the PRC, I had the opportunity to do a follow-up. In China, I had the privilege of being hosted by the Department of Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), in Beijing. In particular, I am deeply indebted to Deputy-Director Dong Xiaoyang, who facilitated my research in Beijing and helped make my visits productive. Invaluable assistance was also provided by department coordinators, Xu Hua and Li Dalin. In Beijing, I benefited from meetings with scholars at the CASS, the China Institute for International Studies, Peking University, and Renmin University. I have tried to depict the views of scholars I interviewed as accurately as possible. While in Beijing, I also benefited from discussions with David Hsieh, formerly of the *Straits Times*, who was a marvelous host, generous with his contacts, and is a source of endless insight into contemporary China.

During the writing of this thesis, I have cherished the assistance and camaraderie of close friends. Rebecca Nicholson and Spenta Kakalia cheerfully took on the daunting task of shaping my unruly prose into something more readable. Cynthia Kelly labored over the French language Abstract. Over the years, close friends and colleagues in Montréal – Amy Cox, Irfan Khan, Hasher Majoka, Margaret Ng, Sebastian Normandin, Tanvir Rehman, Jarrett Rudy, and Walter Young – have been a source of support, good cheer, and good times. Away from Montréal, I am indebted to my good friend Khurram Husain, who for many years has been asking the toughest of questions, while offering the greatest of encouragement. I suspect there will be very few who will be as excited to see this thesis completed as Khurram, or who will be as keen to read it.

I owe a special thanks to my ever-patient spouse and closest friend, Spenta, who faced the unenviable task of living with me as this thesis consumed more and more of my time. Through it all, she has provided encouragement, humor, understanding, and sound advice, which to my detriment, I may not always have heeded. She has been the most wonderful of companions.

Finally, it is difficult for me to imagine how I could have pursued my academic interests without the encouragement of my parents, who provided every type of support imaginable. They followed my academic career with enthusiasm and pride. My father, in particular, had a great love for scholarship. Regrettably, he did not live to see this study completed. Nevertheless, it is not difficult for me to imagine his joy on seeing this study in its present form, and all things considered, this idle thought in itself is a source of much happiness.

Abbreviations

AI	Amnesty International
AIOC	Azerbaijan International Oil Co.
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
BP	British Petroleum
BTC	Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan
CASS	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CFR	Council on Foreign Relations
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CNOOC	China National Offshore Oil Corporation
CNPC	China National Petroleum Corporation
CPC	Caspian Pipeline Consortium
CPCC	China Petro-Chemical Corporation
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CRS	Congressional Research Service
CSIS	Canadian Security Intelligence Service
EIA	Energy Information Administration
ETR	East Turkestan Republic
ETIM	East Turkestan Islamic Movement
FBIS	Foreign Broadcast Information Service
FEER	<i>Far Eastern Economic Review</i>
FFA	First Field Army
FYP	Five Year Plan
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
IRP	Islamic Renaissance Party
ISI	Inter Services Intelligence
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MPS	Ministry of Public Security
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIS	Newly Independent States
NMD	National Missile Defense
NPC	National People's Congress
NWFP	Northwest Frontier Province
OMRI	Open Media Research Institute
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Companies
PCC	Production and Construction Corps
PDPA	People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PNAC	Project for the New American Century
RATS	Regional Anti-terrorism Structure
RFE/RL	Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
RMB	Renminbi
ROK	Republic of Korea
SAIS	School of Advanced International Studies
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SEATO	South East Asian Treaty Organization
SOCAR	State Oil Company of Azerbaijan
TIRET	Turkish Islamic Republic of East Turkestan
TMD	Theater Missile Defense
UNIDCP	United Nations International Drug Control Programme
UNODCCP	United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention
UNRF	United National Revolutionary Front
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WTO	World Trade Organization
XUAR	Xinjiang Uighur Autonomus Region

Introduction

The dissolution of the Soviet Union on December 8, 1991, led to the creation of the sovereign republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan in Central Asia. This thesis explores China's relations with Central Asia after 1991, by addressing two questions: first, what were the variables that shaped China's policy towards Central Asia, and, second, how did the development of China's relations reflect its perception of the new challenges and opportunities in primarily a regional, but also a global context? Conversely, this thesis also addresses how China's understanding of the regional and global context influenced its relations with Central Asia.

This is the first in-depth study of contemporary Sino-Central Asian relations in the English language. This study makes a contribution to the body of knowledge by arguing that China's policy towards the region was determined primarily by China's security and economic imperatives in the *Xinjiang weiwu'er zizhiqu* (Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region or XUAR). In addition, China's diplomacy with the Central Asian states was influenced by its deepening relations with the Russian Federation through the 1990s, whereby China envisioned Central Asia as an arena where China, Russia, and the independent republics could jointly address issues of mutual interest. Foremost amongst these was security cooperation. High priority was also assigned to cooperation in Central Asia's energy sector, expansion of trade, and resolving an important issue that had been leftover from the past: the disputed borders. While China saw significant potential for developing bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the Central Asian republics, China did not purportedly seek a sphere of influence that would exclude either other regional countries – such as India, Iran, Pakistan, or Turkey – or Western ones, as long as the policies of these countries would not be gravely detrimental to China's interests. In this regard, there was deliberate deviation from the Cold War mentality (*lengzhan siwei*), of creating hegemonic spheres of influence. Furthermore, an appendage to the above-outlined argument is my observation that China's relations evolved at a deliberately measured pace with the expressed intention of establishing comprehensive and lasting cooperation with its new neighbors.

It was a result of China's gradualist approach towards Central Asia that scholars and analysts in the West paid little attention to China's diplomatic initiative in the region in the 1990s. Prior to the formation of the *Shanghai hezuo zuzhi* (Shanghai Cooperation Organization or SCO) in the summer of 2001, discussion of China's relations with Central Asia was limited to a few chapters in edited volumes (some which were written by Chinese scholars),¹ a small number of journal articles,² or passing and often general references in studies that either explored an aspect of, or surveyed contemporary Central Asian history and politics.³ In addition, in 1999, the US Air Force's RAND Corporation published a short study on China's relations with Russia and the independent Central Asian republics.⁴ As a general trend, I would suggest that prior to 2001, Western-based analysts saw China's diplomacy in the region as being secondary both to Russia's efforts at maintaining a sphere of influence,⁵ and also to the diplomacy of countries such as Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, and the United States in wanting to make inroads into the region.⁶ In the "New Great Game" that was supposedly being played in Central Asia after independence, China was not initially thought to be a particularly prominent player.

In recent years, there has been a reassessment of China's role in Central Asia. Within the United States, much of the interest in China's Central Asian diplomacy emerged amongst analysts in foreign policy think tanks who were spurned on by two

¹ The following edited volumes contained chapters that addressed China's role in Central Asia: Blank and Rubinstein, *Russia's Changing Role*; Ebel and Menon, *Energy and Conflict*; Roy and Jonson, *Central Asian Security*; and Zhang and Azizian, *Ethnic Challenges*.

² Chang, "China's Central Asian Power"; Christoffersen, "Xinjiang and the Great Islamic Circle"; Dorian, Wigdortz, and Gladney, "China and Central Asia's Volatile Mix"; George, "Islamic Unrest"; Harris, "Xinjiang, Central Asia"; and Walsh, "China and the New Geopolitics."

³ Downs, *China's Quest for Energy*; Dawisha and Parrott, *Russia and the New States*; Gleason, *The Central Asian States*; Humphrey and Sneath, *The End of Nomadism?* Hunter, *Central Asia Since Independence*; Olcott, *Central Asia's New States*; Peimani, *Regional Security*; and Rashid, *Taliban*.

⁴ Though this ninety-five page study (which includes a preface, tables, summary, and bibliography) presents a good survey of China's economic, energy, and strategic cooperation with Russia and Central Asia, many of the conclusions it reaches are debatable. Consider the following on Sino-Central Asian relations: "Most of the economic, political and security considerations that underlie China's policy towards these countries have little or no relations towards its relationship with the United States. Many aspects of China's relationship towards Russia and the Central Asian Republics are either conducive to or have no real impact on American interests." Burles, *Chinese Policy*, 61-62.

⁵ For an argument that Russia was "openly pursuing hegemony, if not reunion" in Central Asia, see Blank, "Russia and China," esp. 40-51.

⁶ For a survey of the role of the United States in Central Asia, see Blank, "The United States and Central Asia." For a discussion on the role of Iran and Turkey, see Hunter, *Central Asia Since Independence*, Peimani, *Regional Security*, and Olcott, *Central Asia's New States*. A good discussion of how Central Asia featured in Pakistan's strategic thinking in the mid-1990s is to be found in Rashid, *Taliban*.

contradictory assumptions: one that saw China as developing a hegemonic posture in Central Asia,⁷ and the other that argued that China's Central Asian diplomacy had been a failure.⁸ In recent studies on Xinjiang,⁹ scholars have also addressed China's relations with Central Asia, though oftentimes the policy dimension of the research is inescapable.¹⁰ This is not to make an underhand critique of the rigor of this scholarship, but to be aware that scholarship may get appropriated by the policy-making establishment,¹¹ and that the boundaries between policy and scholarship in contemporary Sinology are oftentimes permeable.¹²

The foreign policy lobbies advocated a range of policy recommendations that were influenced by different considerations. But one consideration that has remained constant is the prioritizing of national interests. According to my analysis, this is where problems arise with regards to US policy in post-independence Central Asia. In recent years, the "New Great Game" approach to explaining foreign interest in Central Asia has gained currency. In part, this approach appears to be based on a romantic fascination, if not outright nostalgia for empire,¹³ and in part based on the revival of a nineteenth

⁷ For an argument on how China and Russia were creating a sphere of influence in Central Asia, though one that fails to provide substantive evidence, see Yom, "Power Politics."

⁸ For a premature dismissal of China and the SCO see, Stephen Blank, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and its Future," *Central Asia – Caucasus Analyst*, May 22, 2002. http://cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=1150 (accessed December 6, 2005).

⁹ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, esp. 142-165; Wiemer, "The Economy of Xinjiang."

¹⁰ A good example is the Xinjiang Project which began in 1998 and was linked to the Johns Hopkins Paul S. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), during the years that Paul Wolfowitz was Dean of the institute (1993-2001). In 2004, the Xinjiang Project presented its research in a volume edited by S. Frederick Starr in which "eighteen of the most competent specialists on Xinjiang ... collaborated over four years to present a three-dimensional picture of the current situation in the province [*sic*]." Fuller and Starr, "The Xinjiang Problem," 1. Though in the Introduction to the volume, Starr states that the volume was "definitely not conceived as a policy monograph," he does note that "Graham E. Fuller and [myself] ... will discuss the geopolitical implications of the research, draw explicit conclusions, and offer policy recommendations for national governments and international bodies."

¹¹ For the policy recommendations that stemmed from the Xinjiang Project, see Fuller and Starr, "The Xinjiang Problem," 74-79.

¹² For examples see Dru Gladney's "China's Xinjiang Problem," a presentation at the Center for Strategic and International Studies on June 5, 2003, and Justin Rudelson, "Xinjiang's Uyghurs," his Congressional Testimony on June 10, 2002.

¹³ The Prologue to a popular account of the Great Game published in 1999 begins: "This book had its inception on a sunny December morning in 1990 when [we] found ourselves on the far side of Khyber Pass gazing down at Afghanistan. We were accompanied by a wizened Pathan soldier, armed with what looked like a nineteenth-century musket.... Stamped in the cliffs were the emblems and memorials of long-departed British regiments." Meyer and Brysac, *Tournament of Shadows*. Or consider the following from the Forward to Peter Hopkirk's *The Great Game*, a sensationalized account in which cavalier, selfless, and enterprising servants of the British Empire outwit their evil, dimwitted, and despotic Chinese and Russian counterparts: "A new struggle is under way as rival outside powers compete to fill the political and

century imperial ethos that gives primacy to a forward policy of creating exclusive spheres of influence for bolstering one's own position vis-à-vis that of other powers. Despite the Kiplingesque infatuation with empire that the independence of Central Asia may have invoked in scholars and policy makers alike, let us not forget that the so-called nineteenth century Great Game was a quest for empire, which viewed the expansion of imperial frontiers and the creation of zones of influence as a zero-sum game. Judging from the unabashed adoption of the "New Great Game" approach to justifying the creation of exclusive spheres of influence in independent Central Asia, I am saddened to note, that the European and American imperial prerogative, subdued for nearly half a century following decolonization in Asia and Africa, appears to be enjoying something of a renaissance.¹⁴ Though there were isolated calls for cooperation and not competition in the Central Asian arena by some,¹⁵ these were largely subsumed by calls for a forward, zero-sum policy towards the region.¹⁶

Not surprisingly, amongst scholars and analysts in the PRC – as in the United States the distinction between the two is not always clear-cut – there has been greater interest in China's relations with the independent republics, though this does not imply that there is greater breadth in their analysis. The cornerstone of Chinese analysis has been regional security (*diqu anquan*),¹⁷ which was predicated on an understanding that instability in the greater Central Asian region was a result of either Islamic extremism

economic void left by Moscow's abrupt departure. Already political analysts and headline writers are calling this maneuvering for long-term advantage 'the New Great Game'. For, while the stakes are far higher and the players are mostly new, they see it today as a continuation of the age-old struggle." Starr, too, claims to have been inspired to prepare an overview on Xinjiang's recent history while smoking cigars in the former Russian consulate in Kashgar in 1998. See Starr, "Introduction," 22.

¹⁴ This revival appears to be accompanied by nineteenth century imperial sensitivities. Consider the following from a former senior China analyst at the US Defense Intelligence Agency: "Central Asia is awash in treachery, intrigue and chameleon loyalties ... Today, tyrannical oil kingdoms possess enough power to control their subject populations but nonetheless will find themselves unable to protect their precious fluids against larger, hungrier and more powerful neighbors." Thomas Woodrow "The New Great Game," *China Brief* 3, no. 11 (February 11, 2003). http://www.jamestown.org/print_friendly.php?volume_id=19&issue_id=668&article_id=4706 (accessed December 11, 2005).

¹⁵ See Talbot, "A Farewell To Flashman."

¹⁶ Thomas Woodrow, "The New Great Game," op. cit. See also the Testimony of Congressman Doug Bereuter (R-NE) "U.S. Interests."

¹⁷ The most comprehensive study of regional security in Central Asia is Sun Zhuangzhi's *Zhongya xin geju*. For general surveys see also Chen, "Sange 'jiduan zhuyi'" ; Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 183-224, and Zheng and Li, *Dulianti shi nian*, esp. vol. 2, 502-545.

(*yisilan jiduan zhuyi*),¹⁸ or the problem of ethnic relations (*minzu guanxi wenti*).¹⁹ For analysts in the PRC, this instability was dangerous as it could, and did lead to instability in Xinjiang.²⁰

The other important dimension of Chinese analysis is that Central Asia was an arena for both cooperation and competition amongst foreign powers. Though the term is not widely used in the Chinese language, scholars have referred to international competition in Central Asia as a “New Great Game” (*xin de da youxi*).²¹ This approach is predicated on the understanding that both Russia and the United States have a strategic and economic interest in the region. Scholars in China have not seen their regional interests as being in conflict with Russia, noting that the Russian influence is understandable given its previous rule over the region.²² This is in keeping with the stated Chinese position that its Central Asian diplomacy was based on mutual benefit through bilateral and multilateral cooperation,²³ which conformed to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (*heping gongchu wuxiang*), and which stressed openness and non-interference in others’ affairs.²⁴

Chinese scholars have watched US posturing in the region intently, which was perceived to be driven by securing the Caspian’s energy resources,²⁵ and after the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, ensuring a regional sphere of influence. American inroads in Central Asia and the Middle East following the

¹⁸ The role of Islam in Central Asia is addressed in Pan, ed., *Zhongnanya de minzu*; and Zhang, “Zhongya de yisilan jiduan zhuyi.” See also Qu, *Dangdai Zhongdong*.

¹⁹ For a discussion on ethnicity in the Central Asian region, see Chen, “Zhongya wuguo”; and Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 117-144.

²⁰ For a succinct discussion of how instability from the greater Central Asian region was leading to support for the so-called “East-Turkestan” (*dongtu*) separatists, see Ma, “Afuhan de “shengzhan,”” esp. 137-140. For an official version, see Information Office, ““East Turkestan’ Forces.”

²¹ Song, “Zhongya di yuan,” 3.

²² Xing, “China and Central Asia,” ; and Xing, “China and Central Asia: Towards a New Relationship.” Though Chinese scholars are not overtly critical of Russian involvement in Central Asia, there is muted criticism of the energy lobby in Russia. See Wang “Waiguo shiyou gongsi.”

²³ A growing body of literature on the SCO reflects the high priority assigned to multilateral cooperation through this organization. For examples see: Wang, “Zhongguo duobian waijiao”; Xu, “Shanghai hezuo zuzhi”; and Zhao, “Zhongya xingshi bianhua.”

²⁴ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 65-66. The Five Principles are: respect for the other countries’ territorial integrity and sovereignty, absence of aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, equality, and mutual benefit.

²⁵ For an overview on the tussle over export pipelines, see Zheng and Li, *Dulianti shi nian*, vol. 2, 545-567. See also Wu, “Fan kong zhanlue”; and Yang, “Nengyuan lingyu”; and Zheng and Zhao, “Lengzhan hou Meiguo nengyuan.”

September 11 attacks accentuated concerns for China's energy security, a topic that has received extensive treatment by scholars and industry analysts alike in recent years.²⁶ Some Chinese analysts have considered American foreign policy a new imperialism (*xin diguo zhuyi*), which is based on the principle of unilateralism (*danbian zhuyi*). In an asymmetric world order, the critique of unilateralism was the foundation of the Chinese critique of American foreign policy.²⁷

Methodology

The above constitute some of the predominant strains in contemporary scholarship that have a bearing on this thesis; they are also indicative of the arguments that I engage with. The breath of scholarship that this study is forced to draw upon is revealing of the multidimensional aspect of contemporary Sino-Central Asian relations. This study does not hone down on a narrowly defined set of variables; I mention this neither as apology, nor as bravado. Rather, this is an acknowledgement of the rich historical legacies and complex international relations that arise out of an inquiry that places Chinese Central Asia at the center of analysis, and seeks to understand relations with an ethnically, religiously, and geographically diverse region in which regional and global powers have sought an active role. Even then, this study only presents one aspect of contemporary Sino-Central Asian relations: the development of Chinese policy from a regional perspective. This regional perspective informs the methodology behind this thesis.

The independence of Central Asia led to a revival of challenges from across the frontier that needed to be addressed if Beijing was to maintain absolute authority in Xinjiang. I undertake an exploration of Sino-Central Asian relations by identifying how developments in regions external to Xinjiang either influenced, or had the potential to influence Beijing's authority over the autonomous region. The present study builds on existing scholarship by identifying contemporary Xinjiang as a frontier zone where foreign influences permeated to challenge Beijing's authority. Methodologically, this

²⁶ For a discussion on some of the many approaches to energy security, see: Zhu, "Zhongya youqi"; Zhou and Zhou, "Ruhe kandai Zhongguo de nengyuan"; "Zuohao baozhang shiyou."

²⁷ An extensive body of literature addresses contemporary American foreign policy. For in-depth critiques of American policy, see Fang, *Xin diguo zhuyi*, and Zhang, *Xin Meilijian diguo*. See also: Ye, "Danbian zhuyi yu duobian zhuyi"; Zheng "Lengzhan hou Meiguo nengyuan"; Zhang, "Zhongguo nengyuan anquan"; and Zhang "'Xin diguo lun' pingxi."

study draws on the conceptualizations of frontier regions by one of the leading twentieth century scholars of Inner Asia, Owen Lattimore (1900-1989). I have drawn on Lattimore's scholarship, as I believe his insights have continued relevance to the greater Central Asian region.

In *Inner Asian Frontiers of China*, which was first published in 1940, Owen Lattimore described frontiers as "the geographical and historical boundaries conventionally set down as lines on a map [representing] the edge of zones." The Great Wall of China marked such a frontier between the region which "was proper to include in the Chinese *t'ien hsia*" and the "barbarian" realm. Frontiers shifted with time, leading Lattimore to observe that "variants, alternatives, and supplementary lines of Great Wall fortification ... proves that the concept of a linear boundary could never be established as an absolute geographical fact. That which was politically conceived as a sharp edge was persistently spread by the ebb and flow of history into a relatively broad and vague margin."²⁸ Therefore, the boundary represented the limit of expansion of any given imperial system. Lattimore writes:

[A] major imperial boundary ... is not merely a line dividing geographical regions and human societies. It also represents the optimum limit of growth of one particular society. In other words, an imperial boundary that is described as defensive, being supposedly to keep out unwanted barbarians, has in fact a double function: it serves not only to keep outsiders from getting in but to prevent the insiders from getting out.²⁹

Likewise, the frontier could be thought of as a series of concentric circles where imperial power waned the further one moved away from the center.³⁰ According to Lattimore, a "frontier style," marked the opposition between steppe-based power and the power of the Chinese state. The ability to harness water for agriculture allowed the Chinese to expand

²⁸ Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*, 238.

²⁹ Ibid., 239-240.

³⁰ Lattimore described this in the following way: "[T]he abstract concept of an absolute boundary was transformed administratively and politically into a system of zones: the boundary itself, with a more or less differentiated population adhering to it even on the hither side; the "auxiliary" tribes in the frontier zone adjacent to the boundary, the outer edge of whose territory was treated as an outer-frontier zone; and beyond that, again, unregenerate barbarism." Ibid., 246.

the margins of the sedentary empire. “The Chinese had been spreading out for centuries because the steady improvement of their methods of controlling water and crops enabled each generation to take over lands that the previous generation had not yet been able to penetrate.” Beyond territory that was fully subsumed within the Chinese empire, lay the “marginal territory” described by Lattimore as “territory held by barbarians who had not been transformed into Chinese.”³¹ In a latter essay (1953), Lattimore described this process as the “zoning” of Inner Asian frontiers.³²

In this study, I have benefited from Lattimore’s understanding of frontiers as marking both the limits of optimal expansion of the empire, and, as a broad geographical margin over which the power of the state diminished as one moved away from the center. The use of the imperial analogy for contemporary China may warrant qualification. While I do not consider contemporary China to be an empire, nor am I of the opinion that the People’s Republic has imperial ambitions, with few exceptions, Republican China (1912-1949), and the subsequent People’s Republic, did inherit the landmass over which the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) established suzerainty. In recent years, scholars have argued that Manchu emperors were not only conscious of ethnic diversity within the vast empire they ruled, but oftentimes celebrated this diversity.³³ After the establishment of the Republican regime, a concerted effort was made to assimilate the different ethnic groups into the modern nation-state.³⁴ Likewise, following the establishment of the People’s Republic, there was not only an appreciation that China was a multiethnic state (*duo minzu guojia*), but the rights of the minority nationalities were also enshrined in the Constitution,³⁵ and minority areas were declared autonomous regions (*zizhiqu*) where, in principle, minority nationalities were given a high degree of autonomy (Xinjiang had

³¹ Ibid., 411.

³² Lattimore, “The New Political Geography,” 165-168.

³³ Elliot, *The Manchu Way*; Hevia, *Cherishing Men From Afar*; and Rawski, *The Last Emperors*.

³⁴ Duara, *Rescuing History*, 141-42.

³⁵ Consider the following: “The state protects the lawful rights and interests of the minority nationalities and upholds and develops the relationship of equality, unity and mutual assistance among all of China’s nationalities. Discrimination against and oppression of any nationality are prohibited; any acts that undermine the unity of the nationalities or instigate their secession are prohibited. The state helps the areas inhabited by minority nationalities speed up their economic and cultural development in accordance with the peculiarities and needs of the different minority nationalities.” “Constitution,” Article 4.

become an autonomous region in 1955).³⁶ But an acknowledgement of China's ethnic diversity does not disguise the fact that the most recent incorporation of Xinjiang into China was as a result of military conquest in the mid-eighteenth century.³⁷ For this reason, I do not believe that it is problematic to use Lattimore's understanding of frontiers in a discussion of Xinjiang's frontier role today.

According to the Constitution of the PRC, autonomous minority areas, including Xinjiang, are an "inalienable" part of China.³⁸ Officially, Xinjiang is said to have been a part of China since the Western Regions (*xiyu*) were first incorporated into the Han dynasty (BCE 202-220 CE) during the reign of Han Wudi (BCE 140-87). A recent document (2002) released by the Information Office of the PRC, states in no uncertain terms: "From [the Han dynasty] on, the central government has never ceased jurisdiction over Xinjiang."³⁹ But other estimates of Chinese rule in Xinjiang are more conservative. In his account published in 1926, C. P. Skrine, the second British Council General at Kashgar (1922-1924), estimated that over the last two thousand years, Chinese ruled over Kashgar for about 425 years;⁴⁰ this is the estimate for Chinese rule in westernmost Xinjiang used by Owen Lattimore as well.⁴¹ Clearly, there are stark differences between present-day Chinese claims of imperial rule in Xinjiang and the estimate of Skrine and Lattimore. But what is significant for the purpose of this study is that according to the official narrative, Xinjiang was considered to be a part of imperial China, and subsequently an inseparable part of the People's Republic, too.

During times when the region comprising present-day Xinjiang was part of a Chinese empire, administration proved to be an economic, logistic, and military challenge. In the event that a particular Chinese dynasty did establish suzerainty over the region – recall that not all dynasties did so – the region marked the extent of Chinese expansion in the west (this does not include military forays further afield during the seventh and eighth centuries⁴²). Applying Lattimore's framework, Xinjiang can be

³⁶ Information Office, "Regional Autonomy." See the section titled "The Political Status of Regional Autonomy."

³⁷ Perdue, *China Marches West*, esp. 256-292.

³⁸ "Constitution," Article 4.

³⁹ Information Office, "'East Turkistan' Forces." See also, Information Office, "White Paper on History."

⁴⁰ Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, 58.

⁴¹ Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*, 171.

⁴² Bregel, *An Historical Atlas*, 16-19; and Franke and Twitchett, "Introduction," 4.

envisioned as a marginal zone that marked the extent of Chinese imperial expansion. What was equally important was that Chinese power diminished over this marginal zone. In the words of C. P. Skrine, when not a part of China, “Kashgaria has been the prey of one conquering people after another. Huns, Yüeh chih or Indo-Scythians, Hephthalites or White Huns, Tibetans, Uighur Turks, Qara Khitai, Mongols under Chingiz Khan, Dzungar Mongols and Turkis from the Transcaspian Khanates have all won and lost it in turn.”⁴³ The point is this: if the region comprising of present-day Xinjiang can be thought of as a series of concentric circles where the power of the center waned as one moved away from China proper, then the region was also one where the power of the suzerain Chinese dynasty overlapped with the power of other political centers beyond the periphery of the region. In other words, Xinjiang was an area where there was an overlap of political power stemming from multiple centers.

This implied that for the region to be part of the Chinese empire, the ruling dynasty had to exert political power into this distant frontier region that was greater than the power of the political centers in regions external to present-day Xinjiang. In addition, the ruling Chinese dynasty’s reach had to be powerful enough to subsume or overwhelm the traditional structures of power. As is widely accepted in Western scholarship, since the Western Regions were first incorporated into the Han dynasty, China’s influence over these territories had ebbed and flowed in accordance with the ability of the center to project decisive power over the periphery.

In a recent study (2005), Peter Perdue has argued that the demarcation of boundaries between the Qing and the Russian empires “made possible the closure of the steppe,” thus restricting the mobility of the nomadic Zungharian Mongols who had jurisdiction over much of Xinjiang prior to conquest during the reign of the Qianlong emperor (1736-1795).⁴⁴ Perdue also notes: “The Zunghars lost, in brief, because the Manchus and the Russians together deprived them of the critical resources they needed to construct a permanent state.”⁴⁵ This suggests that by the mid-eighteenth century, the Qing dynasty had the ability to project decisive power into the frontier region. Thomas Barfield

⁴³ Skrine, *Chinese Central Asia*, 58.

⁴⁴ Perdue, *China Marches West*, 523.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 535.

also considers the Qing conquest of the Zungharian Mongols as marking a turning point in China's relations with Inner Asia. He writes:

From this time onward, conflicts in Inner Asia would be between the two remaining sedentary powers: Russia and China. A 2,000-year-old struggle had come to an end. It was not simply Ch'ing military power that brought this about. A system that had in the past created and protected new nomadic states and ensured their survival had collapsed. A changing world economy, better transportation and communication, and the decline of the old imperial structure in China itself was rapidly putting an end to old patterns and relationships.⁴⁶

While the defeat of the Zungharian Mongols did mark the end of the last steppe-based empire, I do not agree with Barfield's assumption that conflicts in Inner Asia from this time on would only be between Russia and China. As the first chapter illustrates, Chinese suzerainty in Xinjiang was severely threatened by incursions from the Central Asian khanates through the nineteenth century. Russian and Chinese interests in Inner Asia did not openly come into conflict until the 1851 Treaty of Kulja, that was forced on a Qing dynasty weakened by defeat in the First Opium War (1839-1842), and it was only the 1871 Russian annexation of parts of the Ili region that led to a serious diplomatic row between the two land-based empires. Contrary to Thomas Barfield's point of view, I believe it would be close to two hundred years after the Qing conquest of Xinjiang, before the modernization of transportation and communication would bring Chinese Central Asia firmly under Beijing's control. Therefore, while I am in general agreement with Barfield's argument that the 1757 conquest of Xinjiang marked an end of a nearly two thousand year pattern of cyclical rise and decline of Chinese and steppe-based empires in Inner Asian regions adjacent to China proper, in this case, I also feel that it is important not to overstate the consequences of the mid-eighteenth century conquest.

My reason for suggesting so is based on my understanding that the integration of Xinjiang into China proper is an ongoing process. In the present study this observation forms the regional context in which China's policy towards the Central Asian republics

⁴⁶ Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, 294.

was framed. In the PRC today, officials and scholars alike see the modernization of Xinjiang as a process of economic integration of the region with China proper. As this study will illustrate, relations with Central Asia played an important role in the economic development of the region. As Wang Li has suggested, China's diplomacy with the Central Asian republics was important for economic development of the western part of the country that constitutes fifty-six percent of the landmass.⁴⁷ In recent years, Beijing has increased subsidies to Xinjiang, and has engaged in large-scale projects to promote industrialization, improve transport infrastructure, as well as to exploit the region's natural resources.⁴⁸ These initiatives – deepening relations with Central Asia to facilitate economic development of the western part of the country, and state-led planning to develop the same regions – converge in their identification of economic development as facilitating integration of Xinjiang with China proper. Recently, Tibet has also been the recipient of similar state-led modernization.

What is unstated in both official and scholarly accounts is that these initiatives also serve to politically integrate the region into China proper; concurrently, these narratives do not acknowledge that Beijing's hold over the autonomous region is tenuous. Consider that following the Communist takeover, there was a steady influx of Han migrants into a region traditionally inhabited by Turkic people; there was also the development of an extensive civilian-military bureaucracy, not surprisingly, staffed almost exclusively by the Han. While ostensibly these developments took place to modernize Xinjiang's traditional economy and economically integrate the region into China proper, these policies also served an important purpose of making the region more secure and less susceptible to outside influence.

One could argue that the post-1949 efforts at modernization have led Xinjiang to become more firmly integrated into Beijing's orbit than it has been at any other time in modern history. But simultaneously, it is difficult to imagine how this process of integration could have occurred without an extensive civilian-military bureaucracy, and without the influx of Han migrants into Xinjiang. Both these initiatives sought to limit outside influences in the region. As Owen Lattimore had noted, political boundaries were

⁴⁷ Wang, "Zhongguo duobian waijiao," 520.

⁴⁸ Information Office, "History and Development." See the section titled "State Support." See also, Information Office, "Regional Autonomy." See the section titled, "The Central Government's Support."

the marginal zone over which the influence of the center waned. As we shall discuss in Chapter One, for the nearly two hundred year-long period between 1757 and 1949, foreign influence, first from incursions from Central Asian khanates, and then from Russia, severely tested Beijing's ability to maintain suzerainty over Xinjiang. The post-1949 modernization process in Xinjiang can be seen as an attempt to bolster Beijing's presence in this marginal zone.

But despite the modernization of the region following Communist takeover in 1949, Xinjiang is still susceptible to outside influence that can potentially subvert Beijing's regional authority. The official line in China is that instability in the region is almost exclusively the result of foreign influence.⁴⁹ But just the presence of external instability cannot be the only cause of internal unrest; equally important is that these find resonance among Xinjiang's population. Consequently, I think it is reasonable to think of Xinjiang not only as a region where Beijing exerts predominant influence, but where external influences – Islamist, or pan-Turkic – still permeate. Though scholars in China will probably disagree with me, my understanding is that Xinjiang is still a frontier zone in the way that Lattimore understood the concept, with Xinjiang being the site of conflict between multiple outward-expanding zones stemming from different political centers beyond its boundaries. The overbearing authority of the official line, that Xinjiang has been an inalienable part of China for the last two thousand years and that resistance to Beijing's hold is tantamount to terrorism, has meant that the state has largely remained insensitive to issues of ethnic or cultural marginalization as legitimate grievances. Failure to address these issues through state-initiated mechanisms has resulted in many of these issues finding redress in regional Islamist or ethnic movements that made their influence felt in Xinjiang after 1991, though this is not tantamount to arguing that had these grievances been addressed, Islamist or ethnic movements would not have made inroads into the region, although they may have been attenuated.

After 1949, state-led modernization was borne down on the region with the expectation that through economic modernization, development of communication and transport infrastructure, and the settlement of Han in the region, Xinjiang could be fully

⁴⁹ The most comprehensive official discussion of instability in Xinjiang is to be found in the Information Office of the State Council's, "'East Turkistan' Forces."

integrated into China and adverse foreign influences could be minimized. Likewise, the region's centrifugal tendencies could also be curtailed. I believe that between 1949 and 1991, China's efforts at limiting adverse foreign influences were largely successful. While there was extensive military deployment along the border after the Sino-Soviet split of the late 1950s, the Soviet threat was directed at all of China, although Xinjiang may have been particularly vulnerable. With all of Central Asia divided between China and the Soviet Union in conflict with each other, notwithstanding the intensity of cross-border propaganda, there was little chance that influences from across the border would effect Xinjiang. Though limited cross-border trade between Xinjiang and the Soviet Union began in 1983, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan planted the seeds for one of the most complex transnational war-economies the region has known, China's leaders ensured that Xinjiang remained sheltered from instability across the border.

The emergence of five sovereign republics in Central Asia threatened to undo more than four decades of Chinese Communist efforts to block out Islamist or pan-Turkic challenges. Prior to the 1991 dissolution of the Soviet Union, political power in Central Asia had been vested in the apparatus of the centralized Soviet state. But with the independence of Central Asia, the region was seen to have entered a period of weakened political power (*xuruo zhengquan shiqi*),⁵⁰ where economically and politically impoverished republics could not assert the degree of control over the region that the predecessor Soviet state had. In this respect, the breakup of the Soviet Union had the potential to undermine China's rule in Xinjiang. A corollary to this watershed event was that the emergence of independent republics in Central Asia threatened Beijing's ability to exert absolute control over Xinjiang more than its authority had been threatened during the height of the Sino-Soviet conflict.

The reason for this was that the Central Asian leadership lacked the ability to curtail elements contributing to religious and ethnic instability that had lain dormant during the course of Soviet rule. Like Chinese rule in Xinjiang, Russian rule in Central Asia had suppressed but not addressed traditional undercurrents that opposed Slavic (or in the case of China, Han) rule over Central Asia. In the absence of effective state security apparatus after 1991, some of these forces manifested themselves in the

⁵⁰ Xu, "Zhengju zuo shi," 5.

politically and economically impoverished republics with particular ferocity.⁵¹ Add to the mix a transnational war economy centered in Afghanistan that was sustained by the United States and its local proxies for the purpose of combating Soviet occupation in the country, and the result was the unleashing of complex and intertwined transnational forces that portended poorly for the stability of the greater Central Asian region. This suggests, that at the end of the twentieth century, many of the security challenges faced by China were similar in nature to the challenges that arose between the mid-eighteenth and the mid-twentieth century. Note that I am suggesting that the challenges were of a similar nature, that is, once again there was an influx of external influence into the region that threatened Beijing's absolute power. This in no way insinuates that the PRC's abilities and efforts to address these challenges have not been more successful than that of the Qing dynasty or Republican China. There is little doubt in my mind that Beijing's hold over Xinjiang is stronger than it has been in any time in China's modern history, and given the current course of events, I find it difficult to foresee how Beijing's grasp over the region could diminish.

The principal focus of this study is an identification of developments in the greater Central Asian region that had the potential to adversely effect Xinjiang, and an exploration of China's response to these new challenges. This study is informed by an appreciation of Xinjiang as a frontier zone, where the power of the state conflicted with challenges from across the border. I find that Owen Lattimore's conceptualization of Inner Asian frontier zones allows for latitude in explaining why challenges from across the frontier challenged Beijing's jurisdiction, and consequently, influenced policy towards Central Asia. This regional perspective constitutes the methodological cornerstone of the research presented herein.

There are two aspects of instability in the regions adjacent to Xinjiang that are important to this study that I wish to introduce here. The first was the emergence of the war economy in Afghanistan following the 1979 Soviet invasion. This study benefits from Barnett Rubin's understanding of the war economy that was based on a

⁵¹ There is yet another dimension to the so-called "Islamic revival" in Central Asia which is that this process began not after the breakup of the Soviet Union, but in the final years of perestroika. In addition, the emergence of the region's main Islamist party was actually encouraged by factions within Moscow who sought to weaken the hold of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). We shall survey this process in Chapter Two.

transnational trade in drugs, small arms, and smuggled goods. As Rubin has noted, “Wars create conditions for economic activity, though often of a predatory nature, and such economic returns to the use of violence may both provoke such wars and nourish interests that perpetuate them.” He then argues:

The war economy of Afghanistan exemplifies this phenomenon. Devastated Afghanistan has become both the world’s leading producer of opium (75 percent of world production in 1999) and a transport and marketing corridor where armed groups protect a region-wide arbitrating center where profits are made off policy-induced price differentials. This economy developed in response to the demands of warlords for resources and of the Afghan people for survival in a country devastated by over 20 years of war.

An important point was that the war economy was not limited to Afghanistan. Rubin continues:

This illicit economy is not confined to Afghanistan. Through the development of an Afghan Diaspora linked to neighboring societies, the opening of borders, and lack of customs enforcement in many areas, the Afghan war economy has generated a pattern of regional economic activity and associated social and political networks that compete with and undermine legal economies and states. This regional economy is in turn linked through the drug and arms trade to globalized crime.⁵²

An appreciation of the reach of the war economy is essential to appreciating the nature of instability in the greater Central Asian region. In this study we shall witness how the war economy was pivotal in creating instability through the region, and in particular, crucial for sustaining “nationalist” anti-state factions in the Tajik civil war (1992-1997) and the “internationalist” insurgency in Uzbekistan’s Ferghana valley

⁵² Barnett Rubin, “Excerpts of “The Political Economy of War and Peace in Afghanistan,”” *Eurasia Insight*, March 14, 2000. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav031400.shtml> (accessed March 1, 2006).

(c. 1998-).⁵³ There is also evidence to suggest that Uighurs from Xinjiang also reaped the benefits of Central Asia's parallel transnational economic activity. What is noteworthy is that the war economy did not have a destabilizing impact on China until the breakup of the Soviet Union. Therefore, adverse effects of Afghanistan's civil war should be seen in tandem with the independence of Central Asia, the immediate result of which was a sharp economic decline in all the republics. Breaking free of Soviet tutelage did not allow for greater participation in the political process; consequently, through processes explored in this study, many amongst the politically, and now economically marginalized in Central Asia benefited from the tide of Islamism sweeping in from Afghanistan.

The other important aspect of the regional instability was the growing centrality of Islam in anti-state movements in the greater Central Asian region. The role of Islam in anti-state movements can be traced back to the war against Soviet occupation, where the power of the Mujahidin was buttressed, in part, by the war economy. The war economy continued after the withdrawal of Soviet troops and provided the grist for a new generation of Afghans under the Taliban. For the purpose of this study, what is particularly important about the Taliban was that after coming to power, the regime did little to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards their neighbors; an important facet of their rule was the impunity with which they championed regional Sunni sectarian movements. In their interpretations of religious doctrines, the Taliban were different from traditional Islamist parties such as the Ikhwan al-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhoods), or their South Asian Islamist counterparts, the Jama'at-i Islami, and the Jami'at al-'ulama'-i Islami, with whom the Taliban did share some genealogical links.⁵⁴

The Taliban were not the only Islamists who contributed to instability in the greater Central Asian region, but the Taliban victory over rival factions was the only time

⁵³ Roy, "The Islamic Movement." I have borrowed the distinction between "nationalism" and "internationalism" from Olivier Roy who argues that since the 1970s, movements in the Islamic world have either been nationalistic, (examples of which are the Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria, the Refah Movement in Turkey, or the Hizbullah in Lebanon), or "Internationalist," (such as the insurgency that emerged out of Uzbekistan's Ferghana valley in the mid-1990s).

⁵⁴ The most thorough survey of Islamist genealogies in South Asia from their modern institutionalization at the Deoband madrasa (est. 1876), to the present, is to be found in Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*. A non-genealogical exploration of the links between "fundamentalists" (the term used by Lawrence) can also be found in Lawrence, *Defenders of God*, 189-226. See also Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, and *Globalized Islam*. For links between the Taliban and Islamist organizations in Pakistan, especially the Jami'at al-'ulama'-i Islami, see Rashid, *Taliban*.

a Sunni populist movement overthrew a ruling regime. By doing so, they revoked the traditional exclusion of Islamists from the corridors of power. As Bruce B. Lawrence argues, “[Fundamentalists] are reacting against a notion of intellectual hegemony as well as sociopolitical privilege.... [T]hey are challenging their exclusions from such echelons of power.... [T]hey are ideologues who look in from the margin.”⁵⁵ Lawrence’s argument that Islamists were traditionally outside echelons of power is important,⁵⁶ for through resistance to state power, Islamists challenged the absolute authority of the state as a vestige of rationality, secularism, and modernity.

An important conflict between the modernists and Islamists – and here I invoke these categories in their broadest, most discursive form – was over the nature of the state. As Partha Chatterjee has argued, prior to decolonization, Third World nationalist thought mimicked the intellectual foundations of its European predecessors in its adoption of rationality, Darwinism, and a separation between church and state.⁵⁷ By taking a staunchly anti-nationalist stance, whether in South Asia or the Middle East, Islamists positioned themselves in opposition to the nationalists, who were secular in their demand for separation between the state and organized religion (the exception of course was Pakistan, whose basis for existence was religion). To quote Lawrence again, the fundamental question is this: “[H]ow can believers preserve their symbolic identity within a public order that is structurally anti-religious?.... [The conflict] is above all ideological, weighted towards religion for fundamentalists, towards nationalism for secularists. The two are incommensurate. They are not mere contraries; they are genuine contradictions.”⁵⁸ Though from time to time regimes in Sunni-majority countries had evoked Islamic symbolism to bolster their own legitimacy, a phenomenon that became increasingly common in the Arab world after 1967,⁵⁹ Islamists had largely remained excluded from power. In a public space articulated and demarcated by political power,

⁵⁵ Lawrence, *Defenders of God*, 7.

⁵⁶ Arguably, this phenomenon was not limited to the late-twentieth century, but had first manifest itself in the nineteenth century when Muslim societies were brought under colonial rule by European powers. According to Lawrence, this created a rift in colonized societies “between those [Muslims] who openly accommodated to Western values and those who seemed to oppose them.” Ibid., 87.

⁵⁷ Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought*, esp. chap. 1.

⁵⁸ Lawrence, *Defenders of God*, 85.

⁵⁹ Asad, *Formations*, 195-196.

Islamists, until the rise of the Taliban, were a social group excluded from this sphere.⁶⁰ By actually capturing state power in war-torn Afghanistan, the Taliban were able to deeply influence Islamist movements in the region. This was certainly true for Uzbekistan, where the Taliban supposedly provided ideological and logistical support to movements resisting the state. In addition, up to a thousand Uighurs may have traveled to Afghanistan to join the movement,⁶¹ at least some with the hope of undermining Beijing's hold over Xinjiang.⁶² Thus, instability in the greater Central Asian region became a concern for Beijing, both in its nationalist manifestation (Uighur aspirations for independence from China), and in its internationalist guise (transnational Islamist movements being supported from Afghanistan). There was a convergence in their shared objectives of undermining Beijing's authority in Xinjiang.

For China, the prospect of its authority being undermined in Xinjiang portends poorly, for the region is essential to its security. China has faced security challenges on its Central Asian frontiers since the early nineteenth century, which, as we shall see in this study, continued after 1991. Xinjiang has also been the site of China's nuclear weapons testing program, which has been essential to how it has positioned itself in the global arena. But perhaps most important is the issue of national cohesiveness; should Beijing's grasp over Xinjiang falter, there is fear that this would bolster the independence movements in Tibet and Taiwan, and undermine national unity within the PRC.

Organization of the Study

This study is divided into four chapters followed by a conclusion. The first chapter identifies developments between the mid-eighteenth century and the independence of Soviet Central Asia that had a bearing on China's approach towards the independent Central Asian republics. The subsequent three chapters explore the development of China's foreign policy since 1991. The breakdown of these chapters is as follows: Chapter Two, which begins with the independence of Central Asia and continues to 1996;

⁶⁰ Ibid., 183-184.

⁶¹ Ma, "Afuhan de 'shengzhan,'" 137; and, "Unveiling the Terrorist Nature of 'East Tujue' Elements," *People's Daily*, November 11, 2001. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200111/16/print20011116_84659.html (accessed January 5, 2006).

⁶² Neil A. Lewis, "Freedom for Chinese Detainees Hinges on Finding a New Homeland," *New York Times*, November 8, 2004.

Chapter Three, which begins with the development of the multilateral initiative in 1996 and addresses events until the summer of 2001; and, Chapter Four, which begins with the institutionalization of multilateral cooperation through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and traces China's relations with Central Asia through to the end of 2005, which as this study will indicate, marks the height of Chinese influence in the region to date. While I have mostly confined the discussion in the three chapters to the demarcated time frame, in the second and third chapter I have transgressed these demarcations for the sake of maintaining narrative cohesiveness.

Chapter One begins with a survey of human and physical geographies. I suggest that historically, today's Xinjiang autonomous region consisted of disparate communities. While there was some ethnic homogeneity in the region – most of the inhabitants were Turkic – traditionally, ethnicity by itself was not a strong unifier. Even amongst Uighur communities, which today makeup Xinjiang's largest ethnic group by a slim margin, there were regional, occupational, and before the seventeenth century, religious diversity. Before the mid-eighteenth century conquest, and besides a short spell following the thirteenth century Mongol conquests, all of Xinjiang had never been incorporated into a Chinese empire, nor had the entire region ever existed as an independent political entity.

Before the Qing conquests there had never been a cohesive political or economic entity – East Turkestan, Turkestan, or the Western Regions – that corresponds to the physical boundaries of the Xinjiang of today. Consequently, to speak of external influence in the Xinjiang frontier zone prior the Qing conquest is not necessarily to speak of foreign influence subverting a preexisting political order. At the risk of generalization, we can postulate that in the pre-Qing order, Xinjiang's western oases were economically integrated in the city-state system of Islamic Central Asia, the steppe belt north of the Tianshan was part of a macroeconomic region that extended into the Kazakh steppes, while the eastern oases adjacent to Gansu came under the economic and political influence of imperial China. If we understand the region to be economically and politically non-cohesive with the different sub-regions part of macroeconomic systems external to Xinjiang, then it was the eighteenth century Qing conquest that was an anomaly, and not the Khokandi incursions in the nineteenth century.

While the Qing dynasty had been in ascendancy during the eighteenth century, Russian imperial expansion gained momentum through the nineteenth century. Beset with a host of internal problems and foreign powers preying on the coastal regions, the Qing dynasty was not in a position to ward off Russian influence in Xinjiang. During the nineteenth century, the Qing dynasty routinely lost control over parts of the region; the eventual re-conquest in 1877 had been the last imperial gasp of an ailing Qing dynasty. Re-conquest resulted in an important trend that continued into the Republican period. This was that the power of Xinjiang's traditional elite, whom the Qing had initially patronized, was weakened as Han administrators were brought into the region. This led to acute feelings of marginalization amongst the local population, as a consequence of which pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism became identifiers around which communities coalesced in opposition to what was seen as alien rule. Another important development was that, with China engulfed in chaos after 1911, Russia was able to economically and politically exploit the region (through the nineteenth century, Russia had also attempted to gain access to India through Tibet and Xinjiang). Arguably, between 1911 and 1949, the Soviet Union exerted a stronger influence in Xinjiang than China itself, evidenced by an NKVD division present in the region in 1941-1942.

Following victory, Communist efforts at modernization were directed at bringing the frontier region firmly within the fold of the new China; Han migrants began arriving in large numbers, and along with taking up residence in Urumqi, moved into Xinjiang's border regions. Large military farms were established. Communication and transportation infrastructure was developed. Pastoral nomadic activity saw a sharp decline as large tracts of land were brought under cultivation. An extensive civilian-military bureaucracy was established, mostly staffed by the Han. Following the Sino-Soviet split, and with concern over the implications of the "Brezhnev Doctrine," the pretext of upholding socialism under which Soviet troops had entered Czechoslovakia in 1968, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) began deploying vast numbers of troops along the border with the Soviet Union.

Though the threat of a military confrontation between China and the Soviet Union diminished through the 1980s, the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan created conditions which proved to be destabilizing throughout the greater Central Asian region.

As I discuss in Chapter One, in the initial years following the Soviet invasion, China was a major supplier of arms to the Mujahidin. In the subsequent years, China was adversely effected by the regional war economy that grew out of resistance to Soviet occupation.

Chapter Two begins with a survey of the independence of Central Asia. Populist movements for sovereignty did not precede independence in the region. Consequently, there were very little changes in the political oligarchy following independence. In addition, Russian influence in the periphery continued, but without the economic subsidies that Moscow had previously provided.

China was not adverse to continued Russian influence in Central Asia. The independence of Central Asia had attracted the attention of regional Muslim-majority countries such as Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey, all of whom highlighted their shared Islamic or Turkic heritage as a basis for developing close relations. Both pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism had been kept in check in the Soviet Union. If Central Asia remained in Moscow's orbit following independence, then there was a strong likelihood that neither pan-Islamism nor pan-Turkism would enjoy official patronage. China was also content to see a Russian sphere of influence in Central Asia because of its rapidly improving relations with the country (relations with Russia improved through the 1980s, both because of the resolution of bilateral conflicts, and because of both countries' growing wariness with American foreign policy during this time). In addition, China tread carefully in Central Asia because it did not want to provoke the Russians by appearing to exploit its recent weakness; as I discuss in Chapter Two, not only was there heightened economic cooperation between the two countries in the 1990s, but there was also shared concern with the post-Cold War world order, particularly perceived US unilateralist impulses.

Between 1991 and 1996, China emerged as an important trade partner for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The two countries, along with Tajikistan, agreed to demarcate their borders with China, which had been disputed since the end of the nineteenth century. In addition, the Central Asian republics agreed to clamp down on Uighur political activity in their countries. Amongst Chinese officials there was apprehension that the independence of Central Asia had stirred separatist tendencies in Xinjiang. While China had the security mechanism to address internal unrest, it needed

the cooperation of the Central Asian republics to ensure that regions adjacent to Xinjiang did not become a base for Uighur political activity. The possibility of Central Asia being used as a base for agitation was a real one, given the Islamist-led unrest in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In Chapter Three, I discuss how China addressed these concerns. On April 26, 1996, China and Russia, along with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan convened a summit in Shanghai, which marked the beginning of multilateral cooperation between China and its new neighbors. During the first two years the scope of the multilateral initiative was limited to developing confidence-building mechanisms in the border areas. In 1998 however, the multilateral initiative began addressing issues of regional security. This was a notable development. In 1996 and 1997, China had faced unrest in Xinjiang, which appeared to be inspired less by longings for a theocratic society, and driven more by Uighur nationalist aspirations. The Chinese response had been swift and decisive; within weeks the regional leadership was insisting that restive elements had been rooted out. At the time there was no official mention of the insurgents being linked to transnational Islamist movements.

But unrest in Xinjiang helped bring security concerns to the forefront of the multilateral initiative, probably not least because Uighur émigré organizations in Kazakhstan openly criticized Chinese rule in Xinjiang. This underlined the importance of security cooperation between China and Central Asia. An added regional threat was instability brewing in Uzbekistan's Ferghana valley that the Uzbek regime was unable to suppress, and which would continue unabated until the United States-led military intervention in Afghanistan in October 2001.

Chapter Three discusses another important aspect of Central Asia's contemporary foreign relations, which was the international community's interest in securing access to the region's energy reserves. In addition to securing access to energy, I argue that Central Asia's reserves allowed foreign powers to establish a presence for the purpose of reducing the influence of competing powers in the region. In the decade following independence, Russia had sought to maintain its monopoly over Central Asia's energy, whereas the United States and its regional allies, Azerbaijan and Turkey, had sought to limit Russia's influence. During this time, China was conspicuously absent from the

international wrangling over the direction of the export pipelines. This was despite the fact that since 1993 China had been a net importer of oil, and its supposedly large energy reserves actually contained significantly less oil and natural gas than had been forecasted. Central Asia, and particularly Kazakhstan, had the potential to fulfill a considerable portion of China's energy needs. Nonetheless, China deliberately exercised patience with the purpose of letting the proverbial dust settle and letting others stumble before entering the fray.

Chapter Four explores China's interests in Central Asia from 2001 through 2005. Since 2001, the greater Central Asian region has attracted an unprecedented amount of attention from the United States, as the region became important to US security concerns following the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001. US military engagement in Afghanistan and military deployment in Central Asia indicated that the United States sought a long-term regional presence. This did not bode well for China, although there was little that it could do at that time to prevent US military deployment. Along with Uzbekistan, in June 2001, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan had formed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The purpose of the SCO had been to deepen multilateral cooperation, particularly important amongst which had been heightened security cooperation. Multilateral security cooperation had been facilitated by the fact that all countries shared identical views on regional instability. The Central Asian republics, along with China and Russia, unanimously agreed that there could be no political justification for challenges to the primacy of the state. All countries identified regional unrest as being criminal in nature, the only response to which was to root out restive elements through instruments of state power. SCO member-states never considered that regional unrest could have been caused by internal state policies; in their shared approach to regional insecurity, introspective policy assessment was not an option.

But despite the fact that the SCO member-states and the United States-led coalition took a nominal view of regional instability, the SCO was in its early stages and did not possess the mechanisms to adequately address these concerns. Not participating in the rapidly evolving "War on Terror" was not an option for China as the international campaign addressed issues that were central to China's security concerns. Consequently, China took a multi-pronged approach: it offered to cooperate with the United States,

insisted on the primacy of the United Nations, and perhaps most importantly, projected Uighur unrest in Xinjiang as being linked to transnational Islamist movements based out of Afghanistan. Though SCO member-states had suggested since 1998 that Afghanistan was a major contributor to regional unrest, what China sought to do was to depict all Uighur unrest since 1991 as being masterminded by transnational Islamist forces. Through the revamping of the discourse on instability, China projected itself as a victim of transnational terrorism. This was an important development, as it allowed China to claim that it too was engaged in a struggle against international terrorist forces, while simultaneously using supposed Uighur links with Afghanistan's transnational organizations to clamp down on those who were seen to challenge Beijing's rule in Xinjiang.

Arguably, in 2001 and 2002, US engagement in the greater Central Asian region had eclipsed China's ability to play a pivotal role in Central Asia: the United States-led coalition was seemingly victorious in Afghanistan, the Central Asian republics had agreeably joined the "War on Terror," the United States was unilaterally determining the direction of the anti-terrorist campaigns, dominating the pipeline issue, and condoning preemptive strikes, while a lobby within the American foreign policy establishment argued for a tougher stance against China.⁶³ China's only recourse was a strengthening of the SCO.

An important aspect of the initial development of the SCO was that the organization evolved at a gradual pace, and although China faced setbacks because of heightened US interest in Central Asia, the SCO's multilateral initiatives never wavered. These included the adoption of a Charter in 2002, the beginning of joint military exercises in 2003, and the opening of the Secretariat (in Beijing), and an anti-terrorist center (in Tashkent), in 2003. Additionally, China continued bilateral cooperation with the republics. Trade between China and Central Asia increased steadily during this time, and in 2003, the PRC stepped up its acquisition of Kazakhstan's energy. Viewed individually, none of these bilateral or multilateral initiatives had the potential to

⁶³ For example, see Project for the New American Century's Gary Schmitt, "Our Ambivalent China Policy," *The Weekly Standard*, July 15, 2002, and the Jamestown Foundation's Michael E. Marti "U.S. China Strategy: Redefining Engagement," *China Brief* 2, issue 15 (July 2002). http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=18&issue_id=655&article_id=4657 (accessed December 10, 2005).

overcome the United States' influence in the region. But combined, these initiatives were indicative of a sustained, albeit gradual engagement by China with the region.

Consequently, when the United States was asked to dismantle its military base in Uzbekistan in the summer of 2005, China was positioned to play an important role.

Unlike the United States' bilateral military alliances that resulted from military engagement in the region, China approached its relations with Central Asia from a long-term perspective in which it was mindful of immense potential for cooperation in some areas, such as energy and agriculture, while wary of the trade in arms and narcotics, which continues to destabilize the region. Both of these are addressed in this chapter.

Although challenges to Beijing's authority in Chinese Central Asia will continue into the foreseeable future, it is evident that China has made considerable progress in consolidating its authority in the autonomous region. From a historical perspective, this could be seen both as a part of the ongoing modernization of the region, begun after the establishment of the PRC in 1949, or as a security imperative, following the 1991 independence of Central Asia and the instability that this historic event unleashed. In this process, China benefited from close cooperation with the Central Asian republics. In the Conclusion I suggest that China's diplomatic success was predicated on two factors: first, that the Central Asian and the Chinese leadership faced identical views on challenges to state power, and second, the willingness on both sides to develop mutually beneficial economic ties. Indeed, the rhetoric of mutual benefit is an important strain in China's Central Asian diplomacy and there is considerable truth to it. But there is one important caveat. China's foremost concern in Central Asia was that the region had the potential to, and at times did effect security in Xinjiang. As this study will illustrate, for China to maintain its jurisdiction over the autonomous region after 1991, it was essential that its Central Asian foreign policy had to proactively prioritize first stability, and, second, economic development in Chinese Central Asia.

1.

The Enduring Reach of History

Introduction

As 1991 was drawing to an end, China found itself in a rapidly changing political environment just beyond its northern and western borders. Seemingly overnight, the Soviet Union crumbled, and in a span of less than four months, between August and December, five sovereign states emerged on, and just beyond, China's northwestern frontier: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. A year earlier, virtually no one could have predicted that Soviet Central Asia would be independent. Populist movements for self-determination had not preceded independence in Central Asia, as had been the case in the Baltic states and the Eastern Bloc. In 1917, the Tsarist colonial possessions in Central Asia were brought under Bolshevik control. While there had been revolts against Soviet rule in Central Asia during the 1920s and into the 1930s, by 1991, the entire region was politically and administratively assimilated into the Soviet Union. For the first time since the 1868 storming of Tashkent by Tsarist armies, the people of Central Asia could genuinely claim to be masters of their own destiny. But the mood across the region was not one of joyous celebration. Rather, it was one of caution.¹

China, Central Asia's giant neighbor to the east, swiftly established diplomatic relations with the new states.² The speedy establishment of diplomatic relations by China was partly an attempt to assist neighboring countries now caught in a political and economic quagmire after the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union. In addition, China's interest in establishing close relations with the newly independent republics was born out of the sensitive political situation in China's northwestern Xinjiang autonomous region that now shared a border with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Officially known as the *Xinjiang weiwu'er zizhiqu* (Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region or XUAR), the autonomous region is home to Muslim Turkic and Tajik minority nationalities that have

¹ Rashid, *The Resurgence*, esp. chap. 1. Ahmed Rashid was in Ashkabad, Turkmenistan, reporting for the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (FEER), shortly after the Soviet Union was dissolved on December 8, 1991. I explore the immediate reaction to the breakup of the Soviet Union in Chapter Two.

² Xu and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 53.

historically challenged Han rule in the region. Not only were Xinjiang's indigenous ethnic groups identical to those in the now-independent Central Asian republics, but the autonomous region had also undergone a tumultuous process of integration into the People's Republic after 1949. As was the case in the rest of China, the decades following the Communist takeover saw tumultuous mass campaigns in Xinjiang. But Xinjiang was home to minority nationalities, and Han migration to the autonomous region, along with mass campaigns exacerbated ethnic and religious differences between the Han and the minority nationalities, and were seen as Han chauvinism (*dahan zhuyi*).³ The end of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) saw a deradicalization of society throughout the country, and by the end of the 1980s, Xinjiang was arguably enjoying the longest stretch of stability in close to a century. But peace in the autonomous region remained fragile. Though there were few instances of ethnic tensions flaring up through the 1980s, the rapidly changing situation in Central Asia at the end of 1991 raised the possibility of a spillover of instability into the autonomous region that could have eroded the Party's authority.

A central premise of this study is that China's relations with Central Asia after 1991 were determined largely, but not exclusively, by the experience of Han administration of Xinjiang. The historical experience of Xinjiang's tumultuous integration into modern China cast a long shadow over the evolving relations between China and Central Asia, and China's foreign policy towards the new republics was informed by the pivotal role played by Xinjiang as a minority border region. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the historical legacies that strongly influence Xinjiang today.

Part one explores human and historical geographies through a survey of the geographical features of the region, and by surveying how ethnic groups came to inhabit different areas within Xinjiang. I argue that historically Xinjiang should not be seen as an economically or politically homogenous region, but one consisting of economically and culturally independent, outward-oriented sub-regions that were part of macroeconomic regions peripheral to Xinjiang. Likewise, historically, the nationalities that inhabit Xinjiang today did not constitute economically or politically homogenous units despite

³ For the most thorough treatment of Party rule in Xinjiang, including detailed discussions of Maoist mass campaigns, see McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*.

the fact that most of them are Muslim and identify themselves with a particular ethnic group, be it Uighur, Hui, Kazakh, or one of the numerically smaller nationalities.

In part two, I examine foreign interference within Xinjiang from the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. In particular, I examine Sino-Russian treaties from the mid-nineteenth century that dealt with border agreements and economic concessions made to Russia. The border agreements were particularly important, as after 1949, China would insist that these had been imposed by Russia on an ailing Qing dynasty, and were thus invalid.⁴ Russian influence in Xinjiang increased during the Republican era, and Xinjiang became a virtual satellite of the Soviet Union.

During this time, imperial Russia was not the only provocateur; merchants and adventurers from surrounding Central Asian territories, in particular the tiny khanate of Khokand, managed to wield economic and political influence in the region that the Qing could do little to curtail. Foreign incursion in the region ran parallel with decreasing centralized control. It is noteworthy, that the Chinese Communists attempted to increase the regional authority of the state by developing transport and communication infrastructure in the autonomous region, and by modernizing Xinjiang's traditional economy. This suggests that the Party leaders had learned an important lesson with regard to Xinjiang's modern history: when the center was unable to exert absolute control over the frontier region, foreign powers, big or small could wreak havoc within the boundaries of the state.

Part three focuses on changes in Xinjiang's society after the territory was incorporated into the Qing dynasty in 1757. My primary interest is in the changing role of the local elite within Xinjiang. This section notes that a fundamental policy change occurred at the end of the Qing dynasty that carried through into the Republican period. This was the increasing influx of Han administrators into the region, which resulted in a marginalization of the traditional Turkic elite, the *begs*. This resulted in feelings of marginalization that were expressed in an increasing number of revolts against Chinese rule. Revolts against the Han rulers culminated in the establishment of independent

⁴ Though Sino-Soviet relations saw a marked improvement after 1986, the outstanding dispute over the Sino-Soviet Central Asian border remained mostly unresolved. Consequently, the settling of Sino-Central Asian borders was one of the first orders of business after the independence of Central Asia. This process is examined in the second and third chapters.

“republics” within Xinjiang in the 1930s and 1940s. As this section also demonstrates, during the Republican period, the power of the Nationalist regime in Xinjiang had waned dramatically. This was a reflection of the growing decentralization of power within China resulting from weak governance and warlord rule. In Xinjiang, this decentralization was exacerbated by the limitations of centralized authority in a geographically remote region that had been difficult to administer even during the most peaceful of times. Once again, there was an important lesson to be learned by China’s new Communist leaders: not only was there a need to physically integrate Xinjiang more closely into Beijing’s orbit, but an increasing number of Han settlers could mitigate the threat of minority border regions from breaking away.

In addition, this section explores Russian influence within China’s border region in the 1930s and 1940s. If anything, Russian influence in Xinjiang was more pronounced in the 1940s than it had been at the end of the nineteenth century, a stark indicator of the sharp decline of the Republican government’s authority.

The capture of state power by the Communist Party in 1949 marked a pivotal point in Xinjiang’s modern history. This was because the Party sought to politically and economically integrate the region within Beijing’s orbit by fundamentally altering the demographic and economic landscape of the autonomous region. I explore some aspects of this process in part four. In practical terms, increased centralization amounted to two changes within the autonomous region. The first was a transformation of the traditional modes of production to bring the regional economy in line with a Communist vision of a modern socialist state. The second result of increased centralization amounted to settling more Han into the autonomous region in order to make Xinjiang more secure in an increasingly hostile regional environment. The 1960s had witnessed an increasing militarization of the Sino-Soviet frontiers, including those in Xinjiang, border skirmishes with the Soviet Union, and, in 1962, a war with India over Aksai Chin. I discuss how these influenced China’s security concerns in the autonomous region. While there was a thaw in Sino-Soviet relations beginning in 1982, improvements in bilateral relations were dwarfed by an event that was to have tremendous security consequences for China: the December 27, 1979, Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan under the excuse of the “Brezhnev doctrine.”

No single event in recent history influenced China's security concerns on its Central Asian frontiers as the Soviet invasion and its aftermath. Part five discusses China's security concerns with regard to the Soviet invasion and its aftermath: these included the development of a highly sophisticated informal economy and transnational networks that catered to supplying weapons to resistance groups, the beginning of large-scale poppy cultivation that would burgeon in the years following Soviet withdrawal, and the creation of (mostly) Sa'udi-funded madrasas in Pakistan's border regions that served as a bed-and-breakfast for volunteers that flocked from all over the Muslim world to fight against the Soviet occupation. It was here that a new ideological battle took place as Sa'udi orthodoxy clashed with Sunni Hanafi Islam, the school of jurisprudence traditionally followed by most Muslims in South and Central Asia (including Xinjiang's Turkic minority nationalities). As this study will illustrate, not only did the Soviet invasion bring about pivotal changes in the region, but, to this date, most Sino-Central Asian multilateral security concerns can be traced back to this conflict and its aftermath.

The above formed the backdrop to the establishment of relations between China and the independent republics of Central Asia. It is my contention that all of the above influenced how China would respond to the emerging challenges on its Central Asian frontiers.

I. Human and Historical Geographies in Chinese Central Asia

Occupying 635,829 square miles, Xinjiang constitutes a sixth of China's landmass.⁵ Xinjiang is the largest of China's twenty-three provinces and five autonomous regions, and is adjacent to three of the five Central Asian republics, sharing a 1,533-kilometer border with Kazakhstan, an 858-kilometer border with Kyrgyzstan, and a 414-kilometer border with Tajikistan.⁶ In addition, Xinjiang also borders Afghanistan, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, and Russia. Eight of China's thirteen international borders lie in Xinjiang. This alone would make Xinjiang strategically important for China.

Despite its vast geographic mass, Xinjiang is sparsely populated. Demographic figures from 2003 put the population at 19.25 million. Of these, the Uighurs make up 8.3

⁵ McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, 2.

⁶ Gleason, "Policy Dimensions," 109.

million, or 43.35 percent of the population. The Han are the second largest ethnic group, with a population of 8.28 million, constituting 43.02 percent of the population. In 2003, there were 1.24 million Kazakhs in the autonomous region, who made up 6.47 percent of Xinjiang's population. The other ethnic groups have substantially smaller representation. For example, the Hui, ethnically Han, but followers of Islam and considered an ethnic minority in the PRC, numbered 0.83 million. There were also a hundred and fifty thousand Kyrgyz, and, a marginally smaller Mongol population. The Tajiks numbered thirty thousand. In addition there were also a small number of Uzbeks, Russians, and Tatars.⁷ This chapter will discuss reasons for Han migration to Xinjiang after the establishment of the PRC; yet, even at this stage it is important to mention that the Han population increased dramatically after 1949 when the PRC began establishing control over the autonomous region. In 1953, the total Han population of the region had been 299,000, which then constituted 6.1 percent of the population. The Uighurs, with a then population of 3.6 million, had made up nearly 75 percent of the population. Consequently, 95 percent of the population was non-Han in 1950.⁸ The dramatically increasing Han population since 1950 perhaps constitutes the most fundamental change in Xinjiang's recent history that has wide-ranging political ramifications explored in this study.

The Turkic and Tajik ethnic groups in Xinjiang are similar to those in the Central Asian republics. Besides ethnic likeness, there continue to be linguistic, occupational, and religious similarities between the population of the autonomous region, and that of Central Asia. Historically, the people of Central Asia, of which Xinjiang is an integral part, were not only part of the same communities, but even after Slavic and Chinese incursions into, and rule over Central Asia, frontiers between empires were poorly defined and poorly guarded.⁹ Consequently, though contact between communities on either side of the Sino-Russian border was limited, and one needed official documentation to cross the border, these communities were not completely cut off from each other until the large-scale militarization of the border regions that began in the

⁷ Li, *Zhongguo Xinjiang*, 5-6.

⁸ McMillen, "The Urumqi Military Region," 708; and Toops, "The Demography," 246.

⁹ McMillen, "The Urumqi Military Region," 708. This observation is true not only for much of the Qing and Republican periods, but was also true for the period prior to the Sino-Soviet split of the late 1950s.

1960s. Recall that even as late as 1962 there was an exodus of Kazakhs from the Ili river valley to the Soviet Union.¹⁰

If we accept culture to be a broad signifier that includes religious and occupational identity, then the cultural orientation of Xinjiang's nationalities was directed towards Central Asia. It would probably be fair to say that the indigenous ethnic groups, who still constitute the slim demographic majority in Xinjiang today, share none of the above cultural identifiers with the Han. Given the cultural schism between the Han and the indigenous people of Xinjiang, it comes as little surprise that the process of national assimilation, undertaken by the CCP since 1950, has been fraught with difficulty.

This is not to imply that the region comprising of Xinjiang today was either ever ethnically homogenous or ruled as a single political entity from within Xinjiang, nor that this equilibrium was shattered by the arrival of the Han. An examination of Xinjiang's past reveals a region characterized by political, economic, and religious plurality. Of course presently, Han versus non-Han is the fundamental dichotomy. But probing deeper, we find that the non-Han people are themselves made up of very different ethnicities that historically have had little in common with each other. The Uighurs, the Kazakhs, and the Hui are the three largest Muslim nationalities in Xinjiang today (the Tajiks and the Uzbeks are numerically much smaller). Of these, the Uighurs, the Kazakhs, and the Uzbeks are Turkic ethnic groups who speak different but mutually comprehensible dialects of the Turkish language. The Tajiks are of Persian ethnicity, and their spoken language is similar to the Persian dialect of Afghanistan, and to the Pamiri of the communities that live in the Pamir mountains of Pakistan. The Hui are Han Muslim, and according to CCP nationalities policy, are classified as a minority.

Historically, in Xinjiang identity was determined not only by ethnicity and language, but also by locality and occupation.¹¹ Allowing for some exceptions, there was a clear distinction between oasis dwellers on the rim of the Tarim, who engaged in trade and agriculture (Uighurs), versus those whose economic specialization was transhumance

¹⁰ McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, 122-123; Moseley, *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier*, 107-110; and Pan, "Xinjiang de anquan," 326.

¹¹ Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 110-114.

in Zungharia (the Kazakhs), versus the people who spoke a Persian dialect, and lived in the Pamirs in the far west (the Tajiks).¹²

Not only are the Turkic people of the autonomous region made up of different ethnic groups, but historically, even amongst the dominant ethnic group, the Uighurs, there has been little religious or political cohesion. Uighurs today inhabit the Tarim that stretches from the oases of Turfan in the east, to Kashgar in the west, and also includes the oases along the rim of the Taklamakan desert. But all people who today identify themselves as Uighur probably do not share a single historical past. A brief historical outline is helpful to illustrate the disparate histories of the Uighurs in different regions of the Tarim.

Uighur migrations to Xinjiang began in the mid-ninth century after the Kyrghyz uprooted the Uighur empire (744-840) from Mongolia in 840. This led to multiple westward migrations, with the primary migration being to the vicinity of present-day Turfan, on the eastern edge of the Tarim. Although today nearly all Uighurs are Sunni Muslim, this homogeneity does not extend past the modern era. Conversion to Islam in the eastern Tarim took place between the fourteenth and the seventeenth century over a span of three hundred years.¹³ Conversion to Islam in the western Tarim had taken place earlier. Though it is unlikely that the Arab armies conquered Kashgar during their incursions into Ferghana in the early eighth century,¹⁴ by the tenth century, the oases surrounding Kashgar came under the Karakhanid empire (932-1165). The conversion of the ruling house in 950 led to a conversion to Islam en masse.¹⁵ That most Uighur have a single (distant) point of origin in the Uighur empire of Mongolia is a given. However, after the breakup of the Uighur empire, Uighur societies evolved in different parts of the Tarim, developing different political, religious, and cultural affiliations. Thus, in pre-

¹²Allworth, *The Modern Uzbeks*, 47. Likewise the Uzbeks, while also Turks, have a collective identity that is centered around the organization of a Uzbek tribal confederation under Shaybaniy Khan (1451-1510).

¹³Geng, *Xinjiang wenshi*, 216-227; Gladney, "The Ethnogenesis," 8; Mackarras, "The Uighurs," 316-337; and Vernadsky, "Notes on the History," 454. Prior to conversion to Islam, the Uighurs were followers of Manichaeism, Buddhism, and Nestorian Christianity. The traditional Uighur script was a modified Indo-Iranian Sogdian script, which is indicative of a strong influence from western Central Asia.

¹⁴Gibb, "The Arab Invasion," 473. Though there is some suggestion of an Arab conquest of Kasghar in 715 in classical Islamic sources, it is unlikely that such an event actually took place.

¹⁵Gladney, "The Ethnogenesis," 8.

twentieth century Xinjiang, identity was also centered around oases where people dwelled, which remains important to this date.¹⁶

Likewise, the geographical diversity of the autonomous region necessitates a move beyond a simplified dichotomy of steppe versus sown. Donald McMillen divides the autonomous region into three sub-regions. The first sub-region is the Tarim, which stretches from the oasis surrounding Kashgar in the west, to Lop Nor in the east. The Tarim incorporates the Taklamakan desert, a virtual ocean of sand that was a source of perpetual dread for caravans forced to cross it on their trans-Eurasian trek along the Silk Road. Dotted around the Taklamakan are small oasis towns – Aksu, Kashgar, Khotan, and Yarkand - where the population has traditionally engaged in small-scale agricultural activity in the oases, or engaged in trade along the Silk Road. North of the Tarim are the Tianshan, McMillen's second sub-region. The Tianshan increase in elevation from east to west where they reach heights of over twenty thousand feet. The increase in height of the mountain range results in more snowfall, which then results in greater volumes of water in the rivers that runs through the western oases. Thus, compared to other Tarim oases settlements, the oases in the west surrounding Kashgar have traditionally engaged in more extensive agricultural activity.

The third sub-region identified by McMillen is Zungharia, which lies north of the Tianshan. Geographically similar to the Kazakh steppes into which Zungharia blends, this sub-region extends from Gansu in the east to the Altai mountains in the north along the present Chinese border with Kazakhstan. Traditionally home to nomadic Kazakhs, as well as smaller Mongol communities, the region receives substantially more rainfall than the Tarim (ten inches annually as opposed to a fifth of an inch in the Tarim). The oases in the Zungharian Basin include Urumqi, Altai, and Dacheng. Straddling the Tianshan and the Zungharian sub-regions is the town of Ili in the Ili river valley.¹⁷

Donald McMillen's sub-regions are useful as his demarcations correlate economic specialization and geography. At the risk of some generalization, the inhabitants of the Tarim traditionally engaged in oasis farming and acted as intermediaries along the Silk Road. There is little evidence of pastoral nomadic activity in the Tarim that was the

¹⁶ Benson and Svanberg, *China's Last Nomads*, 19; and Kim, *Holy War in China*, 68. In *Oases Identities*, Rudolson argues that identity remains strongly influenced by locality in contemporary Xinjiang.

¹⁷ McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, 2-5; and Wiens, "Cultivation Development," 76-77.

traditional vocation in Zungharia. The aridity of the Tarim, and the almost complete lack of grasslands, precluded the possibility of people engaging in seasonal migrations with large herds. In addition, there may also be broad correlations between ethnic groups and economic specialization, though admittedly here we are invoking some historical generalizations. Nonetheless, we may cautiously posit that the Uighurs, inhabitants of the Tarim for the last millennium, have been engaged in economic specializations particular to that region. Likewise, the inhabitants of Zungharia, notably Kazakhs and Mongols, have traditionally engaged in transhumance. Therefore, allowing for the inevitable historical variations, McMillen's sub-regions are useful for understanding the relations between ethnicity, geography, and economic specialization.

The above are geographic sub-regions, and while these allow us to establish important links between the regions and occupational specialization, the sub-regions are less useful in explaining macroeconomic undercurrents in the modern era. Andrew Forbes' variation on Xinjiang's sub-regions offers some insight into the political and macroeconomic trends in the region. Instead of the Tarim, the Tianshan, and Zungharia, Forbes proposes "Uighuristan" (Kumul-Turfan), "Altashahr" (the Tarim Basin), and Zungharia (including the Ili valley).¹⁸ For the present discussion, Forbes' sub-regions are more useful, though I would demarcate these as Urumchi-Turfan-Hami in the east, Kashgar-Yarkand-Khotan in the west, and the Ili river valley in the northwest. Of these, the Urumchi-Turfan-Hami sub-region can be viewed as the epicenter of Chinese control of the autonomous region, and being geographically close to China proper, has seen the least political instability. Since 1950, this region has served as the bridgehead of Han migration to Xinjiang, with a substantial number of Han migrants to this region settling in Urumqi.¹⁹

The second sub-region is Kashgar-Yarkand-Khotan west of the Taklamakan. Here, geographical remoteness from China proper traditionally limited Beijing's influence, although this is now changing with the development of transport infrastructure linking Xinjiang's far west more closely to central China. Historically, this region was strongly influenced by Afghanistan, South Asia, and Central Asia, irrespective of whether

¹⁸ Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, 230.

¹⁹ Toops, "The Demography," 254-257.

the region was incorporated into a Chinese empire.²⁰ The geographical remoteness of Kashgar from the traditional Chinese centers of administration meant that communication with the westernmost frontier was a matter of not days or weeks, but months. In comparison, the major Central Asian towns of Bukhara, Samarkand, and Tashkent were just a short march away. As late as the 1930s, the town of Hami, itself on the easternmost fringe of Xinjiang, was 1,200 miles from the railhead at Paotow. Kashgar was 2,500 miles from Paotow, but only a twelve-day march from the Soviet railroads.²¹

The third sub-region is the Ili river valley, located on the northwestern margins of Xinjiang. Ili was susceptible to Soviet influence during the Republican era, and would become the Soviet bridgehead in Xinjiang during the 1930s and 1940s.

I find Andrew Forbes' sub-regions particularly useful, because through much of modern history these sub-regions have exhibited centrifugal tendencies.²² Put another way, prior to the Communist takeover, the three sub-regions were oriented outwards: Urumqi-Turfan-Hami towards the east, Kashgar-Yarkand-Khotan to the west and southwest, and the Ili river valley towards the northwest. With the exception of the thirteenth century Mongol empire, when much of the Eurasian landmass came under the rule of Chinggis Khan (1167-1227) and his descendants, Xinjiang has historically demonstrated a high degree of internal decentralization. The late Joseph Fletcher eloquently summed up this position when he noted that prior to the Qing conquest,

Eastern Turkestan was ... divided among a profusion of city-states. The inhabitants of these city-states spoke closely related Turkic languages and shared a common Islamic culture and sedentary mode of life, but they had no sense of belonging to a single nationality, and their cities were not united by any common political structure ... The southwestern cities, variously known as Kashgaria, or the Six, Seven, or Eight Cities, were largely a cultural extension of Western Turkestan, whereas the northeastern cities of Uighuristan ... had long been part of

²⁰ Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, 67.

²¹ Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang*, 5-6. See also Rudelson, *Oasis Identities*, 39.

²² For a discussion on the range of foreign cultural influences in western Xinjiang prior to the Qing conquest, see Kutlukov, "Iz istorii mezhdunarodnykh svyazey," esp. 59-66.

the Chinese orbit. For Kashgarians, Turfan (the center of Uighuristan) was *Gharibana* Turfan, a city “of foreigners.”²³

Historically, I find it more useful to think of Kashgaria, Turfan, and Zungaria as one might consider Bactria, Khurasan, or Ferghana, that is, regions within Central Asia that historically exhibited a high degree of internal coherence based on economic and political ties. While the individual societies may have shared broad similarities with other communities in Central Asia – such as faith in Islam, or the nature of political and economic organization – these were largely self-contained entities. It is particularly noteworthy, that even after the initial wave of conquest by the Qing military and the destruction of the Zunghar state,²⁴ western Xinjiang continued to enjoy a high degree of autonomy. This was because of the administrative policies of Qing rulers that did not replace the secular local elite, the *begs*, instead allowing them considerable leeway to conduct their affairs and retain their local customs.²⁵

This is different from saying that the Qing conquest did not result in social, commercial, or administrative changes in the region. For one, the mullahs saw a curtailment of their power.²⁶ In addition, Han from Gansu, Sichuan, and Shaanxi, were settled in Zungharia and the eastern parts of the region, though in far smaller numbers than they would be in the twentieth century.²⁷ The traditional steppe economy of Zungharia was also drastically altered. Agriculture was introduced in the Ili river valley following the Qing conquest, and the region went from being an almost exclusively

²³ Fletcher, “China and Central Asia,” 218.

²⁴ Perdue, *China Marches West*, 199, 227-232, 283-285. Manchu emperors sought the destruction of the Zunghar state not only to pacify the northwestern frontier, but also because gaining a foothold in eastern Xinjiang allowed them access to Tibet. In 1697, Hami became a protectorate of the Qing dynasty, which was followed soon afterwards by Kokonor’s (Qinghai) submission to the Qing. In 1705, backed by the Qing dynasty, Lazang Khan (1656?-1717), leader of the Khoshot Mongols of Kokonor, invaded Tibet and sought to establish his rule over the region. The Yellow Hat lamas, whose patrons were the Zunghar Mongols, were upset at Lazang Khan’s rule over Tibet. In response to Lazang Khan’s invasion of Tibet, in 1715, the Zunghars launched an attack on Hami, though they were dispelled by the army of the local *beg*.

²⁵ Fletcher, “China and Central Asia,” 220; Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 49, 204; Newby, “The Begs of Xinjiang,” 278; and Perdue, *China Marches West*, 345. In addition, the Qing rulers also allowed the local population a considerable amount of leeway; this ranged from men not being forced to wear their hair in queues, mandatory in other parts of the Qing empire, to being allowed to trade outside of the tributary system.

²⁶ Fletcher, “Ch’ing Inner Asia,” 70-76.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 66.

pastoral nomadic area to one where there was increasing agricultural activity.²⁸ Also, as James Millward has demonstrated, there was a strong commercial integration of the region with the rest of China. Relying on the postal relay stations and hostels that were set up by the bannermen and the Green Standard armies as they moved deeper into the region, Han merchants were often only a step behind.²⁹

These represented the different changes that the Qing conquest brought to the region, both because it served a commercial interest, and because it was in keeping with the notion that a pronounced military and economic presence would strongly integrate the distant regions within the Manchu empire. But despite the military and commercial incursion, at the local level, the Qing administered the region through the *begs* which allowed the local elite to wield considerable agency as they remained responsible for tax collection, water management, and the administration of justice. Thus, a semblance of local authority was maintained.³⁰ In fact, oftentimes the *begs* were seen as Han collaborators and the target of local scorn.³¹ This reflected a high degree of pragmatism on the part of the Manchu rulers, which was characterized by C. P. Skrine as, “a mixture of suppleness and laxity.”³²

Though the Han versus non-Han schism has formed the primary fault line since the eighteenth century conquest of the region, in this section I have suggested that to focus exclusively on this dichotomy is to ignore the fact that historically, today’s Xinjiang was made up of disparate, outward-oriented communities. Prior to the 1884 incorporation of Xinjiang into the Qing empire as a province, there was little that held the region together as a cohesive economic or political entity. The Qing decision to administer Xinjiang through the *begs* maintained a semblance of agency for the secular elite, but as we shall see, was not effective against foreign incursions. We explore this in the following section.

²⁸ Wiens, “Change in Ethnography,” 760.

²⁹ Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 114-119.

³⁰ Lapidus, *A History*, 353; and Newby, “The Begs of Xinjiang,” 283.

³¹ Forbes, *Muslims and Warlords*, 87; and Kim, *Holy War in China*, 10-11. This trend continued into the Republican period where cooperation with the Han was sometimes seen as a betrayal of Islam.

³² Skrine and Nightingale, *Macartney at Kashgar*, 22-23.

II. Foreign Incursions in Qing Xinjiang

In the introduction to this chapter, I suggested that an important lesson that could be drawn from Xinjiang's modern history is that a weak central government, coupled with the presence of strong external forces would erode the authority of the center in the peripheral border regions. I also suggested that this was a lesson that China's Communist leaders had learned with regard to Xinjiang; the process of socialist modernization in Xinjiang after 1949, which I address later in this chapter, was an attempt to bring the region firmly within Beijing's orbit. In doing so, China's new leaders ended a century-long process of foreign incursions in Xinjiang. Since the mid-nineteenth century, Russia was the principal, though not the only foreign provocateur that weakened Qing suzerainty within the region. Consequently, a survey of foreign influence within the region is warranted. In this section, I discuss foreign interference in Xinjiang through the nineteenth century, focusing on imperial Russia's interests in Xinjiang.

Like China, Russia had acquired vast amounts of territory in Inner Asia by the twentieth century. Unlike China, which expanded into Xinjiang in the mid-eighteenth century, Russia's eighteenth century gains in Inner Asia were modest. But in the nineteenth century, at a time when China was finding it difficult to hold onto her Central Asian possessions,³³ Russia expanded rapidly in Central Asia. Russia was now competing for influence in Central Asia not so much with the Chinese, but with the British, who, after the annexation of the Punjab in 1848, indicated their interest in expanding their sphere of influence to the Central Asian hinterlands of the British Indian empire. While China was beset by internal rebellion in the nineteenth century, Russia and Britain began a race for empire that would bring most of the greater Central Asian region under their direct or indirect control by the end of the nineteenth century.³⁴

British and Russian incursions into Central Asia in the nineteenth century were marked by hawkish expansionist strategies, bold military campaigns, complex local alliances, and the use of modern cartographic techniques as the frontiers of the two empires were surveyed and extended. This was a far cry from the policies of the Qing dynasty at the same time, which far from expanding, was concerned with retaining the

³³ Fletcher, "China and Central Asia," 221-231; and Fletcher, "The Heyday," 361.

³⁴ Allworth, *Central Asia*, chap. 1; Khalid, *The Politics*, 45-79; and Pain, *Imperial Rivals*, esp. chap. 1-2. On the early process of integration, see also Belokrenitsky, "Ginizis i osnoviye kharakteristiki," esp. 9-11.

territory that it had acquired in the eighteenth century. In addition, Qing rulers were beset by another problem, which was, before the 1880s, the Qing administrators had little idea where the westernmost boundaries of the empire precisely lay. The Chinese acquired western cartographic techniques only in the twentieth century. This has led S. C. M. Paine to argue that “Ch’ing sources are unclear regarding the extent of Chinese territories; they discuss a plethora of changing place names referring to areas of unknown extent and vague location.... [B]oundary negotiators before 1880 often did not have more than a very general idea about where allegedly integral territories were actually located.”³⁵ But not all scholars share Paine’s view of the Qing’s rudimentary cartographic abilities. Drawing on Joseph Needham’s study of Chinese cartography,³⁶ Peter Perdue suggests that Jesuit cartographers during the reign of Kangxi emperor (1662-1722), brought “scientific cartography” to China.³⁷ While prior to the mid-eighteenth century conquest, “the maps of the northwest frontier show only blank spaces beyond the Great Wall,” in maps produced after 1760, “the number of place names on the maps increased dramatically.” But a shortcoming of this enterprise was that “The Jesuits and their assistants did depict places they did not visit, including ... Xinjiang, so they were not devoted exclusively to direct observation.”³⁸ It is probably safe to conclude that along the distant Central Asian frontiers, the boundary was not precisely located.

Qing inability to precisely locate its borders in Inner Asia underscored another important point, namely, that even when the Qing dynasty was in a position to exert control in Xinjiang, their actual power in the region was limited. Prior to the First Opium War, the Qing had insisted on dealing with foreigners through a highly ritualized system of tribute that posited the Chinese as the dominant civilization in East Asia (if not the world), surrounded by barbarians. The tributary system helped reinforce beliefs of Chinese supremacy.³⁹ But while the Qing kept up a façade of superiority in their dealings

³⁵ Paine, *Imperial Rivals*, 6.

³⁶ Needham, “Geography and Cartography.”

³⁷ Perdue, *China Marches West*, 452.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 453.

³⁹ Fairbank, “A Preliminary Framework,” 2. John King Fairbank conceptualized the traditional “Chinese world order” as a series of concentric circles with the measure of foreignness increasing as one moved further away from the center, China. The first order of foreign tributaries were geographically proximate to China, such as Korea and Vietnam, and that had, at some time in the past, been under Chinese rule. The second order was of Inner Asian tributaries that were ethnically and culturally more distant from China. Finally, the last category was of distant barbarians (*waili*), which were at a greater distance. Recently,

with foreigners in the coastal regions until the First Opium War, on its Central Asian frontiers, Qing power was anything but absolute. After 1820, a substantial amount of border trade in Xinjiang was free from Qing tributary regulations. As Joseph Fletcher has demonstrated, merchants from the tiny Central Asian khanate of Khokand were engaged in a complex trading network that stretched between Khokand, Kabul, Balkh, Ladakh, and Yarkand, the last being the traditional route of entry from Xinjiang into India.⁴⁰ Recent scholarship also points to a highly developed network of opium smuggling in and through Xinjiang at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The individuals engaged in opium smuggling were not only subjects of the Qing empire, but also Kashmiris, Badakshanis, and Khokandis. This is suggestive of limitations to Qing authority in the region in the years leading up to the Opium Wars.⁴¹ In fact, in 1832, negotiators from Khokand managed to impose the first unequal treaty on the Qing, which included extraterritoriality for Khokandis in Xinjiang in exchange for stability on the frontier.⁴²

More menacing to the Chinese than freebooting Central Asian traders and smugglers – the distinction between the two was not always clear – was the growing Russian presence in Central Asia. Central Asia was not the site of the first encounter between the two Asian land-based empires; China and Russia had negotiated their first commercial agreement, the Treaty of Nerchinsk, in 1689.⁴³ But until the nineteenth century, Sino-Russian economic and political contact remained limited. Following Russian expansion into Inner Asia in the nineteenth century, Russia began pressurizing China for permission to trade outside of the tributary system. In the northeast, trade with Russia was confined to the post at Kiakhta, where the Qing allowed the Russians the same concessions they allowed the British at Canton. Diplomatic relations between the Chinese and Russians hit a hurdle in 1805, when, following the lead of George

scholars have questioned Fairbank's approach of gradations in Qing foreign relations, arguing instead that early to mid-Qing interaction with foreigners was on a one to one basis, and not informed by historical, cultural, or geographic proximity. See Millward, *Beyond the Pass*, 199-202; and Hevia, *Cherishing Men From Afar*.

⁴⁰ Fletcher, "The Heyday," 368-369.

⁴¹ Bello, "Opium in Xinjiang," 137-144.

⁴² Fletcher, "The Heyday," 377.

⁴³ Fletcher, "Sino-Russian Relations," 319. The Treaty of Nerchinsk of 1689, and the Treaty of Kiakhta, signed in 1727, based on the principle of equality between the Qing and Russian empires, loosely defined the frontier between the Russian and Qing empires in Manchuria and Mongolia, allowed for duty-free border trade on the border, and allowed Russia to send a caravan to Beijing once every three years where the Russian embassy would follow the same rites as other tributaries.

Macartney (1737-1806), who in 1793 had refused to prostrate himself in front of the Qianlong emperor, the Russian envoy en route to Beijing, Count Iu A. Golovkin (1763-1846), also refused to kowtow in front of an image of the Jiaqing emperor (r. 1796-1820). The Russians had been particularly keen on opening trading posts at Kulja and Tarbagatai in Xinjiang where illegal trade had been on the rise since 1800.⁴⁴

With the signing of the Treaty of Kulja in 1851, the Russians finally got their wish. Chinese acquiescence was the result of the limitations of Chinese power in Xinjiang following a series of rebellions in 1820, and the debilitating First Opium War that led to unequal treaties with Western powers and the establishment of treaty ports in the coastal areas. The Treaty of Kulja not only opened Ili and Tarbagatai to border trade, but also allowed for Russian warehouses and residences on Chinese territory. Likewise, in 1860, the Treaty of Peking opened Kashgar to Russian trade. Though the Qing rulers were not happy with these agreements, they were not in a position to refuse. Russian commercial penetration would take place regardless of whether the Qing agreed to the treaties or not, and by being signatories, the Qing could at least pretend to maintain authority.⁴⁵

Though the Treaty of Kulja and the Treaty of Peking were an affront to how China had traditionally conducted its foreign relations, the biggest threat to Qing rule in Xinjiang in the nineteenth century came not from the Slavic empire, but from Ya'qub Beg (1820?-1877), a Khokandi who established an emirate over most of the Tarim between 1864 and 1877. Ya'qub Beg paid homage to the Caliphate in Ottoman Turkey. Ya'qub Beg's rise to power was coterminous with the end of the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864), that had laid waste to much of central China. Economically, the Qing empire was in shambles, and Western powers continued to press for greater concessions in the coastal areas. The Qing were forced to assess the feasibility of a protracted military campaign against Ya'qub Beg, which would put a strain on precious human and financial resources. In the end, it was decided that it was not just Ya'qub Beg who posed a threat, but the Russians in Central Asia with whom Ya'qub Beg had initiated diplomatic contact. For the Manchus, the Russian empire was a growing menace. The task of re-conquest

⁴⁴ Ibid., 322-324; and Kuznetsov, "Tsinskaya imperiya," 113.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 330-332.

was given to the celebrated general, Zuo Zongtang (1812-1885), who had played a crucial role in the suppression of the Taiping Rebellion. Following the 1877 re-conquest by Zuo, Xinjiang acquired provincial status in 1884.⁴⁶

A significant Russian affront to Qing authority in Xinjiang came in July 1871, when, under the directives of the Russian governor of Turkestan, General K. P. von Kaufman (1867-1882), the Russians occupied vast tracts of land in the Ili river valley. Russia had acquired the territory during the height of the Ya'qub Beg rebellion. It is likely that Russia believed that the Qing would not be able to recover Xinjiang, and consequently tried to carve out a sphere of influence there (Russia had negotiated commercial treaties with Ya'qub Beg).⁴⁷ It is also possible that the Russians feared Ya'qub Beg's expansion westwards into Russian Central Asia, and viewed the annexation of territory in the Ili region as a defensive measure.⁴⁸

By 1877, the Qing had suppressed the rebellion that had wrested much of Xinjiang from their control. But the Qing were no longer masters of their previous Central Asian domain, as the Russians now occupied much of the Ili river valley. In 1879, border negotiations between the two sides began. The chief negotiator for the Chinese side was the Manchu official, Chong Hou (1826-1896). These negotiations culminated in the Treaty of Livadia that ceded territory in the Ili river valley to the Russians, allowed for greater Russian commercial penetration of the Tarim, and also required China to pay close to a million pounds sterling in indemnities for the Russian occupation of the Ili region.⁴⁹ These terms were completely unacceptable to the Qing. After denouncing Chong, and refusing to ratify the treaty, the Qing finally managed to convince the Russians to return to the negotiating table. Russia had just come out of a disastrous war with Turkey (1877-1878), and wanting to avoid conflict on its Inner Asian frontier, agreed to another round of negotiations. The result was the Treaty of St. Petersburg, signed in 1881, which returned most of the Ili valley to the Qing (though not the southwestern portion), and scaled back Russia's commercial penetration of Xinjiang.

⁴⁶ Hsu, "The Great Policy Debate," 212, 219-226

⁴⁷ Hsu, "Late Ch'ing Foreign Relations," 90.

⁴⁸ Liu and Smith, "The Military Challenge," 224.

⁴⁹ Hsu, "Late Ch'ing Foreign Relations," 94; and Paine, *Imperial Rivals*, 132-35.

Though the indemnity to be paid to Russia was increased by eighty percent, the treaty was still seen as a victory by the Qing.⁵⁰

However, there was one major shortcoming in the Treaty of St. Petersburg: this was the failure to settle the border in the Pamirs, that is, the mountain region to the north and west of Kashgaria. Russia had annexed the khanate of Khokand in 1876, thus bringing substantial parts of the Pamirs into the Russian empire. During Qing forays into the region west of Kashgar during the Qianlong reign, Qing forces had penetrated deep into the Pamirs.⁵¹ But the frontiers of the empire had not been clearly set at this time. Furthermore, according to my understanding, setting precise boundaries on the westernmost frontiers was probably not a very pressing matter in the eighteenth century. As the Qing ruled through the local elite in Chinese Inner Asia at this time, local alliances carried more weight than surveying and demarcating borders. But the net result was that through the nineteenth century, the frontiers in the Pamirs had remained undemarcated, and this became a concern for the Qing at the end of the century following rapid Russian expansion into the region.

In 1884, the Qing and Russia signed a protocol to the Treaty of St. Petersburg, the purpose of which was to demarcate the Sino-Russian border in the Pamirs. Despite the 1884 Protocol, the borders were again left poorly demarcated. Interestingly, as per the 1884 Protocol, there were not only ambiguities as to where the border ought to lie, but there was also an undemarcated borderland between the Russian and the Qing empires. It may have been in Russia's interest to keep border demarcations vague in order to keep the possibility of future expansion open.⁵² Russia was keen on having a border with British India that would allow it to use the common frontier as a pressure tactic in the event of hostility with Britain. Britain, on the other hand, was eager to avoid this outcome, wanting a buffer zone between the British and Russian empires. For this reason, Britain encouraged Qing expansion into the Pamirs so that the Qing would share a border with Afghanistan, thus creating a wedge of at least twenty miles between the British and the Russian empires. Though suspicious of British intentions, the Qing did send expeditions to the Pamirs in 1891. In a reaction to Qing presence in the Pamirs and the

⁵⁰ Paine, *Imperial Rivals*, 161-163.

⁵¹ Clubb, *China and Russia*, 116.

⁵² Garver, "The Sino-Soviet," 111-112.

British occupation of Hunza in 1891, the Russians stepped up their efforts to secure a presence in the Pamirs. In an attempt to resolve the situation, the Qing and Russia resumed negotiations in 1894, though once again, the border was not settled through a ratified treaty.⁵³ It was thus an ad hoc arrangement that determined Russia's Central Asian frontiers with China, which remained in effect until 1991.

The border in question would become the Sino-Tajik border after 1991; as this study will illustrate, bilateral border negotiations between China and Central Asia were a key issue in Sino-Central Asian relations after 1991. They had also been the source of conflict between China and the Soviet Union through much of the second half of the twentieth century. During this time, Russia insisted that the 1894 border demarcation was a formal treaty, whereas the Chinese position was that the 1894 agreement was a de facto, provisional agreement, and that the 1884 Protocol was the last formal agreement between the two empires.⁵⁴

The 1894 agreement between Russia and the Qing was an important one; upholding it through the twentieth century worked to the advantage of the Russians. For the Chinese, Russian borders in the Pamirs through the twentieth century were an infringement on Chinese territory. This is despite the fact that borders in the region were never scientifically demarcated, nor did China have more than a nominal and temporary military presence in the region, first during the Qianlong reign, and then following 1884. Prior to 1884, in Xinjiang a border region became a part of the empire not because it was demarcated to be so, but because China's sphere of influence extended that far as a result of local patronage.

By the end of the nineteenth century, there was a semblance of order on China's Central Asian frontier. Though the terms of the 1894 agreement were not to China's advantage, China would soon be at war with Japan; the ailing Qing dynasty could not be bothered with a minor territorial dispute on its westernmost frontier. In addition, the 1895 Pamir Boundary Commission set up by the British and the Russians allocated the Wakhan corridor – a twenty-mile long narrow strip separating British India from Russia,

⁵³ Clubb, *China and Russia*, 116.

⁵⁴ Garver, "The Sino-Soviet," 113-116.

and bordering China in the east – to Afghanistan.⁵⁵ The major boundaries in Central Asia's recent history had now been established, though not necessarily agreed upon. The Sino-Central Asian borders would be contested through much of the second half the twentieth century, with some borders remaining unresolved until 2003.

As we shall discuss, bilateral border disputes led to heightened instability and adversely affected both China and Russia. Nonetheless, despite the fact the border remained unresolved, Russia had established an important bridgehead in the region, which it would exploit in the first half of the twentieth century. The 1851 Treaty of Kulja, which paved the way for the opening of Xinjiang to Russian trade, is the turning point in increasing Russian influence in the region. Treaties that followed allowed for greater commercial penetration of the region. Though the Russians had been vying for increased trade since 1805, it is no coincidence that they managed to impose their demands at a time when Beijing was under pressure, both internally, from the Taiping rebels, and externally, from foreign powers demanding more concessions in the coastal areas. Likewise, Ya'qub Beg's ability to successfully establish an emirate within much of the Tarim speaks of the inability of the Qing central government to control incursions from the tiny khanate across the frontier, along with their inability to put the rebellion down for thirteen years. When the center was weak, the periphery was laid bare for exploitation.

III. Changes in Chinese Administration in Xinjiang

The collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911 threw China into chaos; one result was the rise of warlords who exercised near-complete power at the local level. In Xinjiang, the rise of warlords was coupled with another important trend that had taken root after the 1877 reconquest of the region. This was a growing reliance on Han administrators, who followed Chinese administrative practices. The *begs*, whom early Qing administrators had relied on for decision making at the local level, were marginalized.⁵⁶

During the Republican era, Xinjiang was administered by three Han governors: Yang Zengxin (1911-1929), Jin Shuren (1928-1933), and Sheng Shicai (1933-1944). Though these governors accepted the overlordship of the Nationalist government, in

⁵⁵ Clubb, *China and Russia*, 116-117; and Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 42.

⁵⁶ Millward and Tursun, "Political Histories," 63.

reality, the Han elite in Xinjiang either enjoyed complete autonomy from the Chinese, or came under the influence of the Soviet Union.⁵⁷ In an article first published in 1933, Owen Lattimore argued that Han administration of the province was independent from Nationalist directives. He wrote: "The Chinese governing minority in Sinkiang is comparable to the British element in India; but with the difference that there is no valid connection between the government of Chinese Turkestan and the government of China. They [administrators in Xinjiang] are sundered by the "inner frontier" of Moslem Kansu."⁵⁸

The exercise of power by the Han sharply accentuated the marginalization of the local elite. During their overland journey from Beijing to India in 1926, Eleanor and Owen Lattimore witnessed Chinese rule in Xinjiang. In his description of the journey that was first published in 1930, Owen Lattimore expressed admiration for Chinese rule in Xinjiang.⁵⁹ But Lattimore was also quick to observe that a great schism divided the Han and the Turkic population. Recounting a meeting between the *begs* and a Han assistant to the District Magistrate, Lattimore describes the *begs* as being immaculately dressed. The Han assistant, a "funny looking opium-smoking bumpkin," had complete authority over the *begs*. Moreover,

[The Han assistant] could not even speak the language of the people. The Begs who toadied him had to speak Chinese ... That such a man should have been competent to handle any matters that might come up was proof outright of the domination of the Chinese as a racial group.

... [A] pointed racial superiority is publicly maintained by the Chinese. At any sort of public reception the subject races, if they are seated at all, are seated separately. Very often they are not seated at all. None of the Turki Begs of whom I have spoken would dare sit down in the presence of a District Magistrate's body-servants, unless they were invited to sit. Nor were they invited.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ McMillen, "Xinjiang and the Production," 67.

⁵⁸ Lattimore, "Sinkiang," 185.

⁵⁹ *High Tartary*, 301-304. Lattimore admired the fact that the Chinese had maintained control over Xinjiang despite both growing chaos within China, and external pressures from Russia. In other words, he saw continued Chinese hold over Xinjiang as a testament to their tenacity as rulers.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 300.

In a later article (first published in 1933), Lattimore made similar claims about the relative authority of Han administrators, and the deliberate aloofness that was maintained by them. He wrote: “[O]n the whole, the Chinese practice is the reverse of that of Western nations which rule in the Orient. The Chinese administrator knows and cares little about the language, life, customs, and point of view of people he governs. He works through a “native” interpreter who can speak Chinese.”⁶¹ According to Lattimore, the Han administrators had a sense of cultural superiority that he describes as, “a conviction that the day of the barbarian was finally over. The Kuomintang urged that the time had come to set about the business of making all natives either Chinese or get out.” The Chinese administrators sought to achieve this by curtailing “the privileges and subsidies of the native Turki “princes,” who had once been at the head of “native states” in a number of southern oases,” and also by curtailing the power of “Kazakh chiefs” and “Mongol princes.”⁶²

Owen Lattimore’s observations provide a rare first-hand account of polarity between the Han administrators and the local population. For Lattimore, the primary fault line in Xinjiang was ethnic, that is, between the Han administrators and the local nationalities. But in large-scale rebellions that broke out in the region in 1933, and that would continue through to the Republican period, the conflict also came to be fraught along religious lines. Religious identification was a means of asserting identity for the marginalized local population.

Tension between the Han and the local populations escalated after the annexation of the Kumul khanate in 1931 (most of the Tarim would be in revolt until 1934). The Kumul khanate had been one of the last semi-autonomous khanates in Central Asia where the local elite drew their lineage back to the principality that had been allocated to Chinggis Khan’s third son, Chaghadai (d. 1242). Annexation by Governor Jin Shuren antagonized the Muslims of Xinjiang, in part because of Jin’s refusal to allow Muslims to travel to Mecca for pilgrimage.⁶³ Matters came to a head in 1933, when a Han tax collector, apparently of questionable character, tried to force a local Uighur to marry his

⁶¹ Lattimore, “Sinkiang,” 194.

⁶² Ibid., 197.

⁶³ Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, 42-43.

daughter to him. Since Islamic law forbids a Muslim woman to marry a man of another faith, this incident was taken as a great affront. Exactly what transpired next is not known, but enraged Uighurs murdered the suitor, Han residents of the region, and very quickly violence engulfed most of the Tarim.⁶⁴ The revolt was led by a Hui, Ma Zhongying (b. 1910?), a Muslim warlord from Gansu, who paid nominal allegiance to the Nationalist government, but who was supposedly supported by the Japanese.⁶⁵

The rebellion engulfed most of Xinjiang and led to the formation of the *Sharqi Turkistan Turk-Islam Jumhuriyatti* (Turkish Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan or TIRET), in 1933 in western Xinjiang.⁶⁶ Wu Aitchen, who had been sent as a Nationalist advisor to Governor Sheng, describes the formation of the TIRET:

In September 1933 the Republic of Eastern Turkestan was proclaimed with much rejoicing. The flag showed a crescent moon and a star on a white foreground, on which there were also written certain texts from the Koran. All the Government seals were remoulded and at every street corner slogans were posted up stating that the [Han] Chinese should be driven out of the new state. Delegates were sent across the mountains to Afghanistan to purchase ammunition from the Mohammedan ruler there, and it was proposed that certain Turkish subjects who had been exiled by the Kemalists and had taken refuge in the East should be offered citizenship in return for their help in founding the republic.

...[A]n appeal was issued to all exiled Turks throughout the East, promising them a safe abiding place under the flag of East Turkistan.⁶⁷

Governor Sheng eventually suppressed the rebellion, though not without substantial help from the Soviet Union. We need not go into details of the rebellion, a topic that has received scholarly treatment elsewhere.⁶⁸ But for our purpose, the role of religion in the TIRET is important. It is probably fair to assume that in the annexation of

⁶⁴ Ibid., 48; and Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 68-69.

⁶⁵ Though not as substantial as the Soviet Union, the Japanese, too, had a small presence in the province. According to Governor Sheng, a Japanese backed satellite in Xinjiang would effectively seal off China's "back door to outside help." Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang*, 157. See also Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 209.

⁶⁶ Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, 113.

⁶⁷ Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, 247.

⁶⁸ Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, 42-127; and Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 67-71.

the Kumul khanate, the restrictions on pilgrimage to Mecca, and the Han tax collector's wish to marry the daughter of a Uighur, religious sensitivities became sharply antagonized. It is also noteworthy, that among demands put forward during the rebellion, such as the lifting of government-imposed trade monopolies, and other monetary policies, were calls for the implementation of Shari'a, Islamic law.⁶⁹ People's feelings of marginalization were accentuated through their religious identity, and the perceived challenge to that Islamic identity by the Han administrators. Thus, religious rhetoric became a part of the discourse against Han hegemony. The following notice, put up in Karakash, and clearly addressed to the Han, illustrates this. Note how the anonymous author posits the conflict between the Han and the non-Han people in religious terms:

You ... try to seek out the supporter of Islam to kill him. Foolish infidels like you are not fit to rule ... How can an infidel, who cannot distinguish between a friend and a foe, be fit to rule? You infidels think that because you have rifles, guns ... and money, you can depend on them; but we depend on God in whose hands are our lives. You infidels think you will take over our lives.... If we die we are martyrs. If we survive we are conquerors. We are living but long for death.⁷⁰

The text is an example of how religious differences between the Han and the Muslims were used by the latter to become a rallying point against the Han. The statement is also interesting in that, though it posits the Turkic people in a position of subordination versus the Han, there is a distinct undertone of martyrdom. When local agency was threatened, Islam ceased to be just a belief system, and became a political force. Membership in the Islamic community provided the political language through which resistance to state power was articulated, during a time when the Turkic population of Xinjiang saw themselves not as citizens, but as subjects of the Chinese republic.⁷¹

Thus, we find a Muslim population that was increasingly marginalized within a geographical region with which they had intimate historic association. But the role of Islam in social and political mobilization needs to be approached with caution by keeping

⁶⁹ Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, 74.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 75.

⁷¹ Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 3.

it within a broader framework of changing socio-economic circumstances that the Muslims, most of whom were Turkic, experienced within Republican Xinjiang. There is a danger of inflating the Islamic overtones by taking them out of their context. While Pan Zhiping of the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences is correct in identifying the pan-Islamic (*fan yisilan zhuyi*), and pan-Turkic (*fan tujue zhuyi*) undertones of the TIRET, I am uneasy with his classification of the TIRET as an Islamic state (*yisilanjiao guo*).⁷² As Wu Aitchen's account of the rebellion suggests, the conflict was not one that simply positioned the Turkic Muslims against the Han Chinese. For example, at one point Wu describes the situation in the southern oases as one where, "each of the several rebel chiefs was aiming at personal power. [One Kirghiz chief] was looting and murdering in all directions ... Not only were Chinese massacred but Muslims and Tungans were slain."⁷³ Wu's observations show that the conflict, which spanned a geographically vast area, was made up of different interest groups. In addition, the Turkic people oftentimes identified the Hui with the Han, despite the fact that the former were Muslim.⁷⁴ The tension between the Turkic Muslims and the Hui continued to be played out after the end of the TIRET in 1934 through to the creation of a Hui warlord enclave in the same year. Established in the southern Tarim around Khotan, this little studied warlord enclave saw continuous exploitation of the Turkic people by their Hui overlords for the duration of its existence till 1937.⁷⁵

Thus, the role of Islam needs to be placed within an overall polarization between Han and Turkic communities. Islam provided a language for the marginalized, and it is problematic to remove the Islamic overtones from the social and political context of marginalization. For this reason, I think there is a problem in Pan's approach in that he sees independent "republics" in Xinjiang in the 1930s and 1940s as precursors to the present-day separatist movements within Xinjiang. This is also the official position taken

⁷² Pan, "'Dong tu' kongbu zhuyi," 288-289.

⁷³ Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, 244.

⁷⁴ Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, 89; Lipman, "Hyphenated Chinese," 102-103. Though both groups are Muslim, there is little shared history between the Hui and the Turkic people. Muslims had been living in commercial cities of China since the late seventh century, and during the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368), experienced a rapid expansion across the country. The Turkic populations, by comparison were always on the periphery of traditional Chinese empires. Therefore even though the religion is similar, the historical trajectories do not converge.

⁷⁵ Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, 128-131.

by the Chinese government.⁷⁶ The present lack of a thorough study of Islam in Republican Xinjiang warrants approaching the issue with sensitivity and caution.

From the above, it may be deduced that ethnic identity was at least as important, if not more, than religious identity. The following example from a later date is illustrative of this point. In 1945 there were calls for a unified Turkic movement from within the Uighur elite. Owen Lattimore observed that this “Pan Turkic nationalism” was designed to, “deal with the population of Sinkiang within the framework of a policy designed to strengthen their [the Turkic elite’s] control over all people living within the province.”⁷⁷ The demand of the pan-Turkic nationalists was not for independence from China, but for a greater degree of control over the people and administration of Xinjiang.⁷⁸ Of course, we need to be careful about reading too much into such demands, especially since the demand was made by the Uighur elite, who probably did not want to appear antagonistic towards Han rulers. At the same time, it is quite clear that the attainment of indigenous control, and not necessarily outright independence, was an important issue for many within the Turkic population. Put another way, a segment within the Uighur elite was asking for more self-determination and less control by the Han, whom they saw increasingly as overlords and less as fellow citizens. It is my belief that the marginalization of the local population, though begun after the Qing re-conquest of the region in 1877, reached new heights during Republican China, and is a precursor to Xinjiang’s troubled ethnic landscape today.

Yet another critical issue in Republican Xinjiang was that of growing Russian influence. In Xinjiang, the lack of political control from the center, and increasing ethnic and religious fragmentation within, was coupled with growing Russian influence in the region. Similar to the last quarter-century of Qing rule in Xinjiang, much of the Republican era was characterized by foreign manipulation. Russian interference exacerbated the tenuous political situation further, leading to a situation of almost perpetual political upheaval and intrigue in the province after 1933. In his account of a six-month long journey from China to Kashmir through Xinjiang in 1935, Peter Fleming, correspondent for the *Times*, commented: “Sinkiang is the last home of romance in

⁷⁶ Information Office, “White Paper on History.”

⁷⁷ Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 112.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 113-114.

international politics.... [T]he present situation in Sinkiang is impossible to watch [from outside the region].”⁷⁹

For most of the Republican era, Chinese hold over the region was tenuous and ad hoc. As Owen Lattimore noted: “The Chinese control of Chinese Turkestan, though maintained with admirable stability, is only maintained as it were from month to month.... In China itself, the welter and turmoil of the political and economic adjustment to new standards has drawn all blood of the country to its heart, leaving no strength to administer its outer dominions, the buffer territories between Asiatic and European.”⁸⁰

According to Lattimore, for two thousand years Chinese power had “waxed and waned” in Central Asia where historically China encountered people of the steppe: “Huns, Tanguts, Uighurs, Tatars, Mongols.” Now Chinese power in its Central Asian domain was threatened again, this time by the Russians. Commenting on the balance of power in the region, Lattimore observed: “In our times it [Chinese power in Central Asia] is waning, as Russia grows to a new stature. Russia controls Outer Mongolia, a Russian shadow falls across Manchuria, and the potential wealth of Chinese Turkestan ... is now laid open to Russia.”⁸¹ Lattimore’s account was published in 1930, and even though Soviet influence in Xinjiang did not peak for another decade, Lattimore’s observations were illustrative of the weaknesses and shortcomings that had become apparent with the inability of the Nationalist government to maintain any degree of control over the entire region. Nor did the Republican regime have any substantial presence in large parts of the province. As Wu Aitchen noted with regard to the southern Tarim: “The Chinese had done nothing for the south – there were no hospitals, no roads, no transport services, in fact nothing to show for the money exacted in taxes.”⁸²

As China’s power in Central Asia waned, the Soviet Union consolidated its power over the Tsarist Central Asian possessions that it had inherited. Internally stable by the end of the 1920s, the Soviet Union was again in a position to exert its influence in Xinjiang. The rebellion of 1931 in Xinjiang presented the Soviet Union with an opportunity to project its power within Xinjiang. In 1933, Governor Jin invited the Soviet

⁷⁹ Fleming, *News from Tartary*, 245-246.

⁸⁰ Lattimore, *High Tartary*, 74-75.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 75.

⁸² Wu, *Turkistan Tumult*, 246.

Union to help suppress the unrest. From this point on, Xinjiang became a virtual satellite of the Soviet Union; the Soviet Union even began garrisoning troops as deep in Xinjiang as Hami.⁸³ Lattimore estimates that in the early 1930s, trade with the Soviet Union – much of it in livestock (from Xinjiang), and light manufactured goods and raw materials (from Soviet Central Asia) – accounted for 82.5 percent of Xinjiang's total foreign trade. Geography played an important role in increased Soviet influence; trade with India was logistically difficult, both through the Karakorams and through Tibet, because of the mountainous terrain and lack of roads. Trade between Xinjiang and central China was likewise difficult, not least because of the vast geographical distance that separated Xinjiang from China proper. In most cases, once transport costs were factored in, trade with China proper became financially unviable.⁸⁴

Economic penetration by the Soviet Union went hand in hand with political control. As early as the late 1920s, there had been considerable Soviet influence in the Ili river valley. By 1935, Soviet influence had reached the westernmost oasis in the province. Passing through Kashgar, Peter Fleming observed that “the whole city was in effect run by the secret police, the Russian advisors, and the Soviet Consulate, and most of the high officials were only figureheads.”⁸⁵

What were the reasons for Russian interest in Xinjiang? First, in the late 1930s, Governor Sheng had declared himself a Marxist and became a member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU).⁸⁶ This allowed for Soviet involvement at the highest level of governance in the province. The Soviet Union also had a strategic interest in the region. With the open outbreak of hostilities between the Japanese and Chinese after 1937, Xinjiang's strategic importance increased. The Soviet Union had long been suspicious of Japanese intentions in Inner Asia, and feared that Xinjiang could become a sphere of Japanese influence as had Manchuria. Besides the grave threat to the Soviet Union, this would allow Japan to flank Mongolia, itself a Soviet puppet, from both

⁸³ Weins, “Change in Ethnography,” 768.

⁸⁴ Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 173-175.

⁸⁵ Fleming, *News From Tartary*, 326.

⁸⁶ McMillan, *Chinese Communist Power*, 21. After the 1942 German assault on the Soviet Union, Sheng came to believe that the Soviet Union would be defeated. He then switched sides, declared his loyalty to the Nationalist regime, and began a persecution of communists in Xinjiang, which included the assassination of Mao Zedong's elder brother, Mao Zemin (1896-1943).

sides.⁸⁷ In addition, Xinjiang provided an important supply route for supporting the anti-Japanese war in China.⁸⁸

The Soviet Union's role in Xinjiang increased in the subsequent decade. In 1943, a Kazakh rebellion broke out in the Altai region. Uighurs soon joined the rebellion. In 1944, a similar revolt broke out in the districts of Ili, Dacheng, and Altai. The Three District Revolution (*sanqu geming*), was strongly anti-Han.⁸⁹ It is worthy of note that insofar as the Han were singled out for attack, there was a united front put up by the nationalities in Xinjiang. But this united front survived only until the Han were identified as the oppressor; it is probably not wise to read a pan-Islamic proto-nationalism into such movements.⁹⁰ Likewise, the traditional Islamic symbol of the crescent and the star on the flag could either be read as a sign of the devout nature of the people, or could be seen as a cultural symbol, which, while not free from religious undertones, was probably more of a cultural unifier against a clearly identifiable adversary.

In 1945 the *Sharqi Turkistan Jumhuriyatti* (East Turkestan Republic or ETR), came into existence in the town of Yining. The ETR was centered around the Ili river valley even though it included towns such as Aksu, south of the Tianshan. The Soviet Union's involvement was also a reflection of two important concerns for the Soviet Union. First was the strategic importance that the Soviet Union gave to securing a presence in Xinjiang. With a client state in Xinjiang, the Soviet Union had a wall of client states that stretched from Mongolia to Azerbaijan. Second, Xinjiang was extremely rich in oil and mineral resources, which the Soviet Union was able to exploit by supporting

⁸⁷ Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang*, 23.

⁸⁸ Norins, "The New Xinjiang," 457-458; and Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang*, 61. The Soviets were the first to use Xinjiang as a supply route in the anti-Japanese struggle. After the closure of the Burma Road in 1942, supply routes were opened through Xinjiang. One began on the port city of Karachi, went up to Peshawar, then to Samarkand, Tashkent, Alma Ata, Urumchi, Hami, Lanzhou, and then into China proper. The other route began on the Persian Gulf, transited Iran to the Caspian Sea, from where supplies were transported in Russian ships to the Kazakh steppe. Goods were then transported overland to Alma Ata and then onto China. Keeping this supply line open was vital for the Chinese government. Towards this end, China established diplomatic relations with Iran and Afghanistan, and in February 1942, Generalissimo Chiang Kaishek (1887-1975) had made a trip to the northwest of India where supplies passed through.

⁸⁹ Li, *Zhongguo Xinjiang*, 192-223; Pan, "'Dong tu' kongbu zhuyi," 289; and Wang, *The Yining Incident*. Chinese historiography has traditionally seen the Three Districts Revolution as exhibiting feudal and nationalistic tendencies, and being staunchly supported by the Soviet Union. In addition, it is seen both by scholars and the government as being a precursor to today's separatist movements, in the same way that the TIRET was. These claims are debatable.

⁹⁰ Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang*, 5.

the ETR.⁹¹ It is also possible that after the end of the Second World War, the Soviet Union was wary of an American-backed Guomindang ruling China.⁹²

After 1945, the Nationalist government attempted to bring the region back into its fold, although much of Xinjiang remained under the control of the ETR. In the following years, the Nationalists lost ground to the CCP, and the limited Nationalist influence in Xinjiang diminished further. By the summer of 1949, the CCP's First Field Army (FFA) had reached Gansu. Leaders from ETR flew out to Beijing to attend the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference to negotiate an agreement with China's new leaders. En route to Beijing, their plane crashed, killing all the people on board. The ETR was now left without a leadership. On September 25, 1949, the Nationalist appointed governor surrendered peacefully to the Chinese Communists. Chaos followed as remnants of the ETR and Nationalist officials refused to surrender to the Communists. Finally, on October 12, 1949, Chinese Communist troops entered Xinjiang, and by the subsequent year, the region was brought under the control of the Party.⁹³

IV. Party Rule and the Securing of the Periphery

Reflecting back on Republican Xinjiang, Governor Sheng wistfully observed: "Sinkiang had been able to live in peace and happiness before its occupation by the Chinese Communists in 1950."⁹⁴ As our survey so far indicates, this was far from the truth. Forced to flee to Taiwan in 1949, Sheng felt bitter at the Communist victory in Xinjiang that he in no short measure had been responsible for. While most of Sheng's narrative is a polemical and defensive account of his role in Xinjiang's tumultuous history, he is correct when he notes that Xinjiang became the focus of three imperialist powers: Britain, Japan, and the Soviet Union.⁹⁵ This is an important observation, although less so for Britain and Japan, than Russia. It is noteworthy, that in the three instances when breakaway factions within Xinjiang declared themselves independent, Russia used this as a pretext to extend political influence within the region. This happened during the Ya'qub Beg rebellion, the formation of the TIRET in 1933, and the formation of the ETR in

⁹¹ Ibid., 109-110. See also Lattimore, "The New Political Geography," 176.

⁹² Wang, *The Yining Incident*, 200, 258.

⁹³ McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, 23-24.

⁹⁴ Whiting and Sheng, *Sinkiang*, 155.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 158.

1945. The role of Russia in Xinjiang's political history after the mid-nineteenth century was pivotal.

As I have suggested, first Russia and then the Soviet Union were guided by economic and strategic interests. But to pin the blame squarely on Russian and then Soviet opportunism is to miss an essential point. Namely, that from the mid-nineteenth century until the Communist takeover, the situation in Xinjiang favored decentralization.⁹⁶ Therefore, while Russian/Soviet economic and strategic interests partly explain their involvement in Xinjiang, equally important is the fact that foreign involvement was made possible because of an internal lack of cohesion. According to Owen Lattimore, not only did the geographical factors favor decentralization, but the local population, confined to self-sufficient oases, tended to develop "social microcosms with no strong superstructures to unite them into a larger state." Even more pertinent is his observation that a fundamental problem lay in "the tendency of the ability to conquer to outrun the ability to integrate economically and administer efficiently."⁹⁷ Therefore, as important as Russian designs on Xinjiang is that the region in its entirety, certainly since the mid-nineteenth century, and possibly since the Qing conquest, underwent both social and political decentralization. Until such time as there were no strong adversaries beyond the border, internal security was easy to maintain. However, as soon as there was a powerful adversary, it became possible to exploit the internal situation in Xinjiang to the disadvantage of China. We need only look at the Khokandi incursions of the 1820s – at a time when a semblance of the Qing's power had not been destroyed – to note how a tiny Central Asian khanate was able to wreak havoc in the Middle Kingdom.⁹⁸ Clearly then, a decentralized Xinjiang, exhibiting strong centrifugal tendencies was anathema to the modern and centralized state envisioned by the Chinese Communists.

The CCP sought to eliminate this possibility by developing highly centralized control over a region that was torn apart after decades of civil war and warlord rule.

⁹⁶ It may be that this was true from the time of the Qing conquest of the region; but given the lack of a powerful adversary on China's frontier, this remains hypothetical. Until the 1876 annexation of Khokand, Russia's borders in Central Asia did not reach Xinjiang. Likewise, borders with British India were not set, and the two empires were separated by an ambiguous, poorly demarcated borderland.

⁹⁷ Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 183.

⁹⁸ Fletcher, "The Heyday," 366. In the 1820s a small band of men led by Jahangir Khoja (d. 1828) had challenged Qing suzerainty in Xinjiang. The capture of just Jahangir Khoja had required 36,000 troops and cost the Qing dynasty more than ten million taels of silver.

While the establishment of Party rule and the development of modern infrastructure was a challenging venture in all parts of the vast country, it was particularly difficult in Xinjiang. Part of the problem was that the CCP had not had a significant presence in Xinjiang prior to 1949.⁹⁹

The CCP sought to increase its reach in Xinjiang through a dual process of Han migration and the transformation of the traditional economy. More often than not, change in demography was linked to change in the economy. Military farms played a central role in this process. As the People's Liberation Army (PLA) fanned out into the Tarim at the end of 1949 and in early 1950, the army established local garrisons, many of which would become centers of production and construction, and many of which would merge into the *Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan* (Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps or PCC), that was formed in 1954.¹⁰⁰ The PCC was a mammoth organization that overlooked military units, agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, industry, commerce, finance, trade, transportation, as well as land reclamation and civil engineering projects. When the PCC had initially been established, it had been under the Ministry of Agriculture, though in May 1956, the newly established Ministry of State Farms and Land Reclamation took over the organization. The PCC was organized in a military command structure, divided into regiments (*tuan*), battalions (*ying*), and companies (*lian*).¹⁰¹ The importance of the PCC can be gauged by the fact that in 1965, the organization was running just over half of the 243 state farms in Xinjiang. At the time, the PCC was made up almost entirely of Han – the PCC is still predominantly a Han organization – and the PCC became the single most important organization responsible for large-scale resettlement of Han migrants in Xinjiang.¹⁰²

Since its formation in 1954, the PCC has been instrumental in increasing centralization in Xinjiang. Put another way, it was the civilian military bureaucracy, of which the PCC was the largest component, that made it possible for the CCP to reverse the historical process of decentralization in the region. Two points are noteworthy: first, the predominantly Han composition of the civilian military bureaucracy, and, second, that

⁹⁹ McMillen, "Xinjiang and the Production," 67.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 65.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 70-71.

¹⁰² Ibid., 75.

the PCC grew out of the FFA's experience in the region, and thus had a military style organization. The latter was an outcome of the Maoist dictum that did not limit the role of the army to defense, but saw the army as an active participant in the economic and social organization of the state; in Xinjiang, only a fourth of the PLA actively guarded the borders or was garrisoned as troops.¹⁰³ The link between the PLA and the PCC was also close because the CCP had very little field experience in Xinjiang prior to 1949. Unlike most other parts of the country, where the CCP had managed to establish a presence for varying amounts of time with varying degrees of success, Xinjiang had remained isolated from the conflict elsewhere in China. Given that the Soviet Union had managed to exert significant economic, political, and military influence within the region, and that on two separate occasions after 1933 substantial portions of the province had broken away from China, it is not surprising that the PLA would play a central role in Xinjiang's modernization.

Consequently, most of Xinjiang's early leadership was drawn from the FFA.¹⁰⁴ The most noteworthy example is that of Wang Enmao (1912-2001), who, prior to 1949, had been a political commissar of the FFA. By 1956, Wang had assumed both the position of political commissar of the PCC and had become the First Secretary of the PCC's Party Committee. A person of limited education, Wang had joined the Party as a teenager and had taken part in the Long March.¹⁰⁵ Select Uighurs did hold important positions in the Xinjiang bureaucracy after the establishment of Party rule. Saifuddin Azizi was appointed Chairman of the Autonomous Region from 1955-1968 after which the position became converted to Chairmanship of the Revolutionary Committee, a position that he held until 1978. But for the most part, Uighurs in the civilian bureaucracy remained subordinate to their Han counterparts in the civilian military bureaucracy.¹⁰⁶ In addition, the local nationalities were greatly outnumbered in the PLA; McMillen estimates that only ten percent of PLA forces were minority nationals.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Ibid., 69.

¹⁰⁴ Whitson, "The Field Army," 7.

¹⁰⁵ McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, 29-33; McMillen, "Xinjiang and the Production," 71; and "Wang Enmao, Obituary," *The Economist*, April 11, 2001.

¹⁰⁶ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 79.

¹⁰⁷ McMillen, "Xinjiang and the Production," 69.

Han control of the civilian military bureaucracy was accompanied by fundamental transformations in the traditional economy. Nomadism saw a sharp decline. This was especially dramatic in the Ili river valley where the traditional economic specialization was pastoral-nomadic. Of course, this began not after the Communist takeover of the region, but had been taking place since the Qing armies carried out a systematic extermination of the Zungharian Mongols following the mid-eighteenth century conquest. Subsequent to the conquest, the Qing garrisoned troops and established military farms in the Ili river valley. During the Republican era, pastoral nomadic activity continued to decline, and was now confined to smaller geographical areas. Likewise, the heads of livestock, such as camels, horses, sheep, and goats declined steadily. After the establishment of Party rule, land under cultivation increased rapidly, as the PCC engaged in massive projects of land reclamation and harnessing rivers.¹⁰⁸ In 1911, the land under cultivation had been 1.6 million acres; a little over a decade after the Communist takeover, the amount had increased to 7.4 million acres.¹⁰⁹ In the case of Xinjiang, such changes are paradoxical; on one hand, the increase in land under cultivation meant more grain production; on the other hand, the increase in cultivatable land also amounts to a permanent change in the economic and social organization of the region.¹¹⁰ My own understanding is that traditional forms of economic specialization were incompatible with the modernization process as envisioned by the Communist regime.¹¹¹ In Xinjiang's pastoral nomadic communities, changes in economic and social organization were synonymous with changes in culture.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ Ren and Yuan, "Impacts of Migration," 100.

¹⁰⁹ Wiens, "Cultivation Development," 77-81.

¹¹⁰ McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, 151. In pastoral nomadic societies, there was a strong correlation between social and economic organization. On the steppes, nomadic societies largely lived off exploiting natural resources such as grass and water that were in limited supply even in the best of times. For this reason, highly sophisticated systems of reaching consensus over migration patterns, group sizes, and use of natural resources evolved over time. With increasing amounts of pastoral land coming under cultivation, this traditional form of social organization was threatened.

¹¹¹ Humphrey and Sneath, *The End of Nomadism?*, esp. 47-65. In recent years, nomadism has also been threatened due to opportunities that did not exist in the past, such as trans-border trade. For similar reasons, the Inner Asian regions of Mongolia and Russia have also witnessed a sharp drop in pastoral nomadic activity. For a recent example of changing nomadic lifestyle in Mongolia, see Tsatsral Baatar, "Mongolian Nomads Fighting for Survival," *Dawn*, November 17, 2004. <http://www.dawn.com/2004/11/17/int14.htm> (accessed November 17, 2004).

¹¹² Hali, Li, and Luckert, *Kazakh Traditions*, 56-74. Consider, for example, the fact that traditional Kazakh songs are strongly influenced by the pastoral nomadic lifestyle, making frequent references to mountains, grazing lands, and herded animals.

Once the PLA had a firm grasp on Xinjiang, the region was open to Han migration. In 1953, the Han made up 6.1 percent of the population. By 1964, the representation of Han had risen to 32.9 percent of Xinjiang's population. Han migration to Xinjiang has continued unabated. In September 1979, Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997) had assured Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau that Xinjiang could not absorb more Han for the time being. Soon afterwards, in 1982, Han population had reached 40.4 percent of Xinjiang's total population. The Han population dipped briefly in 1990, to 37.6 percent, but in 2003, it stood at an all-time high of just over 43 percent of the autonomous region's population.¹¹³ The PCC, by being the primary employer of the new migrants to the region, had played an important role in altering the demographics of the periphery.¹¹⁴

The Han have migrated to Xinjiang for two reasons, and in both cases, the PCC has played an important role. The first rationale has been that the Han provided skilled technical labor in a region where there was traditionally a shortage of qualified individuals.¹¹⁵ In addition, many Han migrants were absorbed into the regional workforce as demand for labor surged with more land being brought under cultivation.¹¹⁶ According to my own understanding, another unstated reason is that the Chinese government sought to increase the number of Han as this would strengthen their grasp on the autonomous region. There are obvious parallels with Qing policy after 1884, when an increasing number of Han were sent to Xinjiang to integrate the province more fully into the Qing empire. As this study illustrates in the following chapters, this policy has admittedly had some success, although by no means could one say that it has quelled all separatist tendencies in Xinjiang. In fact, one may just as well make the argument that Han migration to Xinjiang is a source of unhappiness amongst local nationalities, which is hardly surprising, given the cultural changes that are an inevitable part of major demographic changes.

The more the Han migrate to Xinjiang, the more pressing the threat to cultural identity becomes for the minority nationalities. Besides Uighur groups in exile who see Han migration as a threat to their cultural identity, personal observation leads me to

¹¹³ Dreyer, "The Xinjiang Uyghur," 741; Li, *Zhongguo Xinjiang*, 5; and Toops, "The Demography," 246.

¹¹⁴ Ma, "Population Distribution," 108; and, Ren and Yuan, "Impact of Migration," 97.

¹¹⁵ Dreyer, "Go West Young Han," 368.

¹¹⁶ Dreyer, "The Xinjiang Uyghur," 723.

believe that the increasing number of Han in Xinjiang has led to uneasiness amongst the minority nationalities of Xinjiang. Scholars in the PRC tend to view Han migration to Xinjiang as a dynamic process of cultural assimilation that has led to increased assimilation between the Han and the non-Han people in areas of cultural interactions such as cuisine and language.¹¹⁷ In theory, there is no reason why Xinjiang cannot be a peaceful multiethnic autonomous region. But the reality is different, and even scholarship within the PRC acknowledges that Han and non-Han people occupy segregated living and occupational spaces, and tend to employ people from within their own ethnic communities.¹¹⁸ But this is as far as Chinese scholarship is willing to go on this topic. According to the official discourse, Xinjiang is a multiethnic autonomous region, and minority rights are not being infringed upon. Not only is Han migration to the region not a problem, but this process is seen as one where different national minorities in China are actively engaged in the creation of a socialist society.¹¹⁹

According to my understanding, the unstated assumption that underlies the official narrative is the necessity of securing the frontier; this has been the stark lesson from the modern history of the region. As we have discussed, from the Qing conquest up until the end of the Republican period, Xinjiang exhibited strong separatist tendencies. The Communist regime sought to bring the region firmly into its orbit through socialist modernization. The historical legacy of the region was a telling reminder that without the development of infrastructure, and without drastically changing the modes of production, there was always a risk of the region breaking free of Beijing's control. Not surprisingly, territorial integrity was a foremost concern of the Communist regime. In the Chinese Communist narrative, Xinjiang had been an inseparable part of the Middle Kingdom for the last two thousand years.¹²⁰

During Republican rule, there were two reasons for challenges to Beijing's rule: first, because the center was weak, and, second, because of foreign interference. After the establishment of Party rule, Beijing sought to reverse the first of the two by developing a centralized civilian military bureaucracy in Xinjiang. But threats from across the frontier

¹¹⁷ Ren and Yuan, "Impacts of Migration," 97-98.

¹¹⁸ Ma, "Population Distribution," 121-122; and Tsui, "Uyghur Movement," 134.

¹¹⁹ Information Office, "White Paper on History."

¹²⁰ Ibid.

remained. Prior to the independence of Central Asia, China shared a 3,000-kilometer long border with the Soviet Union in Xinjiang that was poorly demarcated and disputed since 1884. With the deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations at the end of the 1950s, the border with the Soviet Union, both in the northeast and in the northwest, became a security concern for the Chinese government. Though the Sino-Soviet border clashes would not climax until March 1969, with fighting along the Ussuri river, minor border skirmishes had taken place as early as 1959.¹²¹ In fact, according to the Chinese, between October 1964 and March 1969, the Soviet Union had instigated 4,189 border incidents.¹²² In my assessment, the major clashes occurred in the northeast, though this by no means meant that the Chinese did not perceive a threat on the Xinjiang-Soviet frontier. In 1962, for example, border clashes with the Soviet Union broke out in the Ili river valley.¹²³ Such events were a concern for China, and moving more Han into border regions, traditionally inhabited by minority people, was begun in earnest.

Both sides deployed a large number of troops in the border regions. In response to the seven to eight divisions in Soviet Central Asia, as well as Soviet troops in Mongolia after 1966,¹²⁴ China had garrisoned five divisions in Xinjiang by 1968. This was supplemented by a large paramilitary made up of members of the PCC. The PCC, comprised almost entirely of Han, was to be the first line defense in the event of a Soviet attack; three-fourths of Han migrating to Xinjiang during this time were being employed in different PCC units (by 1990, anywhere between a sixth and an eighth of Xinjiang's population was employed by the PCC).¹²⁵ The need for increased border security in Xinjiang became a conduit for increased Han migration to Xinjiang; there were even reports of minority nationalities being moved out of the border regions.¹²⁶

An overriding issue in the Sino-Soviet border disputes of the 1960s was the demarcation of borders that had last been attempted in the nineteenth century. Between

¹²¹ Robinson, "The Sino-Soviet," 1177.

¹²² Ibid., 1183; Dittmer, *Sino-Soviet Normalization*, 190; and Gelber, "Strategic Arms Limitation," 268. The Chinese claim that the border incidents were provoked by the Soviet Union needs to be approached with caution. Given the extremely sensitive nature of this issue, primary documents dealing with the incidents have remained classified, with both countries claiming that the incidents were provoked by the other side. In the case of the March 1969 border skirmish, Robinson suggests that the Chinese were the provocateurs.

¹²³ McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, 56.

¹²⁴ Wishnick, *Mending Fences*, 29.

¹²⁵ Bachman, "Making Xinjiang Safe," 175-176; and Barnett, *China's Far West*, 398.

¹²⁶ McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, 65; and Robinson, "The Sino-Soviet," 1184-1185.

1964 and 1978, China and Russia engaged in ten rounds of bilateral talks aimed at resolving the border dispute. All ended unsuccessfully. At issue was the validity of the nineteenth century treaties.¹²⁷ The Chinese argued that these were unequal treaties forced upon an ailing Chinese dynasty. The USSR refused to accept this position, insisting on the status quo, at least until such time as new treaties could be negotiated and ratified.¹²⁸ Though in their September 11, 1969, meeting at the Beijing airport, Premier Zhou Enlai (1949-1976), and Soviet Premier Alexey Kosygin (1964-1980), had resolved not to go to war over border skirmishes,¹²⁹ the Soviet Union continued to deploy troops along its border with China. Between 1969 and 1976, the Soviet Union tripled its military presence along China's border. Soviet expansion was an acute concern, particularly due to the 1968 Soviet incursion into Czechoslovakia under the umbrella of the "Brezhnev Doctrine."¹³⁰

The Sino-Soviet border was not the only disputed border in Xinjiang in the 1960s. In October 1962, China went to war with India, and though the conflict was low in intensity, and shorter in duration than the Sino-Soviet border engagements, the reason for the conflict was again a poorly demarcated border. The disputed border was the McMohan Line that had been fixed by the 1914 Simla Convention.¹³¹ India argued that the McMohan Line was the international boundary, whereas according to China, the McMohan Line had ceded Chinese territory to India. PLA incursions into Tibet, which began in 1950 to "liberate" the region, led to boundary disputes between China and India. Both countries made claims on Aksai Chin, a territory just south of the Karakoram range, which lay to the southwest of Yarkand. After their takeover of Xinjiang, the Chinese military had used caravan roads through Aksai Chin to ferry supplies between Tibet and Xinjiang. Towards the end of the decade, the Chinese had constructed an all-weather road through the region, and in 1958, an Indian reconnaissance unit had been detained by the Chinese in the vicinity of the new highway.¹³² The Indian government saw this as an encroachment on its territory. The Chinese disagreed, and regarded Indian claims on the

¹²⁷ Dittmer, *Sino-Soviet Normalization*, 68.

¹²⁸ Dittmer, *Sino-Soviet Normalization*, 68; Robinson, "The Sino-Soviet," 1178-1180; and Voskressenski, *Russia and China*, 174.

¹²⁹ Voskressenski, *Russia and China*, 173-174.

¹³⁰ Wishnick, *Mending Fences*, 30.

¹³¹ Maxwell, "China and India," 48.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 57-58

region as an attempt by the Indian government to undermine China's role in the Himalayan region. India was seen to be supported by the United States, an accusation that was not altogether unreasonable given the Indian government's tolerance for the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) spying on Tibet from India.¹³³ War broke out between the two countries on October 20, 1962, and lasted just over a month, before the Chinese emerged victorious. The conflict, though limited in military engagement, underscored the fact that the western frontiers were neither peaceful nor secure.

Elsewhere on Xinjiang's western borders, frontier demarcations proceeded smoothly. In 1959, Pakistan raised the issue of bilateral border demarcation, and negotiations began in May 1962 (in 1960 and 1962, the Chinese had settled their border disputes with Burma and Nepal respectively). On March 2, 1963, the border agreement between China and Pakistan was announced.¹³⁴ Later the same year, China normalized its 47-mile long border with Afghanistan, and in March 1964, the border protocol between the two countries was signed.¹³⁵ What is noteworthy is that the Chinese only normalized their western border with Afghanistan, or what was only the eastern frontier of Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor. As per the 1884 Protocol, and considering the fact that the borderland that had remained undemarcated, the Chinese could also have claimed a border along the north of the Wakhan Corridor.¹³⁶ But this would effectively mean making a claim on territory that belonged to the then Soviet Socialist Republic of Tajikistan (today Tajikistan). Therefore, while the western frontier may have been demarcated with Afghanistan, this did not preclude the possibility of a new frontier coming into existence north of the Wakhan Corridor in the event of a new border demarcation with the Soviet Union. As this study shall show, after the independence of Central Asia, the border along the Sino-Tajik frontier was the last to be demarcated.

As Xinjiang entered its third decade as an inseparable part of the new China, security in the autonomous region remained of paramount concern for the Beijing leadership. True, Xinjiang was no longer a satellite of a foreign power, the Soviet Union, as it had been during the Republican era. It is also true that the Chinese Communist

¹³³ Pringsheim, "China, India" ; and Vertzberger, "India's Border Conflict," 621.

¹³⁴ Barnds, "China's Relations with Pakistan," 471; and Li, *Zhongguo Xinjiang*, 10.

¹³⁵ Dai, "China and Afghanistan," 220; and Li, *Zhongguo Xinjiang*, 10.

¹³⁶ Segal, "China and Afghanistan," 1160-1161.

instated policies brought a high degree of centralization to the region. But the security situation was no less tenuous as China was still confronted with hostile powers beyond Xinjiang's frontiers. This was especially true after 1960, when the Sino-Soviet dispute escalated, leading to thousands of border skirmishes through the decade. The role of the Soviet Union, and to a lesser extent India, demanded that China had to exercise vigilance if Xinjiang was to remain a stable part of China. As suggested in this section, this was possible only through the fundamental restructuring of the traditional economy that went hand in hand with the influx of large number of Han migrants to the region. The early decades following the success of the Communist revolution are especially illustrative for this study, as they highlight two issues that continue to be of importance to the contemporary history of the region: the arrival of Han migrants, and how this relates to the security challenges on China's western borders. Therefore, instead of looking for answers in China's internal politics to explain drastic demographic changes, I have found it useful to examine these developments in the context of regional security challenges.

In the early 1970s, Sino-Soviet relations remained tense, though there were fewer border skirmishes. Internally, there was a semblance of normalcy. Unlike the rest of China, Governor Wang had convinced Chairman Mao to limit the Cultural Revolution in Xinjiang due to the strategic importance of the autonomous region, and because Xinjiang was home to nuclear testing facilities.¹³⁷ The death of Chairman Mao in 1976 did not lead to an immediate détente with the Soviet Union, and security on the western frontiers remained a pressing concern. Between 1972 and 1977, China accused the Soviet Union of annexing 2,800 square miles of territory in Xinjiang. In 1975, India had annexed Sikkim. Grave though these concerns were, they paled in comparison to the instability that threatened China after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.¹³⁸

V. The Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan and Implications for China

On December 27, 1979, Soviet troops entered Afghanistan, ostensibly in an attempt to prop up the regime of Babrak Karmal (1979-1986), the leader of the *Jamiat-i-Democratiki-yi Khalq-i-Afghanistan* or *Khalq* (People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan

¹³⁷ McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power*, esp. 181-222.

¹³⁸ Dreyer, "The Xinjiang Uyghur," 733; Wishnick, *Mending Fences*, 73; and Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 39.

or PDPA).¹³⁹ While a discussion of the political changes within Afghanistan in 1978/1979 is beyond the scope of this study, most scholars are in agreement that the Soviet invasion was a response to internal political developments; Karmal had come to power a year earlier supported by troops sympathetic to the Soviet Union.¹⁴⁰ In addition, in an account published shortly after the Soviet invasion (1980), a leading scholar on Afghanistan, Louis Dupree, suggested that the Soviet Union may have also been driven by considerations that included gaining access to the warm waters of the Arabian Sea, and strategic positioning in the resource-rich Persian Gulf.¹⁴¹

The Soviet invasion would be the last Cold War conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union contested in a Third World country. The war would be one of the most devastating fought in the post-War era, with an estimated 1.5 million Afghan lives lost.¹⁴² The financial costs were likewise astronomical: the Soviet Union poured in some forty-five billion dollars in their fight against the Mujahidin. The United States gave close to five billion dollars in aid to the different Mujahidin factions, which was matched dollar for dollar by Sa'udi Arabia. In total, Ahmed Rashid estimates that the different Mujahidin groups received more than ten billion dollars in aid, most of which was in the form of weapons.¹⁴³

This section examines aspects of the Afghan war that were to have an adverse effect on China's security relations after 1991. I do so by exploring the modalities of the conflict that led to instability after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. These include the breakdown of centralized control and traditional authority in the country, the import of a Sa'udi interpretation of Sunni Islam, and the development of a war economy based on the creation of transnational gunrunning, drug trafficking, and finance networks. My purpose is not to present a comprehensive narrative of Soviet occupation and Afghan resistance, but to examine these critical changes in Afghan economy and society. These particular modalities have an important bearing on the present study because they were not dismantled in the chaos that ensued after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989. As we shall discuss in the subsequent chapters, these have constituted the primary multilateral

¹³⁹ Dong, *Yisilan*, 87; and Dupree, *Afghanistan*, 769.

¹⁴⁰ Kakar, *Afghanistan*, esp. 32-50; Roy, *Islam and Resistance*; and Rubin, *The Fragmentation*.

¹⁴¹ Dupree, *Afghanistan*, 777-778.

¹⁴² Rashid, *Taliban*, 13. See also, Qu, *Dangdai Zhongdong*, 213; and Rubin, *The Fragmentation*, 179-181.

¹⁴³ Rashid, *Taliban*, 18.

security concern for China and Central Asia since 1996, and are arguably central to China's diplomacy with the independent Central Asian republics today.

During its initial phases, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan brought larger numbers of Soviet troops into regions adjacent to Xinjiang.¹⁴⁴ Arguably, the initial deployment of Soviet troops constituted a military threat similar to that faced by China along its border with the Soviet Union. The situation on the Xinjiang-Soviet border had already been tense; just prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Chinese and Soviet forces had clashed on July 16, 1979, in Dacheng county.¹⁴⁵ In particular, Soviet military deployment in the Wakhan Corridor, and the construction of all-weather roads in the region, alarmed the Chinese, since this gave the Soviets another potential front on which to amass troops against China.¹⁴⁶ On June 16, 1981, the Soviet Union and Afghanistan also finalized the northern border of the Wakhan Corridor, a border that China could have claimed according to the 1884 Protocol.¹⁴⁷ In hindsight, it is unlikely that the Soviet Union seriously planned an attack on China through the Wakhan Corridor;¹⁴⁸ nonetheless, at the time the Chinese could not rule out this possibility. Consequently, China became one of the earliest suppliers of military aid to the Mujahidin.¹⁴⁹

Arguably, the most enduring threat to China came not from Soviet deployment in regions close to the Sino-Afghanistan border, but because of fundamental transformations in Afghan society (including the transformation of the role of Islam), and the creation of a war economy specific to the region and the conflict. Both cast a shadow on China's security concerns today. We examine the creation of the war economy first, which has been an enduring legacy of the Afghan war.

¹⁴⁴ Hilali, "China's Response," 327.

¹⁴⁵ McMillen, "Xinjiang and Wang Enmao," 579.

¹⁴⁶ Hilali, "China's Response," 330; and Segal, "China and Afghanistan," 1166.

¹⁴⁷ Segal, "China and Afghanistan," 1160.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 1164.

¹⁴⁹ Barnds, "China's Relations with Pakistan," 468-469; Holmes, "Afghanistan and Sino-Soviet," 125; Segal, "China and Afghanistan," 1161-1168; and Vertzberger, "Afghanistan in China's Policy," 14. China's support for the Mujahidin can also be explained within the larger context of regional alliances. Since the early 1950s, China had established friendly relations with Pakistan, despite Pakistan's membership in the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO). Furthermore, China has traditionally disapproved of Afghanistan's claims on northwestern Pakistan, a claim the Soviet Union had traditionally supported. During the Mujahidin resistance against the Soviet Union, with almost all Mujahidin groups being based out of the Pakistani frontier town of Peshawar, there were repeated threats of the conflict escalating to Pakistan; the Chinese had repeatedly vowed to support Pakistan against a Soviet attack.

The war against Soviet occupation and their Afghan proxies was a guerilla war that was largely, though not exclusively, orchestrated from within Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP). In their resistance against the Soviet occupation, the Mujahidin benefited from financing and arms shipments from numerous patrons, foremost amongst which were the United States and Sa'udi Arabia. On the ground, logistical support was provided by the Pakistani Inter Services Intelligence (ISI). Supplying the Mujahidin factions within Afghanistan meant the development of elaborate arms "pipelines" through which arms would be transported from Pakistan to the different Mujahidin factions.¹⁵⁰ Until 1986, when the US first provided the Mujahidin with "made in America" anti-aircraft missiles, great care was taken to supply the Mujahidin only with weapons of Eastern Bloc origin. This was an attempt on the part of the CIA and the ISI to maintain credible deniability. While large numbers of the assault rifles were procured from Egypt, Israel, and black markets in Eastern Europe, substantial quantities were also procured from China.¹⁵¹ According to the ISI's Brigadier Mohammad Yousaf, who oversaw arms shipments to the Mujahidin, prior to 1984, "the bulk" of arms and ammunition was procured from China.¹⁵² Though we cannot say for certain how many weapons were procured from which source – and it is highly unlikely that such a paper trail would exist – the net result was that the region became awash in small arms. Barnett Rubin estimates that over ten billion dollars of weapons were sent to Afghanistan between 1986 and 1990 (this includes weapons supplied both by US/Sa'udi funds, and those supplies by the Soviet Union).¹⁵³ The number of small arms sent to Afghanistan would easily run into the millions, turning the NWFP into "the world's premier arms bazaar."¹⁵⁴ As we shall discuss in Chapter Two, weapons from the Afghan war were used in regional conflicts through the 1990s, and continue to be a source of instability today.

Closely linked to the influx of arms into the region was the shift from hashish production for local consumption, to heroin production for international markets;¹⁵⁵ during the war, Afghanistan witnessed a dramatic increase in poppy cultivation. While

¹⁵⁰ Rubin, *The Fragmentation*, 197

¹⁵¹ Pirseyedi, *The Small Arms Problem*, 18.

¹⁵² Yousaf and Adkin, *The Bear Trap*, 85.

¹⁵³ Rubin, *The Fragmentation*, 179.

¹⁵⁴ Naylor, "Bin Laden."

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

poppy cultivation would reach dizzying heights during the Taliban regime and the US-backed Hamid Karzai regime (2001-), figures from the 1980s show a distinct upward trend in cultivation. In 1980, poppy production was at 200 tons, 450 tons in 1984, and 1570 tons in 1989.¹⁵⁶ As these figures indicate, as the 1980s progressed, Afghan commanders began cultivating poppy in larger quantities. The poppy was processed into heroin in the NWFP, and then loaded on to trucks returning “empty,” after supplying the Mujahidin. Next, the heroin was transported down-country, and then to world markets.¹⁵⁷ In the 1980s, multiple export routes out of Pakistan were in operation.¹⁵⁸

The new war economy was based on the supply of weapons, the cultivation of poppy, the production of heroin, payments to Mujahidin commanders, and the proliferation of smuggling rackets. These modalities of the war economy were tolerated by the Mujahidin’s patrons as this was how their loyalty was often bought and maintained, who, alongside fighting the Soviet Union, were just as often fighting each other. As Tom Naylor has observed, the weapons and narcotics pipelines were not only inseparable, but “[f]rom one end to another the pipeline leaked.” Weapons and supplies were routinely skimmed off for personal profit at every level of the supply chain. Many of these weapons were used in regional insurgencies in the Punjab and Kashmir, or made their way onto the international arms market.¹⁵⁹ The important point is that the war economy opened up countless opportunities for corruption, patronage, and the creation of personal fortunes and private militias which led to the complete breakdown of any semblance of authority that the institutions of the nation-state might have had as the nexus of power and legitimacy in the war ravaged country.

During the same time, another equally important transformation was taking place within Afghan society. At the risk of some generalization we can say that prior to Soviet occupation, Afghan society was largely based on a social consensus that recognized traditional authority based on the seniority of the tribal leaders. The Soviet invasion of

¹⁵⁶ UNODC, “The Opium Economy,” 6.

¹⁵⁷ Rashid, *Taliban*, 120-21; and Rubin, *The Fragmentation*, 197-98;

¹⁵⁸ Naylor, “Bin Laden.” Export options included smuggling organizations linked to Sikh guerillas, who would pass the heroin to the Bombay underworld, who would then export the heroin to international markets. Further south, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE), were also exporting narcotics to Europe. Yet another route was through Baluchistan into Iran, from where Kurdish groups would smuggle the heroin into Turkey, after which it would transit the Balkans and be sold on European markets.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

Afghanistan, and the US/Sa'udi-backed resistance, not only destroyed state institutions, but in the process, destroyed any semblance of traditional authority. With most of the traditional elite either killed or in exile by the early 1980s, Afghanistan presented a vacuum that was ripe for the implantation of a Sa'udi interpretation of Sunni Islam, that disregarded classical interpretations of the Quran, Islamic philosophy, and Sufism, and sought to return to a puritanical Islamic society as it supposedly existed during the time of the Prophet.¹⁶⁰

The Sa'udi agenda was nothing short of opening an ideological battleground in the war-ravaged country. The promotion of a literalist interpretation of Sunni Islam was in keeping with political changes in the Middle East since 1967. The decisive victory of Israel over the Arab coalition in the 1967 war was seen across the Arab world as a failure of the staunchly secular, pan-Arabism championed by Egyptian President Jamal 'Abd al-Nasser (1952-1970).¹⁶¹ In the subsequent years, the Sa'udi elite sought to fill the void left by Nasserite internationalism. In this venture, the Sa'udi leadership was aided by two important developments. First, being one of the world's largest oil producers, the Sa'udi government benefited from the rapid rise in oil prices in the 1970s. Second, the Iranian revolution of 1979, being strongly confrontational towards Arab regimes, posited the tension between Iran and its Arab neighbors across a Sunni-Shi'a fault line. Afghanistan thus became an important arena for Sa'udi-backed Sunni internationalism, particularly since tens of thousand of volunteers from across the Muslim world traveled to Afghanistan to fight against Soviet occupation. As Fawaz Gerges has observed, "Never before in modern times had so many Muslims from so many lands who spoke different tongues journeyed to a Muslim country to fight together against a common enemy."¹⁶²

While most US funding went towards the procurement of weapons for the Mujahidin, the majority of Sa'udi funding was channeled towards the establishment and operation of madrasas in Pakistan's border areas. This explains the sharp increase in the number of madrasas in the country. In 1971, there were a total of nine hundred madrasas in Pakistan; by 1988, this number had grown to eight thousand official madrasas, with an

¹⁶⁰ Roy, *Islam and Resistance*, 219.

¹⁶¹ Ajami, *The Arab Predicament*, 171.

¹⁶² Gerges, *The Far Enemy*, 82.

estimated twenty-five thousand unofficial ones.¹⁶³ The new madrasas served as a transit point for the kaleidoscope of citizens from every Muslim country that had volunteered for the anti-Soviet struggle. Mostly run by the Jama‘at-i Islami and Jami‘at al-‘ulama’-i Islami in Pakistan, the Pakistani and Afghan clergy at these madrasas proselytized an interpretation of orthodox Sunni Islam that was at odds with not only Shi‘a and Sufi interpretations, but often with traditional Hanafi Sunni interpretations as well.

While this was an important trend, we should be careful not to overstate the transformation of Islam in the 1980s. Sa‘udi puritanical interpretations did not take hold amongst most Afghan Mujahidin, or in Afghan society, during the early years of the anti-Soviet struggle.¹⁶⁴ On the contrary, based on his interviews with volunteers from the anti-Soviet resistance, Fawaz Gerges concludes that a schism emerged between the so-called “Afghan Arabs” and the Afghans themselves. Gerges writes:

An air of moral superiority colored some of the Afghan Arab’s attitudes toward their hosts, and deep tensions existed ... under the surface ... [T]hey disagreed on almost everything [besides fighting the Soviets], including politics and religion.... Foreign fighters, particularly Afghan Arabs, considered some of the Afghani’s religious practices “sacrilegious” and tried to show them “the correct Salafi” (ultraconservative) way. At the heart of these differences lay a bigger moral clash between Afghanis’ homegrown, nuanced tradition of worship and that of an absolutist, textualist, and fundamentalist interpretation that denies context-oriented local customs.¹⁶⁵

Through the 1980s, Afghan Mujahidin drew largely from traditional Islamist organizations, such as Burhanuddin Rabbani’s (b. 1940) Jama‘at-i Islami, and Gulbuddin Hikmatyar’s (b. 1947) Hizb-i Islami. Traditional Islamist organizations and leaders, who led the Mujahidin factions against the Soviet Union, were largely a product of the urban student movements of the 1960s. While most of them were Islamists, they were closer to the Ikhwan al-Muslimin (Muslim Brotherhoods), than they were to their successors, the

¹⁶³ Rashid, *Taliban*, 89-90.

¹⁶⁴ Rashid, “The Taliban,” 26.

¹⁶⁵ Gerges, *The Far Enemy*, 83.

Taliban. Olivier Roy, who spent time with the Afghan Mujahidin through the 1980s, notes that the Afghans had a great tolerance for other faiths.¹⁶⁶

Amongst those impressed by the Mujahidin's resistance were Muslims in Soviet Central Asia. In the early years, many Central Asian Muslims were conscripted in the Soviet military to fight in Afghanistan. For many such conscripts, this was their first exposure to the broader Islamic world; many would return home with admiration for the Mujahidin. Some Central Asians who were taken prisoner by the Mujahidin actually opted to take up arms against the Soviet Union. This problem became so commonplace that in the early years of the war, the Soviet military had to ensure that Soviet Tajiks did not serve in Afghanistan.¹⁶⁷

By the mid-1980s, there was growing admiration for the Mujahidin in Soviet Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In 1987, the latter-day Tajik leader, Mullah Nuri (b. 1947), demonstrated in favor of the Mujahidin in Kurgan-Teppe. Another notable example is that of the latter-day leader of the insurgency in Uzbekistan, Juma Namangani (1969-2001?), a Soviet paratrooper who became a born-again Muslim while deployed in Afghanistan. During this time, religious books published in Pakistan made their way into Soviet Central Asia via Afghanistan.¹⁶⁸ Additionally, hundreds of Central Asians traveled clandestinely to Pakistan to either study in the madrasas, or to volunteer in the anti-Soviet war.¹⁶⁹ In 1989, Ahmed Rashid interviewed Uzbeks and Tajiks who had fought alongside the Mujahidin who believed that Soviet defeat in Afghanistan would lead to Islamic revolutions in Central Asia.¹⁷⁰

Uighurs from Xinjiang may have also been amongst the volunteers traveling to Afghanistan from the greater Central Asian region. According to Rashid, "scores" of Uighurs, probably supported by the Jami'at al-'ulama'-i Islami in Pakistan, may have made their way to Afghanistan to fight alongside the Mujahidin against the Soviet Union.¹⁷¹ During the war, the PDPA accused China of training Mujahidin in Xinjiang and

¹⁶⁶ Roy, *Globalized Islam*, 155.

¹⁶⁷ Rashid, *The Reemergence*, 172.

¹⁶⁸ Roy, "Qibla and the Government," 55.

¹⁶⁹ Hunter, "Religion, Politics" 72.

¹⁷⁰ Rashid, *Jihad*, 44.

¹⁷¹ Interview in Lahore, Pakistan, June 2002.

in Pakistan.¹⁷² Given the sensitive internal situation in Xinjiang at the time, the training of Mujahidin within Xinjiang appears unlikely. In his recent study (2004), Michael Dillon has suggested that there is some evidence that “Beijing itself” sent Uighurs to “liaise” with the Mujahidin between 1979 and 1989, although he does not indicate what this evidence might be.¹⁷³ In an unclassified report published in 1998 by the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), independent analyst Paul George assessed the impact of the Afghan war on Uighur aspirations as such:

As an ideological event, the Afghan conflict clearly had a powerful effect on those who now seek to create an Islamic state in East Turkestan. A number of Xinjiang Muslims are known to have fought alongside the Mujahideen in Afghanistan together with other committed revolutionaries from a number of Islamic states. It is feasible that some of the Xinjiang Muslims who fought in Afghanistan have returned to take up arms against the Chinese. Certainly, radical Islamic international contacts were consolidated in Afghanistan and the end of that conflict has created a pool of well-trained, religiously motivated, fighters and a vast amount of surplus weapons. There is a virtually uncontrollable trade in weapons from Afghanistan to the border regions of Pakistan, Kashmir, Tajikistan and to criminal elements elsewhere in the region. Smuggling of all kinds of contraband is endemic throughout the area and centuries-old tribal connections make it unreasonable to dismiss the influence of "outsiders" in the Xinjiang conflict.¹⁷⁴

That Uighurs did transit Pakistan en route to Afghanistan is without a doubt. But as we shall discuss in the subsequent chapters, it is not certain if this took place before 1989, and, if so, whether they were supported by Beijing. I am skeptical of Beijing’s direct involvement. Having said that, in his account of the Afghan war, Brigadier Yousaf has

¹⁷² Merriam, “Arms Shipments,” 74.

¹⁷³ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 156-157.

¹⁷⁴ George, “Islamic Unrest.” See the section titled “The Question of Fundamentalism.”

claimed that Chinese weapons specialists were training the Mujahidin in the use of weapons within Pakistan.¹⁷⁵

On February 2, 1989, the last Soviet soldier withdrew from Afghanistan. Though the Soviet troops had withdrawn, fighting still continued between the Mujahidin factions and the pro-Soviet regime of General Mohammed Najibullah (1987-1992). After General Najibullah, Burhanuddin Rabbani (1992-1996) became the head of the country, but achieved little in terms of either securing peace, or dismantling the madrasas, training camps, or the transnational networks that had provided the logistical backbone of the anti-Soviet struggle. With the central government weak and unable to suppress the local warlords, Afghanistan remained a haven for volunteers from different parts of the world who came for the purpose of religious or military training. The focus of these foreign fighters was less on taking part in combat within the country, and more on learning a certain set of skills, often military, and then taking these skills back to their home country.¹⁷⁶ We shall discuss this with regard to volunteers from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in Chapter Two, and Uighurs from Xinjiang in Chapter Three and Chapter Four. In addition, Dong Fengxiao correctly notes that while Afghanistan was a hotspot (*redian*) for the Soviet Union and the United States while Soviet troops were actually in Afghanistan, the international community grew increasingly apathetic (*mo bu guanxin*) towards the country after the withdrawal of the Soviet military.¹⁷⁷ The indifference of the international community did little to curtail the spread of instability in the greater Central Asian region. As we shall witness subsequently, first Central Asia, and then China began to feel the full brunt of instability stemming from Afghanistan shortly after the independence of Central Asia.

Conclusion

The historical legacies discussed in this chapter formed the backdrop against which China's relations with Central Asia began evolving in 1992. Irrespective of the fact that the near-instantaneous independence of five new states on or just beyond China's

¹⁷⁵ Yousaf and Adkin, *The Bear Trap*, 89. There is also a possibility that the Wakhan Corridor was used by China to supply weapons to the Mujahidin. However, it seems more likely that the major supply route for arms to the Mujahidin was through Pakistan. Holmes, "Afghanistan and Sino-Soviet," 130.

¹⁷⁶ Gerjes, *The Far Enemy*, 12, 30, 43-46.

¹⁷⁷ Dong, *Yisilan*, 198-199.

frontiers was a historically unprecedented event, that these political changes took place on China's Central Asian frontiers was indicative of the utmost care that China would have to take in the following years.

In this chapter, I have illustrated that notwithstanding the bilateral and multilateral issues of concern to China and its new neighbors that would be addressed after 1991, the historical experience of Chinese rule in Central Asia mandated that the PRC proceed with caution. To a large extent this was because the Sino-Central Asian frontier was not a cultural frontier. If for a moment we ignore the international boundaries between China and Central Asia, and the process of modernization undertaken since the turn of the twentieth century, we discover that the cultural landscape of Xinjiang blends seamlessly into that of post-Soviet Central Asia. As Owen Lattimore observed in an essay first published in 1953, "An important characteristic of Inner Asia is that most of its political frontiers do not mark the edges of territories inhabited by people who differ from each other in language, economic activity, social organization, and in the kind of group loyalty that is founded on the feeling of kinship. [Political frontiers] divide kindred people from each other and place them under different political sovereignties."¹⁷⁸

Insofar as China and the Soviet Union established suzerainty over Central Asia, politically, the region could be absorbed within either state. But this possibility was predicated on the assumption that the two states were in a position to exert strong centralized rule. This was the case with Soviet rule in Central Asia until 1988, after which, as we shall discuss in the subsequent chapter, Soviet rule in the region waned, giving rise to an Islamic resurgence. As we shall also witness, while this resurgence was driven by an indigenous impulse, it was bolstered by contacts from within foreign Muslim countries. In this regard, the lesson drawn from Soviet Central Asia was similar to the lesson we may draw from Republican Xinjiang. That is, lacking strong centralized control, containing the Central Asian territory within the absolute political orbit of a distant and culturally dissimilar metropolis was very difficult.

Since coming to power, the Communist Party has maintained that Xinjiang is an integral part of a multiethnic China; my purpose is not to dispute this claim. However, the very fact that the PRC sought to firmly integrate the region within China, both through

¹⁷⁸ Lattimore, "The New Political Geography," 165.

the influx of Han migrants to the region, and through the modernization of the traditional economy, suggests that though the Communist leadership may consider Xinjiang an integral part of the country, they probably do not consider it to be a secure part of the country for some of the reasons we have explored up until now. These have included the historical, economic, and political tendencies within the region, that have pushed the different sub-regions presently within the autonomous region in an outward direction, and a growing marginalization of the indigenous population since the Republican era, a process which has arguably been accentuated by the growing influx of Han migrants. In addition, though the PRC has managed to exert strong centralized control in the region since the 1950s, the independence of Central Asia led to the formation of economically impoverished states, which provided little in terms of a transformation of the Soviet political culture. Initially weak, economically vulnerable, and politically unrepresentative of the majority of their populations' aspirations, when coupled with Afghanistan's endless civil war, independent Central Asia presented China with immense challenges on its historically troubled frontier.

2.

China's Initial Central Asian Diplomacy Considerations, 1992-1996

Introduction

At the height of the Sino-Soviet conflict, China had faced the prospect of a military showdown with the Soviet Union. Sino-Soviet confrontation was followed by a gradual normalization of relations through the 1980s that culminated in Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's (1985-1991) historic visit to Beijing on May 15, 1989. But the Sino-Soviet détente did not lead to lasting stability on China's Central Asian frontier. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, China was faced with a new set of challenges as Soviet rule in Central Asia gave way to economically weak and politically unrepresentative regimes that both failed to maintain the standard of living that had been achieved during Soviet rule, and failed to address the political aspirations of their citizens. The immediate result was continued rule by the Soviet-era oligarchy, but without the minimum standard of living that had been achieved under the final years of the Soviet Union.

The ongoing conflict in Afghanistan proved to be another source of instability. Though Soviet troops had withdrawn in 1989, conflict in the country continued to simmer. After independence, the economically impoverished and politically unrepresentative Central Asian republics became susceptible to the robust Afghan war economy; Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, both of which shared borders with Afghanistan, became increasingly influenced by the political and economic undercurrents from the war-torn country (recall that this process had begun during the 1980s when there was some support for the Mujahidin in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan). Though the threat was greatest in the two aforementioned republics, the entire region, including Xinjiang, was susceptible to challenges by non-state movements. As this chapter will illustrate, the resulting anti-state movements drew on Islam for legitimacy, the production and smuggling of narcotics for finance, and the regional arms bazaars for weapons; combined, these represented an amorphous, transnational threat that took root in parts of the post-Soviet Central Asian republics. While these new threats did not have the potential to threaten China the way a conventional or nuclear confrontation could have, at

the regional level, within Xinjiang, the new threats had the potential to be equally, if not more destabilizing than a conventional military conflict.

These new threats were similar in nature to the challenges posed to Qing authority in Xinjiang in the nineteenth century; as half a century of Khokandi incursion in nineteenth century Xinjiang had demonstrated, incursive elements from smaller states could challenge Beijing's power over the distant frontier region. Although Xinjiang underwent rapid modernization after 1949, influences from across Xinjiang's extensive and porous Central Asian borders could not be eliminated. This was because Xinjiang shared stronger demographic similarities with Soviet/post-Soviet Central Asia than it did with the rest of China, thus making Xinjiang particularly susceptible to the political undercurrents in Central Asia. After 1991, China shared a 4,000-kilometer long border with the new republics, much of it consisting of desert, steppe, and lofty mountain ranges that were impossible to seal off. Though China could enhance its border security, it was only through cooperation with the neighbor republics that the threat of instability could be minimized.

This chapter explores relations between China and the newly independent republics between 1992 and 1996. I consider this to be the first stage of Sino-Central Asian relations during which China established bilateral relations that primarily addressed two issues. The first issue was security, of which there were two dimensions. The principal security concern was with the economic challenges faced by the new republics; should the republics have continued in a downward economic spiral, it is likely that this would have led to greater political instability that could have adversely influenced Xinjiang. Thus, much of China's early diplomacy focused on establishing close economic ties with the republics in the hope that this would contribute to political stability. The other dimension of the security challenge was the growing presence of Islam in Central Asia's anti-state movements. China grew concerned at the possibility of similar developments taking root in Xinjiang, where Uighurs, either supported by émigré Uighur organizations in Central Asia, transnational Islamist organizations elsewhere in the region, or simply inspired by developments in Central Asia and Afghanistan, could challenge Beijing's authority in the autonomous region. As we discussed in Chapter One, there were historic precedents to these possibilities during the Republican era that

Chinese scholars were aware of. Nonetheless, it is important to stress that during the first phase of Sino-Central Asian diplomacy, the situation in Xinjiang remained largely peaceful (though this would not be the case after 1996). These two security issues marked China's primary short-term goal in Central Asia.

China's other objective was long-term and ongoing: China sought to use the emergence of Central Asia to assist in the economic uplift of Xinjiang. Situated in the heart of Eurasia (*Ouyadalu zhongxin*),¹ Xinjiang was ideally positioned to serve as a market for manufactured goods in demand in Central Asia. Since independence, there has been an influx of traders from Central Asia that has contributed to the economic development of the autonomous region.

This chapter comprises of seven parts. In the first part, I survey the notable developments that led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the independent republics. I argue that while the Russian leadership sought to reduce its economic obligation to the Central Asian periphery, Russia remained the dominant power within the region. I suggest that given continued Russian control over the region, the new states were independent according to international law, but in reality, remained subservient to the former political center. A fundamental problem with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was that it made no provisions for the asymmetry in productivity and demography amongst the member-states. In addition, military provisions negotiated by CIS member-states opened the possibility of interference in the internal affairs of the other republics; this would allow Russia to play a partisan role in Central Asia. Continued Russian influence ought not only to be seen as an attempt by Russia to impose itself on the region; there was also a conscious attempt on the part of the new Central Asian leadership, which had been a creation of Soviet rule in the region, to continue to align itself closely with Moscow. That Russia would continue to exert strong political influence in Central Asia was not lost on Chinese analysts. Though China shared a 4,000-kilometer long border with three Central Asian republics, China never expressed a desire to replace Russian influence in the region. On the contrary, China treaded carefully in the region, seeing Central Asia as an arena where the

¹ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 176.

two former adversaries could simultaneously benefit from engagement with the independent republics.

In part two, I survey the Sino-Russian rapprochement since 1982, and examine how bilateral relations grew closer in the years leading to the breakup of the Soviet Union, and following the emergence of the Russian Federation (and other CIS member-states). Ideological differences between China and the Russian Federation did not impede the development of close bilateral relations. This section explores the development of bilateral relations as a united front that was guided by two strategic objectives: mutually beneficial economic cooperation, and concern at the rise of unchecked US power. Given that China and Russia took a similar position on most international issues after 1991, it was in China's best interest that Russia retained a high degree of influence over Central Asia. It would have been to China's grave disadvantage had the Central Asian republics either been drawn into a pan-Turkic or pan-Islamic bloc, or drawn into the US orbit. As long as Russia retained a high degree of influence, the possibility of the Central Asian republics drifting into a pan-Turkic or pan-Islamic bloc was low. Though I have no concrete evidence, I am certain that with regards to the Central Asian leadership, China was satisfied with their continued alignment with Russia.

In part three, I examine the development of bilateral relations between China and Central Asia. China was quick to establish bilateral relations with the Central Asian republics. Relations between China and its new neighbors went through two stages between 1992 and 1996. During the initial stage, between January 1992 and April 1994, leaders from all five republics visited China: commercial agreements were signed, and the initial steps towards boundary demarcation were taken. In April 1994, Premier Li Peng (1987-1997) visited Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. This marked the second stage in Sino-Central Asian relations considered in this chapter. Bilateral economic cooperation was now further strengthened; in addition, there is some evidence to suggest that Premier Li asked the Central Asian governments to crack down on Uighur organizations within Central Asia. During this time, China also emerged as Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan's largest trading partner outside the CIS.

Thus, shortly after the independence of the republics, China emerged as an important economic and strategic neighbor, which was particularly notable given the

weakened economies in Central Asia, and that of Russia. Economic instability portended poorly for political stability. Elsewhere in the greater Central Asian region, further potential for heightened instability was brewing. As we discussed in Chapter One, the conflict in Afghanistan had created a sophisticated war economy that was based on and adapted to regional modalities. The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan did not lead to stability in the country. On the contrary, as I argue in part four, the rise of the Taliban invigorated the war economy. This was particularly notable in the continuing narcotics production in the region. In this section, I explore this process, and discuss a central assumption of this study, namely that China's challenges in the greater Central Asian region stem from threats posed by transnational networks/organizations to the nation-state as the sole vestige of power. Though there were modalities of the war economy that were particular to the contemporary era, I suggest that there were also historical preconditions that allowed for the Central Asian republics to experience the level of instability that they did.

But focusing exclusively on Afghanistan as the sole source of instability is an over-simplification. It is important to ask whether there were developments in Central Asia that predate the collapse of the Soviet Union that could help explain why opposition to the state came to rely heavily on Islamist discourses. In part five, I suggest that we need to consider changes that took place within the Soviet Union to understand how instability in the region acquired Islamist undertones. I survey Soviet policy towards Islam in Central Asia since the Second World War, suggesting that while the Soviet Union did try to curtail the role of Islam in public life, the Soviet state also harnessed Islam through the creation of an official clergy that served as an instrument of the state. When restrictions on religious congregation and public practice were lifted in 1988, the official clergy found itself in confrontation with the unofficial mullahs whose support base had grown considerably because of the funding that now freely flowed in from across the Muslim world. Thus, not only was there a sudden interest in Islam in the region – the construction of mosques and madrasas skyrocketed – but the revived interest in Islam was championed by independent mullahs, with the official clergy seen as being in the service of the state.

Part six explores how the above factors, that is, the continuation of Afghanistan's war economy coupled with dramatic changes in the Central Asian public sphere, led to the civil war in Tajikistan (1992-1997), and the insurgency in Uzbekistan (c. 1998-). Though the Uzbek insurgency would not gather force until 1998, it is discussed along with the Tajik civil war because of the notable parallels with that conflict. I discuss the Islamist dimension, arguing that more than promoting the creation of a Caliphate or the implementation of Shari'a, the Islamist discourses gave voice to people who saw themselves as marginalized. In doing so, anti-state movements benefited from Afghanistan's war economy without which these challenges to state power could not have been undertaken.

How did China's diplomacy measure up to these challenges? This is the question I address in section seven. It is my understanding that until 1996, during what I consider the first stage of China's relations with the republics, China's primary concern was enhancing economic cooperation. This was seen to contribute to security in the region and, simultaneously, become a stimulus for development in Xinjiang. Though there was some discussion on the Tajik civil war by Chinese scholars, the conflict was seen in a simplified manner as being rooted in the region's ethnic and religious vortex. The actual situation, as I have argued, was considerably more complex.

From the above it is clear that the regional situation beyond China's Central Asian borders was complex, rapidly changing, and involved a myriad of different phenomena and actors. This chapter seeks to understand how these influenced the region, and how China would respond to the new challenges. We begin with a discussion on the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of independent Central Asia.

I. The Soviet Legacy in Independent Central Asia

On December 8, 1991, Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich (1991-1994) from Belarus, First Vice-Deputy Chairman of Russia Gennadiy Burbulis (1991-1992), and Ukrainian Deputy-Prime Minister Vitold Fokin (1991-1992), signed an agreement in Minsk, Belarus, that announced the formation of the *Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimyykh Gosudarstv* (Commonwealth of Independent States or CIS). The declaration began with a statement on the dissolution of the USSR: "[T]he Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as a subject

of international law and a geopolitical reality, hereby terminates its existence.”² In its stead, Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine identified “international peace and security,” implementation of “effective measures to reduce arms and military expenditures,” “unified control over nuclear weapons,” “coordination of foreign policy activity,” “development of a common economic space, common European and Eurasian markets,” and “combating organized crime,” as areas of international cooperation through the CIS framework. The CIS was not a successor state to the Soviet Union, but a broad forum for multilateral cooperation. According to the Minsk Declaration, the CIS “[was] open for the member states of the former Union of Socialist Republics, as well as other states sharing the objectives and principles of this Agreement.”³

The sudden dissolution of the Soviet Union caught the Central Asian leadership off guard.⁴ In response to the Minsk Declaration, the leaders of the five Central Asian republics, President Nursultan Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan (1990-), President Askar Akaev of Kyrgyzstan (1991-2005), President Rakhmon Nabiev of Tajikistan (1991-1992), President Saparmurad Niyazov of Turkmenistan (1991-), and President Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan (1990-), convened a meeting in Ashkhabad, Turkmenistan, on December 12, to come up with a joint response to recent events. That the larger Slavic republics had dissolved the Soviet Union brought an ethnic dimension to the quagmire the Central Asian republics now found themselves in.

Ahmed Rashid was witness to the transition in Central Asia. In *The Resurgence of Central Asia*, he described the mood in Ashkhabad as one where the Slavs were seen to have made “their own decisions and [were] prepared to dump Central Asia in the process. That day ... I witnessed people’s palpable fury at the Slavs and, in particular, the anti-Russian feeling. There was talk of racial discrimination, of ethnic overlordship, and anger.”⁵ On the following day, December 13, the five Central Asian leaders announced that they would be joining the CIS. On December 21, leaders of the successor states to the Soviet Union met in Almaty, Kazakhstan, to sign a protocol to the Minsk Agreement, by which the republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova,

² CIS, “Agreement on the Establishment.”

³ Ibid.

⁴ Gleason, *The Central Asian States*, 76.

⁵ Rashid, *The Resurgence*, 2.

Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan also joined the CIS.⁶ For now, the Central Asian leadership could breathe easy knowing that they still maintained close ties with the Slavic republics.

The political elite in Soviet Central Asia had followed the events of the previous six months with rising concern. The rapidly changing political situation within Russia did not bode well for the long-term survival of the Soviet Union. After coming to power, one of the first acts of Russian President Boris Yeltsin (1991-1999) had been the declaration of Russian sovereignty, suggesting that a lobby within Moscow was keen to limit, if not altogether sever, ties with the peripheral republics of the Soviet Union.⁷ This was in keeping with the process of decentralization that had begun in the late 1980s, through which Moscow sought to decrease its control over the peripheral republics. In the years preceding the breakup of the Soviet Union, there was decreasing support for a vast Soviet state that put a financial strain on Moscow through annual subsidies.⁸

But not everyone in the Soviet Union agreed with the trend towards decentralization; granting more autonomy to the republics provoked a reaction from the so called “hard-line” communists within Russia who staged a coup on August 20, 1991, in an attempt to revert to centralized Party rule. The reactions of the Central Asian leaders to this event were noteworthy; only the Kyrgyz leader, President Akaev, opposed the coup outright. President Nazarbaev of Kazakhstan also opposed the coup, but only after thirty-six hours when it had become apparent that the coup had failed.⁹ In contrast, the leaders of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, were all in support of the coup.¹⁰ The noteworthy point is that with the exception of the Kyrgyz leader, the instinctive reaction of the heads of the Central Asian republics had been to support the continuation of Soviet control over the region. In other words, there was no desire for independence from the Soviet Union on the part of the leaders.

⁶ CIS, “Protocol to the Agreement.”

⁷ Jackson, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 34-37.

⁸ Belokrenitsky, “Russia and Greater Central Asia,” 1093-1094; and Rywkin, *Moscow’s Muslim Challenge*, 153. Alexander Solzhenitsyn (b. 1918) was one who called for Russia to disentangle itself from Central Asia, arguing that, “We don’t have the strength for the peripheries either economically or morally. We don’t have the strength for sustaining an empire ... Let this burden fall from our shoulders, it is crushing us, sapping our energies and hastening our demise.” Rashid, *The Resurgence*, 39.

⁹ Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 16-17.

¹⁰ Rashid, *The Resurgence*, 39-40; and Rupert, “Dateline Tashkent,” 183.

Self-determination is usually taken for granted as being the primordial impulse of people living under foreign rule. Consequently, deviation from this norm by four out of five leaders raises an important question: why did the leaders of the Central Asian republics wish to remain part of a Slavic-dominated state? The answer lies partly in the fact that after more than a century of Russian rule, the republics were structurally so thoroughly integrated into the Soviet Union that breaking free of the Soviet Union was not possible without a complete restructuring of the republics, which arguably, the leaders of the republics were loath to undertake.¹¹ As we shall see, severing ties with the Soviet Union indeed led to an immediate economic downturn in all the republics.

In addition, some of the reluctance on the part of the Central Asian leadership had to do with the fact that these leaders were a product of Soviet rule in Central Asia. It is noteworthy that the only person who opposed the coup outright was President Akaev of Kyrgyzstan. Though he had been prominent in the Communist Party of Kyrgyzstan, since 1989, he had been head of the Academy of Sciences in the republic, and it is possible that his academic background tempered his support for continued Soviet rule. Immediately following the coup, President Akaev declared full independence for Kyrgyzstan. Where Kyrgyzstan had been the first Central Asian republic to declare its independence, Kazakhstan was the last, declaring independence only on December 16. This was not surprising given the close links between Kazakhstan and Russia: of all the Central Asian leaders, President Nazarbaev was the closest to the Moscow leadership, supposedly enjoying a particularly close relationship with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.¹² Though the remaining three leaders could not make similar claims, the heads of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan had achieved their lofty positions of power within the Soviet republics because of their Party backgrounds. President Karimov of Uzbekistan, today the leader of the most populous Central Asian republic, was handpicked out of obscurity by Moscow and made the First Secretary in 1989.¹³ Likewise, President Niyazov of Turkmenistan, and President Nabiev of Tajikistan were Communist Party elite in their respective republics. These political genealogies demonstrate that the leaders of the independent Central Asian republics were not simply

¹¹ Allworth, *Central Asia*; Malashenko, "Tsentral'naya Aziya i Rossiya"; and Roy, *The New Central Asia*.

¹² Rashid, *The Resurgence*, 118.

¹³ Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 112-115.

individuals with connections to the Soviet regime. Rather, they were a product of Soviet rule in Central Asia.

Mindful of the political trend in the Soviet Union where President Gorbachev had dismantled the CPSU on August 24, 1991, the leaders of the Central Asian republics followed suit by dismantling the regional communist parties. New secular political parties were created instead. In Kazakhstan, the Communist Party was dissolved on September 7, and renamed the Socialist Party. Elections were held on December 1, where President Nazarbaev received 99.8 percent of the votes cast.¹⁴ In Uzbekistan, President Karimov dissolved the Communist Party of Uzbekistan on September 14, and created the National Democratic Party in its stead. In elections held on December 29, President Karimov received 85.9 percent of the votes cast.¹⁵ In Kyrgyzstan, the local communist party was similarly outlawed.¹⁶ (Unlike the other republics, Tajikistan suffered from a breakdown in the political process, leading to a vicious civil war that is discussed later in this chapter.) But the dismantling of the regional parties did not herald a shift towards increased public participation in the political process. Rather, the political elite remained unchanged, and there was every attempt to marginalize, and in many cases, altogether ban opposition political parties.¹⁷ This signified an impulse on the part of the elite to maintain the status quo. (As we shall see later in this chapter, this would have a profound impact on Central Asian society. With secular opposition parties marginalized, the Islamists would champion opposition, particularly in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.)

If initially the Central Asian leaders did not want to become independent of Moscow, CIS mechanisms ensured that the peripheral Central Asian states would stay under the influence of the larger Slavic republics. This became obvious soon after independence. Consider the CIS summit that was held on February 14 and 15, 1992, during which the heads of member-states sought to establish guidelines for military cooperation. Through stressing “non-interference in each other’s affairs,” and, “respect

¹⁴ Rashid, *The Resurgence*, 119.

¹⁵ Ibid., 94.

¹⁶ Ibid., 147.

¹⁷ Ibid., 79-80.

for the territorial integrity and inviolability of state borders,” CIS member-states outlined policies ensuring that the sovereignty of member-states was not violated.¹⁸

In theory, these principles were egalitarian, though in practice, Russian domination of the Central Asian periphery continued through the CIS. The same summit also led to the creation of a “Strategic Force,” the purpose of which was vaguely defined as “[ensuring] the security of all states which are party to the agreement.” In not being precise about what constituted a threat to the security of the states, and how the “Strategic Force” would address these threats, this mechanism left open the possibility of outside interference in an internal conflict. Equally important, member states gave consent to the “permanent or temporary deployment” of Russian troops within the sovereign republics.¹⁹ Similar principles were reiterated in the CIS Charter that was signed in Minsk, Belarus, on January 22, 1993, which allowed CIS member-states to engage in military cooperation to protect the borders of the CIS.²⁰ As the present chapter will demonstrate, military cooperation within the CIS became the pretext that allowed for Russian and Uzbek interference in Tajikistan’s civil war, during which both countries played a partisan role by supporting the pro-Moscow governing faction.²¹ In addition, the role of Russian security forces on the Central Asian borders often went beyond securing the foreign frontiers of the CIS. There is some evidence to suggest that in certain cases, Russian border security forces along the Afghan-Tajik border, (in cahoots with the Russian mafia), were involved in the export of narcotics from Afghanistan.²²

Besides Tajikistan, Russian troops remained strategically deployed elsewhere in Central Asia. The Russian military continued to guard the non-CIS borders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan. More than a year after independence, Russian military deployment in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan had remained unchanged, with four divisions deployed in each republic.²³ With the exception of Kyrgyzstan, which initially planned a modest military, Russia helped the other republics set up their

¹⁸ CIS, “Agreement Signed ... on the Observation.”

¹⁹ Additionally, the republic where the Strategic Forces were deployed were required to provide transportation facilities, and “land, air, and sea space for their movements.” In other words, the mobility of the strategic forces would not be restricted. CIS, “Agreement Signed... Strategic forces.”

²⁰ CIS, “Charter.”

²¹ Belokrenitsky, “Russia and Greater,” 1097; and Magnus and Naby, “Afghanistan and Central Asia,” 614.

²² US Department of State, “International Narcotics Control.”

²³ Belokrenitsky, “Russia and Greater,” 1097; and Hyman, “Moving out,” 302.

independent militaries.²⁴ Having received the large part of their military hardware from the former Soviet army, it is debatable as to how independent of Russia the Central Asian armed forces actually were.

Though the CIS Charter was egalitarian in principle, a fundamental problem was that the Charter called for cooperation between states that differed widely in economic development, demographics, and military ability. Herein lies a fundamental problem: there was nothing in the Charter that made provisions for the vastly unequal modes of production, and, consequently, asymmetric relations of power between CIS member-states. In 1990, the five Central Asian republics accounted for 16.8% of the population of the latter-day CIS member-states, with production in the five republics amounting to 8.7% of the total production of CIS member-states in 1991.²⁵ Without provisions for dealing with such asymmetry, there was a danger that the CIS could become a mechanism that continued to promote the interests of the larger Slavic republics over those of the former periphery. In practice, there was little opportunity for the Central Asian republics to be equal partners within the multilateral framework. Of course, this was not helped by the fact that in the initial period following independence, the Central Asian leadership was keen to retain ties with Moscow.

Was there an alternative to accepting Russian dominance under the CIS umbrella? In their study on the CIS, Zheng Yu and Li Jianmin have suggested that, given that the newly independent states lacked political and economic power (*quanli*), Central Asian leaders had little choice but to stay within Russia's orbit. Zheng and Li also point to the fact that the Central Asian republics had little experience dealing directly with foreign multilateral organizations. In addition, there were no independent military structures, and with the entire region oozing (*fanqi*) with ethnic extremism (*jiduan minzu zhuyi*), which was on the rise (*shangqi*), it was in the best interest of the Central Asian republics to stay closely aligned with the CIS.²⁶

Though I do not agree with Zheng and Li's assessment of ethnic instability at the time of independence, the authors are correct that the Central Asian republics lacked the mechanisms that would allow them to make an instantaneous transition to structural

²⁴ Belokrenitsky, "Russia and Greater," 1096-1097.

²⁵ Zheng and Li, *Dulianti shi nian*, vol. 1, 205.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 203-204.

independence. But if the Central Asian countries had joined the CIS with the expectation that they would be shielded from fiscal and political crises, they were gravely mistaken. While Russia was keen to retain a strategic link with the former periphery, it was not willing to take on the fiscal responsibility of assisting the republics.

Following independence, the Central Asian republics found themselves in deep fiscal crises, leading many foreign analysts to wonder if the new republics had staying power. Kazakhstan, the largest and most resource-rich Central Asian republic, suffered the sharpest economic decline. Between 1990 and 1996, the Kazakhstan's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) decreased by 45.9 percent, total industrial output by 48.1 percent, agricultural output by 56.1 percent, cargo volume by 22.3 percent, and capital investment by 13 percent. In particular, production in the following sectors declined sharply between 1990 and 1995: chemical and petrochemical industry, by 71 percent; light industry, by 84 percent; timber and wood-working industry, by 76 percent; machine-building and metalworking, by 64 percent; construction materials, by 82 percent and electric power, by 30 percent.²⁷ In 1993, inflation in Kazakhstan had reached 3,000 percent.²⁸

A similar scenario unfolded in Kyrgyzstan, where 60 percent of state-owned enterprises stopped production by 1993, and the price of consumer goods grew by 2,027 times that of 1990 levels.²⁹ By 1996, the GDP had declined to 53.1 percent of 1990 levels, industrial output to 38.8 percent, agricultural output to 64.5 percent, cargo volume to 5.1 percent, and capital investment to 43.7 percent of the pre-1991 levels.³⁰ Similar economic decline took place in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. How do we explain this?

The decline in the region's productivity stemmed from the straining of economic ties with the Soviet state. Prior to 1991, Central Asian economies had been structured to provide raw material and manufacturing facilities for a centralized Soviet state, and consequently lacked diversification. Being monopolistic, single market economies, the

²⁷ Kasinov, "Post-Soviet Modernization" 33-35.

²⁸ Sun, "Central Asia's Transition," 153.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Kasinov, "Post-Soviet Modernization" 33.

local economies had not been structured to operate independent of Moscow. Production was focused on heavy industry or agriculture, with little or no market infrastructure.

Prior to 1991, between forty and seventy percent of manufactured goods were allocated to the region by Moscow. Manufactured goods were procured from Russia and the other Soviet republics. This created economic dependence on Moscow. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, most of these ties were severed. In addition, 1991 was the last year when there had been public funding from Moscow that had traditionally accounted for between twenty and forty-five percent of the public funding in Central Asia.³¹ With the abolishment of subsidies from the center, economic decline in the republics hastened. Though Moscow had cut subsidies to the Central Asian republics based on the understanding that all former Soviet republics were now independent states, structural economic interdependence could not be rectified overnight. Consequently, trade figures from Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan from the mid-1990s continued to exhibit an overbearing reliance on trade with the CIS (admittedly, these were the hardest hit republics; figures from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan do not show similar reliance on the CIS). Five years after independence, in 1996, the CIS still accounted for fifty-four percent of Kazakhstan's exports and seventy percent of Kazakhstan's imports. Similarly, seventy-eight percent of Kyrgyzstan's total exports, and fifty-eight percent of the total imports, came from the CIS.³²

The continued reliance on the CIS adversely affected the republics, and there was some awareness on the part of the Central Asian leadership that they were trapped in an exploitative relationship with Russia. In a speech made on January 15, 1993, President Akaev of Kyrgyzstan noted that constructive economic cooperation within the CIS was impossible, since Russia was trying to uphold its own interests in the former Soviet republics. But he also noted that there was no way that links with Russia could be severed.³³ In a similar vein, on January 26, 1994, President Karimov of Uzbekistan grimly described the role of Russia as that of a dictator. Yet, President Karimov also acknowledged that the future of Uzbekistan was "inconceivable" without Russia.³⁴

³¹ Rashid, *The Resurgence*, 65.

³² Zheng and Li, *Dulianti shi nian*, vol. 1, 323.

³³ Akaev, "President of Kyrgyzstan."

³⁴ Karimov, "Speech on Uzbekistan."

But it would be a mistake to suggest that the center-periphery relationship between Russia and Central Asia has remained unchanged since 1992. According to Zheng Yu and Li Jianmin, the years between 1991 and 1993 marked the height of security, economic, and political cooperation between the Central Asian republics and the CIS.³⁵ While the 1991 to 1993 demarcation is somewhat arbitrary, one could argue that once past the initial transition, Central Asia's foreign relations began developing. China started playing an increasingly prominent role in Central Asia, particularly after 1994. But this is not to suggest that China's role in Central Asia eclipsed that of Russia. As we will discuss in the following section, Sino-Central Asian relations developed within a broader framework of improving Chinese relations with first the Soviet Union, and, subsequently, the Russian Federation.

II. Sino-Russian Diplomacy as a Precursor to Sino-Central Asian Relations

Besides the emergence of five sovereign states on and just beyond China's northwestern borders, political changes within the Soviet Union in 1991 were noteworthy because they had both global and regional consequences. In this section, I survey Sino-Russian relations in the final years of the Cold War for two reasons: first, because Sino-Russian rapprochement arguably created the regional context within which China would establish relations with the Central Asian republics, and second, because the emergence of unilateralist US power would create a global context where China sought close cooperation with Russia, which included cooperation in Central Asia. While it would be an oversimplification to see the dominant trend in global politics since 1945 as being the standoff between the United States and the Soviet Union, the breakup of the Soviet Union marked the end of an era where, for the most part, the power of one superpower had been juxtaposed by the other.

Central Asia had been absorbed into the Bolshevik state in 1917, and after the suppression of the Basmachi revolt that lingered in the Pamirs until the early 1930s, the Soviet Union's control over its Central Asian republics was absolute. (In addition, recall that during the late Qing and Republican era, Russia had exerted significant economic, cultural, and political influence over Chinese Central Asia as well.) We shall explore the

³⁵ Zheng and Li, *Dulianti shi nian*, vol. 1, 205-206.

weakening of Soviet control over Central Asia later in this chapter; suffice it to note at this stage, the lessening of Moscow's control over Central Asia was a consequence of Soviet policy, and not because power was wrested by the people of Central Asia. As we discussed, the periphery did not sever ties with the center, and Moscow retained significant influence in the region in the immediate post-independence years.

Though the early post-independence years marked the height of Russian influence, Russia continued to exert great economic, cultural, and political leverage in the region through the 1990s. Chinese scholars had a pragmatic view of Russian influence in the region that was based on an understanding that Russia would continue to exert a disproportionate influence given its historic role in Central Asia.³⁶ As we noted, Zheng Yu and Li Jianmin shared a similar view. Given Russia's influence in Central Asia, the question of interest to us is this: can China's relations with the Soviet Union in the years leading up to 1991 tell us anything about the development of China's policy towards independent Central Asia? I believe they can, and here suggest that Sino-Soviet relations in the late 1980s, and subsequent Sino-Russian bilateral relations provided the strategic context in which Sino-Central Asian relations were fostered. To illustrate what this strategic context was, we begin with an overview of Sino-Russian relations since the 1980s.

As we discussed in Chapter One, during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, China had sought to undermine Soviet presence in Afghanistan through the supply of weapons to the Mujahidin through the CIA-ISI pipeline. According to my understanding, there were three reasons for China's support for the war against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. First, as we have discussed, the invasion of Afghanistan brought Soviet troops to Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor, thus prompting new security concerns on China's western borders. Second, China was displeased with the Soviet Union's close strategic alliance with Mongolia and Vietnam,³⁷ both of which were located on China's periphery; the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was seen as another step towards the

³⁶ Xing, "China and Central Asia," 166.

³⁷ Paine, *Imperial Rivals*, esp. 269-342; and Rossabi, *Modern Mongolia*, 30-35. Recall that Mongolia had been a Soviet satellite for most of the twentieth century. Also, in February 1979, China went to war with Vietnam, the reasons for which included the expulsion of ethnic Chinese from the country, Vietnam's "Treaty of Peace and Friendship" with the USSR, border skirmishes between China and Vietnam, and the December 25, 1979, Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. For a succinct overview, see Roy, *China's Foreign Relations*, 31-32.

encirclement of China.³⁸ Third, given the large quantity of arms and ammunition being procured from China, especially in the initial years,³⁹ it is impossible that commercial interests were not a consideration.

But despite the ongoing state of conflict, the early 1980s saw the beginning of reconciliation. In a speech made in Tashkent on March 24, 1982, President Leonid Brezhnev (1964-1982) spoke of improving relations with China, and throughout the year, the Soviets continued to make conciliatory overtures towards the PRC. Sino-Soviet rapprochement was largely necessitated by a shared caution after President Ronald Reagan (1981-1989) came to power in the United States.⁴⁰ However, between 1982 and 1986, rapprochement between China and the Soviet Union was gradual. Confidence-building measures were taken at the regional level, including in Xinjiang. Cross-border trade between Xinjiang and the Soviet Union was initiated, which in 1983, amounted to a modest \$118 million.⁴¹ Both sides favored a gradual normalization of relations; in China, initial cross-border trade was regulated both through the regional trade bureaus, and at the highest Party levels.⁴² Between 1983 and 1990, the Xinjiang regional government negotiated a number of agreements with the Soviet Central Asian Republics that facilitated cross-border trade.⁴³ The overall value of this trade remained small; according to one source, Xinjiang's total foreign trade in the 1980s was about \$500 million.⁴⁴ I believe it is useful to see border trade between China and the Soviet Central Asian republics between 1983 and 1989 as a confidence building measure, and not as having a particularly significant impact on the foreign trade of either country. Following President Gorbachev's rise to power, the normalization of relations became a high priority.⁴⁵

³⁸ Hilali, "China's Response," 330; and Segal, "China and Afghanistan," 1166.

³⁹ Yousaf and Adkin, *The Bear Trap*, 83.

⁴⁰ Rozman, "Moscow's China-Watchers," 216. There may be another reason: As one Russian scholar has suggested, following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Russia faced condemnation not just from the United States, but all through the Muslim world. It is possible that the initial steps towards rapprochement were taken for the purpose of reducing Moscow's international isolation in the early to mid-1980s. Vasil'ev, *Rossiia na blizhnem*, 179-180.

⁴¹ Christofferson, "Xinjiang," 142.

⁴² Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 39-40.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 40-44.

⁴⁴ Kou Zhengling, "Xinjiang: Opening Wider to the Outside World," *Beijing Review*, November 25-December 1, 1991.

⁴⁵ Vasil'ev, *Rossiia na blizhnem*, 286.

During the early 1980s, the Chinese government had remained steadfast in their three demands that had to be fulfilled for the normalization of relations: the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Mongolia, and the withdrawal of Vietnamese troops from Cambodia. Finally on July 2, 1986, during a speech at Vladivostok, President Gorbachev announced that the Soviet Union would be withdrawing six regiments from Afghanistan, and would also withdraw troops from Mongolia. High-level visits between officials from the two countries continued. Deng Xiaoping now stated that the only obstacle to peace remained the Vietnamese presence in Cambodia. In mid-1988, Vietnam announced it would be withdrawing troops from Cambodia, thus paving the way for the visit of President Gorbachev to Beijing on May 15, 1989.⁴⁶

If the initial post-1982 rapprochement was marked by a gradual and cautious approach, pragmatism on the part of the Chinese leaders was the hallmark of Sino-Soviet rapprochement after 1989. Consider that among the Chinese political elite, there was a growing concern with the nature of political reforms that President Gorbachev had initiated. President Gorbachev's decision to give priority to political reforms over economic reforms was opposite to the path that the Chinese leadership had been following after 1978. In all likelihood, political reforms in the Soviet Union, along with President Gorbachev's visit to Beijing, were stimuli for the demonstrations in Beijing that began following the death of former Communist Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang (1980-1987) on April 15, 1989, which made demands for extensive political and economic reform in the country.⁴⁷

The economic sanctions imposed by Western countries on China following the June 4, 1989, suppression of the Tiananmen demonstrations led to a twenty-two percent decrease in foreign investment within a year. China now needed to diversify its trading partners. Members of the Chinese Politburo Standing Committee, in particular Premier Li Peng and Yao Yilin, advocated stronger economic relations with socialist countries. As a result of improving bilateral relations, by the end of 1989, China's trade with the Soviet

⁴⁶ Wishnick, *Mending Fences*, 99-102.

⁴⁷ Dittmer, "China and Russia," 97-100.

Union had increased eighteen percent from the previous year, from \$3.26 billion to \$3.95 billion.⁴⁸

Bilateral relations continued to improve. Between April 23 and 26, 1990, Premier Li visited the Soviet Union. Premier Li's visit marked an important step, with the Soviet Union agreeing to sell advanced military technology to the Chinese, which included twenty-four SU-27 aircraft. In 1990, trade between China and the Soviet Union increased by an additional twenty-six percent from the previous year, and now amounted to \$5.3 billion. The Soviet Union had become China's fourth largest trading partner.⁴⁹

The Gulf War of 1991 brought the two countries closer. In the months leading up to the war, China lobbied for more time to allow sanctions against Iraq to take effect. But in exchange for the lifting of some economic sanctions imposed following the Tiananmen suppression, China had abstained from vetoing the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) 678 that authorized the use of force against Iraq. The swift victory of the United States-led coalition took military advisors in China by surprise, leading to a revision of China's military strategy. Earlier, many within the PLA had been predicting a Vietnam-style protracted war in the Gulf.⁵⁰

The Gulf War was also a demonstration of Western military technology, and more poignantly, a demonstration of the asymmetric global balance of power in which the United States had emerged as the sole superpower. China sought to counter the rise of the US by strengthening economic and military relations with the Soviet Union. Between May 15 and 19, 1991, then Communist Party General Secretary Jiang Zemin (1989-2002), visited the Soviet Union. In a symbolically important gesture, the Soviet Union ceded the Zhenbao Island to the PRC. More defense contracts were signed, which included the option to purchase an additional forty-eight SU-27 aircraft, as well as T-72 tanks, transport planes, and the possibility of joint production of MiG-31 aircraft in the future. In the summer of 1991, the CCP Central Committee issued a statement declaring that the Soviet Union still adhered to socialism, that Sino-Soviet cooperation was essential to counter US hegemony, and lastly, that the question of border disputes with the Soviet Union should be approached realistically. The last point was particularly

⁴⁸ Ibid., 98.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 101; and Nguyen, "Russia and China," 294-295.

⁵⁰ Calabrese, "China and the Persian Gulf," 360.

telling, as it indicated the lengths to which China was willing to go to strengthen ties with the Soviet Union.⁵¹

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation embraced free market capitalism under the leadership of President Yeltsin. But despite the ideological gulf that now separated China and the Russian Federation, close bilateral relations remained unchanged. In fact, relations improved steadily as the decade progressed, a process that we shall explore in Chapter Three. Given the significant ideological differences between the two countries, how can we explain the steady improvement in relations?

I find it useful to consider the close relations between China and Russia at the end of the Cold War as a united front. By definition, a united front is a strategic alliance between groups with different ideological positions that work together towards a common objective. This does not mean that a united front will not be hindered by contradictions. In his analysis of the First United Front between the CCP and the Nationalists (1922-1927), S. J. Noumoff reminds us that, "By definition the United Front is an unstable political form," and, "In the creation of a Front, the primary enemy must be identified and isolated as much as possible."⁵² Therefore, far from insinuating that there were no differences between China and Russia, the united front position assumes that those differences could be managed for the purpose of strategic cooperation towards a particular end. This much was officially acknowledged after President Jiang Zemin's (1993-2003) visit to Moscow between September 2 and 6, 1994. The joint statement following the summit noted: "different social systems and viewpoints do not obstruct the development of relations in various fields."⁵³

By stating that bilateral relations between China and Russia evolved as a united front, I am suggesting that the relationship was based upon a strategic objective of creating a counterweight to the United States as the sole superpower. As we shall see in the following chapter, as the 1990s progressed, and the rise of US power became a growing concern, Sino-Russian relations continued to grow closer. During this time, the two sides would identify unchecked US power as threatening to global stability. In

⁵¹ Dittmer, "China and Russia," 101-103.

⁵² Noumoff, "First United Front," 5.

⁵³ "Text of Chinese Russian ... September 3, 1994."

addition, this bilateral relationship also rested on a strong commercial foundation reflected in the growing trade, and sale of Russian military hardware to China. In 1993, bilateral trade reached \$7.6 billion, and while this figure would not be surpassed until the year 2000, bilateral trade during the intervening years remained steady between \$5.4 billion and \$6.8 billion.⁵⁴

It is my understanding that Sino-Russian diplomacy constituted one of the essential building blocks of Sino-Central Asian relations. With Central Asia now acting as a buffer between China and Russia in the northwest, Sino-Russian rivalry in Central Asia could have turned into rivalry over economic clout, political influence, or a scramble for resources in Central Asia. That this did not happen is probably not accidental; it is my belief that China treaded carefully in Central Asia, seeing it as an area of potential Sino-Russian cooperation, and not an arena where China should create a sphere of influence exclusive of Russia.⁵⁵ As Xing Guangcheng notes: *“the independence of Central Asia was an important signpost that the world was going beyond the Cold War. By the same token, it will exert great impact on the development on post-Cold War international political and economic systems.”*⁵⁶ An example of the development of an important “post-Cold War international political system” was the multilateral diplomatic initiative between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, which began in 1996. It is my understanding, that the growing Sino-Russian cooperation that preceded China’s development of close relations with Central Asia laid the foundation for confidence-building measures between China, Russia, and the Central Asian states. In particular, the September 1994 summit between President Jiang Zemin and President Boris Yeltsin stands out as a turning point in bilateral relations between the two former adversaries. Agreements reached at the summit included an understanding that the border demarcation process would be gradual and non-confrontational. Additionally, both sides agreed not to target each other with nuclear weapons.⁵⁷

In a changing global order, China saw close cooperation with the independent Central Asian states as being linked to the deepening of relations with Russia. Had China

⁵⁴ Zheng and Li, *Dulianti shi nian*, vol. 2, 764.

⁵⁵ Li, “Zhong E zhanlue,” esp. 3-8.

⁵⁶ Xing, “China and Central Asia: Towards a New Relationship,” 39. Emphasis in original.

⁵⁷ “Text of Chinese Russian ... September 3, 1994.”

sought to mold the Central Asian republics into a bloc-like alliance independent of Russia, relations with Russia would certainly have soured. While there was immense potential for cooperation with the Central Asian republics, for China, this cooperation needed to be preceded by Sino-Russian relations. As we discussed, Chinese scholars were pragmatic in their understanding that the independent republics would maintain close economic, political, and strategic ties with the Soviet Union after independence.⁵⁸ China could not expect to replace Russia's influence. Nor have I seen any indication in literature produced within the PRC that China sought to do so.

The April 26, 1996 summit, (discussed in Chapter Three), marked the beginning of multilateral diplomacy between China, Central Asia, and Russia. At the risk of some generalization, I believe it is an unstated maxim of Sino-Central Asian diplomacy that the bilateral and multilateral relations between China and its Central Asian neighbors followed the trend set by Sino-Russian relations. To test this assumption in a hypothetical scenario, I find it difficult to imagine how China could have had close relations with its Central Asian neighbors but strained relations with Russia.

I also believe that it was to China's advantage that the Central Asian republics, with the obvious exception of Tajikistan, remained wholly within the Soviet Union's political and strategic orbit in the early years. A situation where some or each of the independent republics had developed a foreign policy at odds with China's security concerns (such as pan-Turkic or pan-Islamic), could potentially have had a destabilizing effect on Xinjiang. Continued alignment with Russia meant that the Central Asian republics and China shared similar views on the major security issues, such as the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan, the destabilizing effect of narcotics, small arms, and transnational crime in the region, and also agreed entirely on internal security issues such as Islamist-led challenges to state power in Central Asia, and China's growing concerns with Uighur unrest. All the above would become central issues in multilateral diplomacy after 1996. Therefore, I feel confident suggesting that a continued projection of Russia's influence in Central Asia, with whom China had been developing closer relations since 1986, was in China's best interest, and that relations with Central Asia ought to be seen in the context of Sino-Russian relations.

⁵⁸ Sun, *Zhongya xin geju*, 180-186; and Zheng and Li, *Dulianti shi nian*, vol. 1, esp. 201-215.

III. Sino-Central Asian Diplomacy until 1996

China was quick to establish diplomatic relations with the Central Asian republics after the breakup of the Soviet Union, extending recognition to Uzbekistan on January 2, Kazakhstan on January 4, Tajikistan on January 5, Kyrgyzstan on January 6, and Turkmenistan on January 7, 1992.⁵⁹ China was amongst the first countries to recognize the new Central Asian states, a gesture of goodwill that was not lost on the Central Asian leadership.⁶⁰

In this section, I explore Sino-Central Asian relations until the signing of the first multilateral agreement between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan in 1996. Sino-Central Asian relations went through two stages between 1992 and 1996. The first stage lasted from 1992 to 1994, when bilateral diplomatic and commercial relations were established between China and its Central Asian neighbors. In April 1994, Premier Li Peng visited Central Asia, which led to heightened cooperation between the new neighbors; this marked the beginning of the second stage. This stage would last until April 26, 1996, when heads from China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Russia convened for a summit in Shanghai that laid the foundations for multilateral cooperation.

During the first phase of Sino-Central Asian relations, China placed particular emphasis on establishing close ties with Kazakhstan.⁶¹ The day after China extended diplomatic recognition to Kazakhstan, a delegation led by the Minister of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade, Li Lanqing (1990-1992), traveled to Almaty, Kazakhstan; the purpose of the visit to pave the way for close commercial relations.⁶² There were many reasons why the Chinese government was keen to immediately develop close relations with Kazakhstan. As we noted, China had a large Kazakh population. Also, of the Central Asian republics, not only did Kazakhstan share the longest border with China,⁶³ but it also had the second largest population of the five republics (figures from 1996 put Kazakhstan's population at 16.5 million, versus 23.1 million for

⁵⁹ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 53, 63; Zheng and Li, *Dulianti shi nian*, vol. 2, 725.

⁶⁰ "Foreign Minister Leaves for Central Asia, Russia," *Xinhua*, November 17, 1992. In FBIS-CHI-92-224.

⁶¹ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 63-64.

⁶² "'High-level' Delegation arrives in Kazakhstan," *Xinhua*, January 4, 1992. In FBIS-CHI-92-003.

⁶³ Gleason, "Policy Dimensions," 109.

Uzbekistan⁶⁴). If for no other reason than its population and location, Kazakhstan immediately became the most important of the Central Asian republics for China. But in addition, Kazakhstan's President Nazarbaev also had close relations with the Moscow political elite; recall also that the December 21, 1991, protocol to the establishment of the CIS had been signed in Almaty, suggesting that the republic had considerable clout amongst the former Soviet republics. Additionally, 37.8 percent of the republic's population was made up of ethnic Russians, most of whom made up the country's technical labor force.⁶⁵ Kazakhstan had also inherited more than a thousand Soviet nuclear weapons, the fate of which remained undecided,⁶⁶ and had also been important in the Soviet Union's space program. The republic was also rich in energy. Therefore, while the entire Central Asian region had been peripheral to Moscow, it appears that Kazakhstan was less so than the other republics. Kazakhstan's importance was reflected in the special emphasis that China placed on establishing close relations with the republic.

This is not to suggest that relations between China and the other republics got off to a slow start. Uzbek President Karimov's visit to China in March 1992 marked the highest-level visit from the CIS until that time. Fourteen documents on bilateral cooperation were signed during this visit. In May 1992, Kyrgyzstan's President Akaev visited China during which the two sides signed eight documents on bilateral cooperation. In November of the same year, Turkmenistan's President Niyazov also visited China.⁶⁷ During the same month, Chinese foreign Minister Qian Qichen (1988-1998) visited Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, along with Russia. It is noteworthy that three Central Asian republics were visited during what was the first visit to any CIS country by the Chinese Foreign Minister.

High-level visits from Central Asia continued through 1993: President Rahmanov of Tajikistan visited Beijing in March. Though China extended thirty million Renminbi in

⁶⁴ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 4.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 5.

⁶⁶ Mukimdshanova, "Vneshnyaya politika," 43.

⁶⁷ Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 373.

aid to Tajikistan, and another three million in humanitarian aid,⁶⁸ China's economic relations with Tajikistan were limited through the first phase of Sino-Central Asian relations.⁶⁹ The reason for this was the Tajik civil war, which made Chinese entrepreneurs reluctant to visit and invest in Tajikistan.

While Sino-Tajik bilateral relations remained limited during this stage, the October 1993 visit of President Nazarbaev strengthened Sino-Kazakh relations further. The joint declaration issued at the end of President Nazarbaev's visit highlighted areas of future cooperation between the two states in the economic and scientific sectors. In addition, eight agreements promoting regional cooperation were signed with the government of Xinjiang. China had become, in the words of President Nazarbaev, "Kazakhstan's number one partner in economic cooperation," with bilateral trade estimated at five hundred million dollars at this time.⁷⁰ During the meeting, the leadership also emphasized cooperation in the fight against organized crime, drug trafficking, and international terrorism.⁷¹

Border demarcations were also an important bilateral issue, although it is unclear whether this issue was actively pursued during President Nazarbaev's visit in 1993. Work on demarcating the Sino-Central Asian border had begun almost immediately after independence. After his October visit, Nazarbaev claimed that out of the 1,500 kilometer-long border with China, only two out of eleven sectors had yet to be resolved.⁷² A boundary accord was signed between the two countries on March 21, 1994, just ahead of Premier Li Peng's visit to Central Asia.⁷³ Another border accord was signed on April 26, 1994, during Premier Li's visit that demarcated 1,600 kilometers of the 1,700-kilometer border.⁷⁴ This resolved all but a small segment of the Sino-Kazakh border. These border demarcations were important, as they were precursors to other important issues of

⁶⁸ "Rakhmanov Arrives in Beijing; To Meet Leadership," *ITAR-TASS*, March 7, 1993. In FBIS-SOV-93-044; and "PRC to Provide Credit, Aid," *Moscow Radio Rossii Network*, March 8, 1993. In FBIS-SOV-93-044.

⁶⁹ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 87.

⁷⁰ Nazarbaev, "Nazarbaev Interview," 303-304.

⁷¹ "Statement of China-Kazakhstan."

⁷² Nazarbaev, "Nazarbaev Interview," 303-304.

⁷³ "PRC, Kazakhstan Sign Boundary Accord 21 March," *Xinhua*, March 21, 1994. In FBIS-CHI-94-

⁷⁴ Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 379; "Li Peng, Nazarbaev Sign Border Treaty in Almaty," *Xinhua*, April 26, 1994. In FBIS-CHI-94-080; and "Li Peng Comments on Investment," *Zhongguo xinwen she*, April 26, 1994. In FBIS-CHI-082.

bilateral cooperation, such as the sharing of water resources and opening of new ports of entry and exit.

Between April 18 and 28, 1994, Premier Li visited Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan (Tajikistan was not visited because of the continuing conflict in the republic). Premier Li's trip marked a shift towards heightened cooperation between China and the Central Asian republics. According to Li Jingjie, China identified six principles for Sino-Central Asian cooperation. These were: 1. A relationship based on mutually acceptable and mutually beneficial principles (*huli yuanze*) of economic cooperation; 2. Diversified cooperation; 3. The use and development of natural resources found in the border region; 4. The improvement of communication and transport infrastructure, and the construction of a new Silk Road (*sichou zhilu*); 5. Chinese extension of economic assistance as a gesture of its friendship (*youyi de biaooshi*); and, 6. The development of multilateral cooperation and mutual development.⁷⁵ These principles suggest that expanding economic cooperation, and deepening relations with the Central Asian republics was a priority in Chinese diplomatic initiative during this stage.

The emphasis that China placed on deepening relations with Central Asia was also reflected in the unusual entourage that accompanied Premier Li on his visit to Central Asia. A large number of Chinese businessmen made up the delegation. According to a *Xinhua* article, this was the first time that a delegation of businessmen had accompanied a high-level government leader abroad. The entrepreneurs were led by Zheng Hongye, President of the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade. The delegation included executives from China National Construction Engineering Corporation, China National Petroleum Corporation, China National Textiles Import and Export Corporation, and China Electronics Import and Export Corporation. The entrepreneurs sought to enhance cooperation in the fields of construction, textiles, electronics, telecommunications, metallurgy, petrochemicals, and mineral resources.⁷⁶ At the end of his Central Asian tour, Premier Li declared that the entrepreneurs' visit to the region had been a success, with Chinese entrepreneurs signing four agreements, two contracts, and upwards of twenty letters of intent on economic cooperation in fields of

⁷⁵ Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 375.

⁷⁶ "Businessmen to Accompany Li Peng on Central Asia Visit," *Xinhua*, April 13, 1994. In FBIS-CHI-94-073.

petroleum, natural gas, construction, metallurgy, textiles, electronics, and other industries.⁷⁷

Now that Central Asia's economic ties with the Soviet Union had been diminished, there was great potential for economic cooperation with China. As a commentator in *Pravda* noted: "[P]resent-day China is capable of giving these countries almost all they need, including both consumer goods and products of heavy machine building. In other words, much of what these countries now lack as a consequence of the rupture of the many links that existed within the USSR."⁷⁸ Of course, this did raise a concern that China might exert a disproportionate influence in Central Asia. The author acknowledges Premier Li's claim that an economically viable Central Asia was in the interest of both China and Russia, but given the disproportionate economic capacity of both countries, stops just short of suggesting that China might hedge Russia out of Central Asia. Consider the following:

In [a market economy] competition in some form or another is an inescapable feature. However, I do not think that the chances enjoyed by the two states [China and Russia] in this market are even. On the one hand you have Russia, which was until very recently powerful and influential but which is now rent by internal conflicts and is squandering its resources and destroying its economy, while on the other hand, you have a stable, dynamic and self-assured China.⁷⁹

Russia still exerted a strong influence in the region and the Chinese leadership was careful not to appear as though it was creating an exclusive sphere of influence. Premier Li was careful to stress that China was engaging with Central Asia on the basis of equality and non-interference in others' internal affairs. During his visit, Premier Li took care to strike a cordial tone, insisting that "In this region China does not have selfish

⁷⁷ "Li Peng Affirms Entrepreneurs Role in Central Asia Visit," *Xinhua*, April 27, 1994. In FBIS-CHI-94-084.

⁷⁸ "Chinese Influence in Central Asia Viewed," *Pravda*, April 20, 1994. In FBIS-SOV-94-077.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

interests and would never presume to use force to expand its sphere of influence,” adding that, “We are going to be your friends and good neighbors forever.”⁸⁰

But there was also a strategic dimension to Chinese cooperation with the Central Asian republics. During Premier Li’s visit, China put pressure on the Central Asian republics to crack down on Uighur organizations based out of Central Asia that were calling for the independence of Xinjiang.⁸¹ However, President Akaev later denied that China had put pressure on Kyrgyzstan to clamp down on Uighur groups in the country.⁸² China’s discomfort with the rise of Islamist organizations in Xinjiang and Central Asia was clear to some observers in Central Asia. Later in the year, a journalist in Kazakhstan argued that China deployed four hundred thousand troops on the Sino-Kazakhstan border because of the threat of “Islamic fundamentalism,” which was being transported from Afghanistan through Tajikistan into Central Asia where it had a “real chance of consolidating [its] position on new soil.” The author ominously suggests: “Taking into consideration the animation of the separatist sentiments among the XUAR Muslims it can be freely supposed that the PRC is attentively watching the situation and it will take the toughest measures to prevent an Islamic revolution in the Xinjiang Uighur region and territories adjoining China on the other side of the border.”⁸³ Goodwill between China and the Central Asian countries notwithstanding, China made it clear that it was wary of any form of instability in the region. But at the same time, we need to be careful not to overstress China’s caution with regard to security in Central Asia in 1994; Xinjiang had been relatively peaceful in the years following the independence of Central Asia. We shall explore the roots of instability in Central Asia in the subsequent section; nonetheless, at this stage, I do not believe that instability in Central Asia posed an immediate threat to China. This would change beginning in 1996, and as we shall witness in Chapter Three, the new wave of instability in Xinjiang was linked to support from émigré Uighur organizations in Central Asia, particularly those based in Kazakhstan.

⁸⁰ Ahmed Rashid, “Chinese Challenge: Li Peng visit Highlights Beijing’s Growing Role in Region,” *FEER*, May 12, 1994.

⁸¹ Ibid.; and, “More on [China, Kazakhstan] Communiqués,” *Xinhua*, April 28, 1994. In FBIS-CHI-94-082; “Li Peng Comments on Investment,” *Zhongguo xinwen she*, April 26, 1994. In FBIS-CHI-94-082; and Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 85.

⁸² Akaev, “Akayev on Relations.”

⁸³ “Islamic Fundamentalism, China Threaten Almaty,” *Panorama*, October 22, 1994. In FBIS-SOV-94-210.

Though security was less of a concern than it would become in the subsequent years, a sensitive bilateral issue was Chinese nuclear testing at Lop Nor in Xinjiang. The Kazakh government lodged its first protest with the Chinese government over nuclear testing in June 1992.⁸⁴ During Premier Li's visit to Central Asia, he was met by demonstrators protesting China's continued nuclear testing.⁸⁵ Similar demonstrations took place outside the Chinese embassy in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in 1995.⁸⁶ There was also concern in Kyrgyzstan, where there was a widespread belief that the Chinese carried out nuclear tests only when the wind from the Taklamakan desert blew in the direction of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. According to ecologists, Chinese nuclear tests increased background radiation by forty percent and were having an adverse affect on the glaciers and snow on the mountains that fed the Syr Darya river basin.⁸⁷ But despite this hurdle, relations between China and Kyrgyzstan continued to improve. In January 1995, China and Kyrgyzstan reduced troops within a hundred miles of the border, though it is unclear as to how many troops were actually moved out of the border regions.⁸⁸ Later in the year, in October 1995, Kyrgyzstan's Prime Minister Apas Dzhumaglov paid an official visit to Beijing where both sides agreed to resolve the border problem.⁸⁹

During the first phase of China's engagement with the Central Asian republics, China's total trade with the region made up a modest part of its total foreign trade. Between 1992 and 1995, Kazakhstan remained China's largest Central Asian trading partner. In 1992, total trade with Kazakhstan amounted to \$368 million (\$227 million exports; \$141 million imports). This figure was approximately ten times the amount of Sino-Kazakh trade in 1990.⁹⁰ By the following year, the trade had grown to \$434 million (\$171 million exports; \$263 million imports). Figures for 1994 totaled \$335 million (\$139 million exports; \$196 million exports), while figures for 1995 stood at \$391

⁸⁴ "Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan React to PRC Test," *Komsomolskaya*, June 2, 1992. In FBIS-SOV-92-109.

⁸⁵ Ahmed Rashid, "Chinese Challenge: Li Peng visit Highlights Beijing's Growing Role in Region," op. cit.

⁸⁶ "Protests Outside Chinese Embassy Over Nuclear Tests," *ITAR-TASS*, August 21, 1995. In FBIS-SOV-95-162.

⁸⁷ "Chinese Nuclear Tests Said Affecting Border Regions," *Moscow Russian Publics Television First Channel Network*, June 5, 1995. In FBIS-SOV-95-108.

⁸⁸ "Kyrgyzstan, China Reduce Troops in Border Zone," *ITAR-TASS*, January 27, 1995. In FBIS-SOV-95-018.

⁸⁹ "PRC's Li Peng Holds Talks With Prime Minister," *ITAR-TASS*, October 24, 1995. In FBIS-SOV-95-205.

⁹⁰ Liu, "Sino-Central Asian Trade," 181.

million (\$75 million exports; \$316 million imports). Trade with other Central Asian states was significantly less during this time, with trade with Tajikistan and Turkmenistan being almost negligible. Total Sino-Central Asian trade for the years 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1995 was at \$459 million, \$608 million, \$578 million, and \$782 million respectively.⁹¹ These figures illustrate that trade between China and Central Asia was modest compared to China's trade with other countries.⁹² As we have discussed, the Central Asian republics had been economically peripheral to Moscow before 1991. The local economies were designed to contribute to the national economy of the Soviet Union. By themselves, they were not economically comprehensive, and this led to limitations in what could be exported out of the region. Also, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the republics suffered from an economic collapse, resulting in inflation, a sharp drop in the purchasing power of the population, and the closure of factories. These factors help explain the overall low turnover of trade between China and Central Asia during this period. But it is important to keep in mind that for the Central Asian republics, in particular Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, China had emerged as the second largest trading partner after Russia, and the leadership in both countries desired to strengthen economic ties with China.⁹³

An additional problem was that there was little legal commercial infrastructure within the republics. This made it difficult for foreign entrepreneurs, including those from China to do business.⁹⁴ Yet another problem was that the quality of imports from China varied considerably, with some products being of particularly poor quality.⁹⁵ This was reportedly the cause of the drop in imports from China in 1994, and was an issue that Premier Li addressed during his visit.⁹⁶ Yet another problem was the limited transport infrastructure in western China and Central Asia. China sought to rectify this shortcoming through the development of the western regions (*xibu dakaiifa*), an initiative that was launched in 1999.

⁹¹ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 117.

⁹² U.S. Census Bureau, "Foreign Trade." For comparison, consider that in the same four-year period, China's total trade with the United States only was thirty-three billion dollars (1992), forty billion dollars (1993), forty-nine billion dollars (1994), and fifty-five billion dollars (1995).

⁹³ Akaev, "Akayev on Relations," 95; and, Nazarbaev, "Nazarbaev Interview," 304.

⁹⁴ International Research and Exchanges Board, "The Dynamics of Economic Development."

⁹⁵ Liu, "Sino-Central Asian Trade," 181.

⁹⁶ "Li Peng Comments on Investment," *Zhongguo xinwen she*, April 26, 1994. In FBIS-CHI-94-082.

However, it is also important to keep in mind that official trade figures can be misleading since trade figures only reflect official trade. The actual trade between China and Central Asia was much larger than the official figures indicate; although exact figures are impossible to come by, according to Liu Qingjiang, unofficial trade could have been as high as official trade.⁹⁷ Unofficial trade was based on purchases made in Xinjiang by foreign merchants. The Chinese government has encouraged this “shuttle trade” or “tourist trade.” In recent years, wholesale markets of manufactured goods have appeared in Kashgar, Turfan, and Urumchi, which offer “one-stop-shopping” for visitors from neighboring countries.⁹⁸

Wholesale markets in Xinjiang were preceded by border markets that had been established following the independence of Central Asia. The first border market opened in August 1992, in Korgas.⁹⁹ Subsequently, in 1993, China opened up border residents’ markets in the Ili region that allowed visa free entry into Xinjiang for Central Asian nationals for up to three days. In the first six months these markets are said to have sold goods of up to 120 million Renminbi. In addition, in 1993, Central Asian shuttle traders also began making purchases in Urumqi; in that year alone, four hundred thousand shuttle traders visited the city making purchases of over a billion Renminbi.¹⁰⁰ (In 1986, the Chinese and Pakistani governments had negotiated an agreement that allowed Pakistani citizens domiciled in the Northern Areas to visit Xinjiang without a visa for up to one month to make purchases. It appeared that China was following a similar policy with the Central Asian republics.) In the meantime, clearing forwarding agencies emerged in Xinjiang, who took responsibility for transporting the goods to their respective destinations in the neighboring countries. As is evident, the emergence of the Central Asian republics led to a sharp increase in Xinjiang’s foreign trade. Through the entire 1980s, Xinjiang’s foreign trade totaled a mere five hundred million dollars.¹⁰¹ While the coastal regions had been drawing foreign investment through the 1980s, Xinjiang had

⁹⁷ Liu, “Sino-Central Asian Trade,” 182.

⁹⁸ Weimer, “The Economy of Xinjiang,” 184.

⁹⁹ “Xinjiang as a Gateway to Central Asia Promoted,” *Xinhua*, August 27, 1992. In FBIS-CHI-92-172.

¹⁰⁰ Liu, “Sino-Central Asian Trade,” 182-183.

¹⁰¹ Kou Zhengling. “Xinjiang: Opening Wider to the Outside World,” op. cit.

remained relatively cut off from foreign trade. The breakup of the Soviet Union allowed Xinjiang to economically engage the new Central Asian republics.¹⁰²

The central government sought to promote this international trade. In 1992, the State Council allowed Urumqi the same preferential policies as the coastal areas to attract foreign investment. That year, Urumqi began to hold an annual international trade fair which led to the signing of contracts worth \$1.9 billion and \$2 billion in the first two years respectively.¹⁰³ This contributed to the development of transport and communication infrastructure within the autonomous region, which included opening new rail and road links, both with the interior of the country, and with the Central Asian republics. By 1993, Xinjiang had opened eleven international ports of entry.¹⁰⁴ As Li Donghui, the Vice-Chairman of the XUAR suggested: "A quick and effective way to promote local economic development and help minority nationalities overcome poverty is to encourage prosperous border trade."¹⁰⁵ This was part of China's plan to "Integrate with the East, Open to the West,"¹⁰⁶ and was part of the Chinese strategy for the development of the region. By the end of 1994, the policy was yielding some dividends, with Xinjiang having established economic relations with sixty countries.¹⁰⁷

With the Central Asian republics independent and free to determine their own economic trajectory, there was significant potential for bilateral cooperation with China. With a total population of over fifty million, the region provided a reasonably sized market that China could expand into. In addition to benefiting Chinese manufacturing, trade through Xinjiang would stimulate development in China's far west. Additionally, the Central Asian republics were rich in natural resources. The fact that the Central Asian states continued to align with Russia meant that they would not embark on a pan-Turkic

¹⁰² In 1992, a journalist attributed Xinjiang's development to Deng Xiaoping's Southern Tour, noting: "After studying the talks of Comrade Deng Xiaoping during his southern tour, all of Xinjiang, from top to bottom, reflected on their lessons and traced the reasons for the slow pace of opening up both internally and externally. Insufficient emancipation of the mind and lack of initiative and becoming a pacesetter; lack of daring in opening up to the outside world, preference for stability for fear of chaos." Once these shortcomings were acknowledged, "The reflections jolted the decision makers in Xinjiang, prompting them to emancipate their minds further and boldly lay down a new strategy." "Xinjiang as a Gateway to Central Asia Promoted," op. cit.

¹⁰³ She Duanzhi, "Xinjiang: Rebuilding the Silk Road," *Beijing Review*, November 7-13, 1994.

¹⁰⁴ Kou Zhengling, "Xinjiang," op. cit.; and Walsh, "China," 280.

¹⁰⁵ Liu Weiling, "Border Trade a Boon for Xinjiang," *Beijing Review*, January 23-29, 1995.

¹⁰⁶ Liu, "Sino-Central Asian Trade," 192.

¹⁰⁷ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 177.

or a pan-Islamic trajectory that could have had severe consequences for security in Xinjiang. These were all developments that went in China's favor.

Although China got off to a promising start in its Central Asian diplomacy, threats to stability remained. The greatest threat came from the burgeoning war economy in the greater Central Asian region. As we discussed in Chapter One, this war economy had been facilitated by the breakdown of traditional state structures in Afghanistan during Soviet occupation. As I argue in the following section, the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan led to the final demise of Afghanistan as a nation-state constituting a nexus of power and authority. Consequently, threat to security in the greater Central Asian region came from non-state organizations, and after 1996, much of China's multilateral Central Asian diplomacy would focus on these threats. In the following section we explore how this threat germinated through the early the 1990s, with the rise to power of the Taliban.

IV. Central Asia's Invigorated War Economy

Unlike most Mujahidin, the Taliban emerged from the vast Afghan refugee population in Pakistan's border provinces of Baluchistan and the NWFP. Most of the latter-day Taliban were non-combatants during the Soviet occupation, ethnically Pashtoon, came of age in refugee camps in Pakistan, spoke Urdu as their first language, and were educated in the Sa'udi funded madrasas. The last point is particularly important. Unlike President Rabbani, Ahmed Shah Masood, Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, and other Mujahidin commanders, who were products of the urban Islamist movements in the 1960s and 1970s, the Taliban were educated in madrasas that often proselytized a literalist interpretation of Islam. With President Rabbani's regime challenged by rival contenders for power, the lack of strong state opposition allowed the Taliban to rapidly extend control over much of the country by 1998. The Taliban succeeded in the defeat of the regional warlords largely because of the military aid provided to them by the government of Pakistan, whose support stemmed from the belief that a united Afghanistan could serve as a corridor to the newly independent republics of Central Asia. In addition, the Taliban

leadership did not make claims on Pakistan's NWFP, a claim that has traditionally strained relations between the two neighbors.¹⁰⁸

In Chapter One, we discussed how the war of resistance in Afghanistan was facilitated by the development of economic networks based on the proliferation of small arms, poppy cultivation, heroin production, transnational transport networks, training camps, foreign funding, and madrasas that provided room and board for the volunteers; I suggested that a noteworthy failure of both General Najibullah and President Rabbani's regimes had been their inability to dismantle this war economy after the Soviet withdrawal. Following Soviet departure, this same war economy not only facilitated the Taliban's rise to power, but in the process, grew more sophisticated. This can be assessed from the rise of narcotics production in the years immediately following Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan. There were sharp increases in poppy cultivation from 1989 to 1990 (production went from 1,200 tons to 1,570 tons), 1990 to 1991 (production went from 1,570 tons to 1,980 tons), and then from 1992 to 1993 (when there was again a jump in production from 1,970 tons to 2,330 tons).¹⁰⁹ Coupled with the rise of the Taliban shortly thereafter, the perseverance of Afghanistan's war economy would have a destabilizing effect on the greater Central Asian region, including on China's Xinjiang autonomous region. The most important consequence was that the war economy created new nodes of power in place of the nation-state that came to undermine, to varying degrees, the power of the nation-state all across the greater Central Asian region.

In Afghanistan, the tenacity and reach of the war economy superseded or was equal to that of the nation-state. Consider that besides the Pakistani government, one of the earliest supporters of the Taliban was the Baluchistan transport mafia that was eager to secure a transport corridor to the emerging markets of Central Asia, Iran, and beyond. Taliban campaigns against both Herat and Kabul were partially financed by the Baluch transport mafia for whom the Taliban provided security on Afghanistan's highways and lowered transit costs. Where previously the trucks had to pay between thirty and fifty thousand rupees traveling from Peshawar to Kabul, the Taliban now levied a fixed rate of

¹⁰⁸ Rubin, *The Fragmentation*, xi-xv.

¹⁰⁹ UNDCP, "Supply and Trafficking," 8.

six thousand rupees per truck.¹¹⁰ After the consolidation of the trade routes in Afghanistan by 1995, trade in smuggled goods and drugs increased rapidly. The narcotics trade was particularly lucrative. The Taliban taxed poppy cultivators twenty percent of their total yield. The Northern Alliance, the coalition of Islamist parties led by President Rabbani, levied a similar tax on drugs exported through territory under their control, and in both cases, this money was used to finance the war.¹¹¹

Europe was the primary destination for Afghan opiates. In Chapter One we noted that during the 1980s, Pakistan had been the starting point for the export of narcotics to European markets. This changed in the mid-1990s; now, sixty-five percent of the drugs produced in Afghanistan were exported through the Central Asian republics.¹¹² The principal route at this time appeared to leave northern Afghanistan into the Gorno-Badakshan province of Tajikistan ("Here it is possible to trade narcotics for anything," one journalist observed¹¹³). From Tajikistan, the opium was transported to Osh in Kyrgyzstan, from where it was transported to European markets via Russia and Belarus, which was another important transit republic for Afghan narcotics.¹¹⁴ Though the bulk of Afghan narcotics entered the CIS through Tajikistan – one study estimates that up to sixty-five percent of drug traffickers were citizens of Tajikistan¹¹⁵ – narcotics from Afghanistan were transiting every Central Asian republic on their way to Russia. This included Kazakhstan, which was geographically removed from Afghanistan.¹¹⁶ (It should be pointed out that trafficking routes changed constantly, and with its myriad of unsecured borders, and corrupt officials, Central Asia offered a variety of trafficking options.) In between, a wide range of individuals, including those in the local transport mafia, the Russian mafias, and Russian border guards, made handsome profits.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁰ Rashid, *Taliban*, 191.

¹¹¹ Olcott and Udalova, "Drug Trafficking," 8; and Rashid, *Taliban*, 78, 124.

¹¹² Pirseyedi, *The Small Arms Problem*, 30.

¹¹³ "Paradise for the Narco-Mafia," *Rossooskaia gazeta*, February 4, 1993. In Black, *Russia and Eurasia 1993*, 38.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.; and Yevgenii Denisenko, "A Second Switzerland or a Second Columbia? The Drug Trade in the Republic is Advancing on the Entire Front," *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, July 21, 1994. In Black, *Russia and Eurasia, 1994*, 228.

¹¹⁵ Olcott and Udalova, "Drug Trafficking," 11-12.

¹¹⁶ Bauzhan Sapargaliev, "The Game is not Over with Poppies: The Opium War Continues," *Pravda* (February 3, 1993). In Black, *Russia and Eurasia 1993*, 270.

¹¹⁷ Olcott and Udalova, "Drug Trafficking," 5, 17; and US Department of State, *International Narcotics Control*.

The transnational trade in narcotics continued to grow through the early 1990s. According to the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), in 1996, Afghanistan had overtaken Myanmar to become the world's primary source of illicit opium.¹¹⁸ Though narcotics production would keep increasing through the decade, reaching a peak production of 4,100 tons in 1999,¹¹⁹ even in the immediate post-independence years, the export of opium out of Afghanistan posed a grave threat to the Central Asian republics. The drug trade sustained the anti-state movements in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, a process we shall explore in the discussion on the Tajik civil war and the insurgency in Uzbekistan.

It is noteworthy that the Central Asian republics also saw a rise in drug production in the years following independence. While there is an abundance of data for poppy cultivation in Afghanistan, unfortunately, data from Central Asia is woefully inadequate. Though precise figures for narcotics production in the Central Asian republics at this time are difficult to come by, in 1993, one estimate suggested that the southern Chu Valley in Kazakhstan alone was capable of producing up to five thousand tons of cannabis a year.¹²⁰ Likewise, in neighboring Kyrgyzstan, sixty thousand hectares of land were said to be under hemp cultivation in 1994.¹²¹ Like the proliferation of Afghan opiates, narcotics production in Central Asia, though on a smaller scale, did not bode well for the stability of Central Asia and the surrounding regions. Nor was cannabis production in Central Asia limited to the immediate post-independence years; in 1998/1999, Kazakhstan harvested 3,900 tons of marijuana.¹²² If we assume that the regional governments were not actually encouraging these ventures, how do we explain the brazen existence and perseverance of the war economy?

According to my understanding, the nature and function of the state in Afghanistan underwent an important transformation during the 1980s and 1990s. Afghanistan's sophisticated war economy, that began replacing the state as the nexus of power, had a profound influence on the economically weak and politically

¹¹⁸ UNDCP, *Supply of and Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs*, 6-8.

¹¹⁹ UNODC, "Afghanistan Opium Survey 2005," 5.

¹²⁰ "Paradise for the Narco-Mafia," op. cit.

¹²¹ Yevgenii Denisenko, "A Second Switzerland or a Second Columbia?" op. cit.

¹²² UNODCCP, "Illicit Drugs Situation," 4.

unrepresentative republics in Central Asia. In Tajikistan, and arguably to an extent in Uzbekistan, this resulted in severe challenges to the absolute authority of the state.

In an essay on the rise of states in early modern Europe, Charles Tilly has defined the function of the state as four-fold: war making, or the ability of the state to counter threats from outside its boundaries; state making, or the process through which states eliminate rivals within their own boundaries; protection, or the elimination of those who threaten the state's clients; and extraction, or the process through which the state acquires the means to carry out the above.¹²³ While we need not take this to be a comprehensive list of the functions of all given states through history, it is nonetheless illustrative that in our discussion of the war in Afghanistan, the state failed to fulfill any of the functions identified by Tilly. I have invoked Charles Tilly's above criteria, because they identify a primordial function of the state: the ability to exercise violence for its own interests. According to Tilly, state monopoly over violence is critical; should other groups within the boundaries of the state be able to wield power, the legitimacy of the state is curtailed, since it may not be able to wield power as an instrument of power, which cannot be matched by other groups within the state.

This was the case in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal, where first General Najibullah's, and then President Rabbani's regime was unable to have a monopoly over violence, which it could have used for its own survival through the elimination of rivals and rival sources of power. During resistance to Soviet occupation, Mujahidin factions received support from foreign patrons, which created independent nodes of authority in the country. Indeed, the very fact that the Mujahidin did not come from a single political organization but drew from different parties strengthened the tendency towards decentralization after the withdrawal of the Soviet military. The donor countries, through patronizing specific resistance organizations, contributed to the rise of factions in the Afghan resistance. The process of fragmentation was accelerated by the lack of a centralized authority, and also because, through the 1980s, the independent power base of the Mujahidin commanders increased considerably; by tapping into existing transport networks, and through the production of narcotics, regional warlords developed strong, and more importantly, independent economic foundations. Through the duration of the

¹²³ Tilly, "War Making," 181.

Mujahidin resistance, the central Afghan government was little more than a proxy of the Soviet Union. The toppling of General Najibullah's regime, and his gruesome end in 1997, suggests that not only did his regime not enjoy support from the Afghan population, but that alternate sources of power within the country had now become very powerful. Of course, the overthrowing of a ruling regime by a populist movement has occurred frequently in the Third World since the Second World War. But what makes the conflict in Afghanistan unusual is that there was not a single united resistance movement, but multiple anti-state groups, each of which wielded considerable military power, had foreign patrons, and an independent means of generating revenue. Much of this had to do with the fact that many of the different factions could tap into a lucrative war economy. By being able to do so, they were highly transnational organizations, which accounts for a large part of their success.

Transnational organizations, whether commercial, criminal, or religious (the distinction between them in the greater Central Asian region was not always clear), were highly complex, and sometimes undertook operations at the level usually undertaken by nation-states. What was common in the operation of these transnational organizations was that they were structured on the threat of, and the ability to resort to violence that was oftentimes on a scale extreme enough to challenge the authority of the nation-state. Thus after the 1980s, and increasingly after independence in Central Asia, we have witnessed a new level of highly organized violence that cuts across borders and nation-states. In the period under consideration in this study, non-state organizations declared a *de facto* war on the regional states.

By the traditional Clausewitzian definition, organized violence could only be war if undertaken by sovereign states.¹²⁴ In other words, the traditional understanding of war cannot account for or explain the level of sophistication in conflicts in the greater Central Asian region in the recent past. Given the nature of recent conflicts in different parts of the world, including the Balkans and the Caucasus, it is reasonable to assume that there has been a shift in the nature of warfare away from the "total wars" of the early to mid-twentieth century, and the proxy wars of the Cold War. The turmoil in the greater Central Asian region is a good example of this new type of conflict. According to Martin van

¹²⁴ van Creveld, *The Transformation of War*, 36-37.

Crevelde, a crucial transformation in the nature of international conflict is taking place, whereby the process of warfare has been taken over from bureaucratic state organizations by groups whose solidarity is based on personal loyalty or charisma of the leaders.¹²⁵ Put another way, in many cases the bureaucratic, rational, and secular institutions of the nation-state no longer suffice as vestiges of power.

Mary Kaldor takes this reasoning further by suggesting that globalization has altered the way in which regional conflicts are contested. Drawing our attention to the transformation of warfare from the beginning of the twentieth century, where civilians made up a small part of the fatalities, to the late twentieth century, where civilians made up the largest casualties of war, Kaldor suggests that present-day wars are not necessarily confined to conflicts between nation-states. Instead, what we are witnessing is a new form of globalized violence, where the globalization of the 1980s and 1990s is defined by Kaldor as, “a qualitatively new phenomenon which can, at least in part, be explained as a consequence of the revolution in information technologies and dramatic improvement in communication.”¹²⁶

According to Mary Kaldor, the new wars “arise in the context of the erosion of the autonomy of the state and in some cases the disintegration of the state. In particular, they occur in the context of the erosion of the monopoly of legitimate organized violence.”¹²⁷ Diverging significantly from van Crevelde’s notion that many present-day conflicts are centered around personal connections or charismatic individuals, Kaldor suggests that the driving force behind many of today’s wars is identity politics, which she defines as ethnic, racial, or religious movements driven to achieve state power. In Kaldor’s analysis, identity politics are in opposition to the “politics of ideas” – environmentalism, nationalism, socialism – which sought to define an integrative, (and often secular), process of collective modernization.¹²⁸ In contrast, identity politics are “fragmentative, backward-looking and exclusive.” Occurring simultaneously with the erosion of legitimacy of the traditional elite, these movements are based on nostalgia for past glory, conquest, or even defeat, and “acquire meaning through insecurity, through

¹²⁵ Ibid., 200.

¹²⁶ Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, 3.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 4.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 76.

rekindled fear of historic enemies, or through a sense of being threatened by those with different labels.”¹²⁹ Equally important is that these movements often draw support from parallel economic activity.¹³⁰

Mary Kaldor and Martin van Creveld’s perspectives on contemporary conflicts helps explain the role of transnational organizations in Central Asia that has contributed to much of the instability in the region. To be certain, the basis of regional power has shifted away from absolute control by the nation-state, to one where the power of transnational organizations and networks often supersede that of the nation-state. That these organizations draw economic and logistical support from transnational linkages and networks is also true. In addition, these movements are not a throwback to antiquity, though some ideas that they may propagate, such as a literalist interpretation and implementation of the Shari‘a, or *Sunna* (the example set by the life of the Prophet), fly in the face of modern rationalism. Insofar as many of these transnational movements were supported by the forces of globalization, transnational organization in Central Asia are very much a modern phenomenon. As a leading scholar on contemporary Afghanistan, Barnett Rubin has pointed out, “Afghanistan, far from being an “unchanged” traditional society living in a different time, had been thoroughly shaped by its interaction with the modern state system.”¹³¹ In recent years, some journalists have generated a discourse of “timeless” terrorists living in “caves” and “tribal” areas. But as Kaldor’s approach suggests, present-day conflicts are part of the process of, if not a direct result of modernity. Olivier Roy’s comprehensive studies of contemporary Islamist movements corroborates such a position. As Roy has argued, whether Islamist or “neofundamentalist,” these contemporary movements are an outcome of modernity. This is evident in their emphasis on rationality, their urban origins, rejection of history, or in their reaction to Western encroachment on a world in which large segments of the Muslim population feels increasingly marginalized.¹³²

There is yet another dimension to the erosion of the authority of the nation-state. This is the historical dimension. I take exception to Kaldor’s emphasis on globalization in

¹²⁹ Ibid., 78.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Rubin, *The Fragmentation*, ix-x.

¹³² Roy, *The Failure*, 1-4, 21-22, 50; and Roy, *Globalized Islam*, 43-46.

explaining the origins of “new wars.” In Afghanistan, it is true, instability was a product of contemporary conflict in which both superpowers threw their patronage, (and weapons), behind their proxies with little foresight. Likewise, the instability that emerged in the Central Asian republics was the consequence of the breakup of the Soviet state. Both the above would fit Kaldor’s framework of instability stemming from the contemporary process of globalization, and leading to new forms of conflict. But in my opinion, there are also historical structures within the greater Central Asian region that predate the contemporary emphasis on globalization.

In Chapter One, we had noted that the tiny principality of Khokand was able to impose the first of the unequal treaties on China in 1831. In addition, Khokandi merchants and smugglers crisscrossed the greater Central Asian region with disregard for the power of empires, which were far more vast, rich, and seemingly more powerful than the tiny Central Asian khanate. In part, this may have to do with the inability of the Qing dynasty to exert its influence into its own frontier region. But it also probably had to do with the nature of local economic and political structures. What the Badakshani, Kashmiri, and Khokandi merchants and smugglers of the mid-nineteenth century shared with their late twentieth century counterparts, the drug runners, gun smugglers, and transport mafia of the greater Central Asian region, was that both were operating in a vast region where the reach of the state was limited.

Furthermore, as I also suggested in Chapter One, political decentralization occurred because of the way in which political power was traditionally wielded in the greater Central Asian region, that is, through small principalities and khanates such as Bukhara, Khiva, and Khokand, which existed in mostly economically self-contained localities. Throughout history, similar self-contained political structures have existed in Bactria, Ferghana, Kashgaria, Turfan, and other localities across Inner Asia. Since 1949, through the modernization of Xinjiang, China has sought to instate a highly centralized civilian military bureaucracy that endeavored to reverse the historic tendency towards economic and political decentralization in the region. One could perhaps argue that the Soviet Union also sought to exert highly centralized control over Central Asia during much of its rule. After the independence of Central Asia, many of the centralized Soviet economic ties became defunct. This resulted in a diffusion of political power, which

benefited from the endless conflict in Afghanistan and its unique war economy. We shall examine this with regards to the Tajik civil war and the insurgency in Uzbekistan.

Thus, I would cautiously venture that political structures in the greater Central Asian region have traditionally favored decentralization. Large centralized empires did emerge in Inner Asia, but I believe it is a fair generalization to say that even at the height of their geographical expansion, these Inner Asian empires were less centralized than their sedentary counterparts.¹³³ Therefore, while I find Mary Kaldor's insights useful, we also need to examine historical substructures within Central Asia, in conjunction with the process of globalization, to fully understand the transnational challenges in the region. These transnational challenges came into play in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in the years following independence. They would also impact security in Xinjiang through the participation of Uighurs in the instability stemming out of the Afghan vortex. We begin an exploration of this phenomenon by looking at salient aspects of Soviet policies in Central Asia, that coupled with Afghanistan's war economy, intensified the potential for instability in the greater Central Asian region.

V. Russian Rule in Central Asia

Numbering over fifty million, the Soviet Union had the fifth largest Muslim population in the world. While Tsarist rule in nineteenth century Central Asia had left Islamic institutions such as religious endowments (*waqf*), Shari'a, and madrasas intact, during Soviet rule, the CPSU attempted to restrict the influence of Islam on everyday life. This was in keeping with a view amongst the new leadership that saw religious beliefs and rituals as an expression of backwardness and antithetical to the forces of socialist modernization. A popular belief that would prevail from the Bolshevik takeover of Central Asia in 1917 until 1988, often held Islamic traditions responsible for the backwardness of Central Asia.¹³⁴

Islamic institutions were restricted not only because the Soviet leadership saw religion to be regressive; Islam was intimately intertwined with the history of Central

¹³³ Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier*, esp. 24-28. Barfield has suggested that political legitimacy on the steppe was predicated on both lineage, and the personal charisma of the tribal leader, and less so on centralizing bureaucratic institutions of the state. This is not to suggest that sometimes steppe empires did not borrow bureaucratic structures from their sedentary neighbors.

¹³⁴ Tazmini, "The Islamic Revival," 66.

Asia, and that presented a challenge first to Tsarist, and then Soviet authority in the region. Though Central Asia would become peripheral to the Muslim world after the Soviet takeover, this had not been the case in the centuries preceding Russian conquest. Between the tenth and the fourteenth centuries, Central Asian towns were important centers of Islamic learning, as well as the birthplace of important Sufi sects, notably the Naqshbandiya and Yasaviya orders.¹³⁵ Mongol conquest and rule during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries initially ravaged the region, but Islam, as a belief system, was not attacked. After the capture of Tabriz in 1501 by Shah Isma'il (1487-1524), and the establishment of the Safavid empire (1501-1736), Central Asian societies found their direct route to the Middle East and Ottoman Turkey cut off. Nonetheless, at an intellectual level, Central Asian societies remained an inseparable part of the greater Islamic community (*umma*). For the Soviets, it was this aspect of Islam in Central Asia that was deeply problematic: namely, that adherence to Islam, in principle, gave Muslims a sense of belonging in the *umma*. Through its perseverance, Islam posed a challenge to Soviet authority in Central Asia.

During most of Soviet rule, Islam had existed clandestinely; immediately after independence, it was still uncertain what role Islam would play. The newly independent Central Asian republics were not Islamic republics, and were led by leaders who were staunchly secular. (On the contrary, as this study will illustrate, in recent years, President Karimov of Uzbekistan has periodically cracked down on even the slightest hint of political organization along Islamist lines.) The leaders have consistently steered clear of invoking Islam to bolster legitimacy, unlike other regional states, such as Afghanistan, Iran, or Pakistan.

The public sentiment after independence appeared to be different, with some citizens making an effort to undo the Soviet legacy. This is evident when we consider that in the years immediately prior to, and following the breakup of the Soviet Union, mosques opened at the rate of more than one a day, madrasas were set up, and millions of copies of the Quran were sent to Central Asia from Iran, Sa'udi Arabia, and Pakistan.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 144. The Naqshbandiya order was founded by Bahauddin Naqshband (1317-89) in Bukhara, located in present-day Uzbekistan, while the Yasaviya order was founded by Ahmed Yasavi (b. 1166), buried in the town of Yasi, in present-day Kazakhstan.

¹³⁶ Rashid, *Jihad*, 95.

Citizens were free to travel to Muslim countries and establish personal contacts. After 1988, Islam pervaded most aspects of the public sphere.

Besides a sudden public interest in religion, Islam began featuring in the discourse that channeled public discontent. Soon after independence, the authority of the state came under challenge, particularly in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Islam featured prominently in the anti-state discourse. During the Tajik civil war, the insurgent coalition opposing the Moscow-backed regime of President Rahmanov drew heavily on Islam (though as I suggest, regionalism played more of a role). Uzbekistan was likewise threatened by insurgents who drew their legitimacy partly from Islam, although unlike Tajikistan, the inclusion of Islam in the anti-state movement was strongly influenced by the ongoing war in Afghanistan and Sa'udi orthodoxy.

The insurgency in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan was indicative of grave challenges to state power in the newly independent republics. The Tajik civil war ravaged the country: by the 1997 ceasefire, approximately fifty thousand people were dead, and half a million people were displaced in a country of less than six million.¹³⁷ The insurgency in Uzbekistan was likewise extremely destabilizing. Uzbek insurgents had their roots in Uzbekistan's Ferghana valley, where the local clergy used Islam to champion the plight of the people marginalized by the regime.

In addition, another transnational organization, the Hizb ut-Tahrir, that has a strong following amongst the Muslim diasporas of Western Europe, made its appearance in Central Asia. The Hizb ut-Tahrir emerged in 1952 as a splinter group of the Muslim Brotherhoods. Deeply influenced by the views of the Egyptian Islamist, Sayyid Qutb (1906-1966), the group has an expressed agenda of overthrowing local regimes and establishing a Caliphate, albeit through non-violent means. In 2001, Ahmed Rashid estimated that the Hizb ut-Tahrir had fifty thousand members in Uzbekistan alone.¹³⁸ The discourse of the Uzbek insurgents and the Hizb ut-Tahrir had distinct internationalist strains, in that they did not see their struggle as confined within the boundaries of a specific nation-state.

¹³⁷ Rashid, "The Fires of Faith," 49.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 54.

But the role of the Hizb ut-Tahrir needs to be approached cautiously; while the Uzbek government has blamed the organization for unrest in Uzbekistan in recent years, and analysts from the right-wing US think tank, the Heritage Foundation take a similar view of the organization, as do analysts from the PRC, the Hizb ut-Tahrir is not banned in the United Kingdom, nor in a number of Muslim countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates.¹³⁹ In countries where the Hizb ut-Tahrir is not banned, it continues to operate openly, and maintains “official” websites. In addition, members of the Hizb ut-Tahrir have always insisted that they have not resorted to violent means to overthrow state power.

While the exact function of the Hizb ut-Tahrir, and other similar organizations remains disputed, what is beyond dispute is that after 1988, there was a revival in the role of Islam in Central Asian public life. This is notable given that until that time, the role of Islam in the public sphere in Soviet Central Asia had been severely curtailed. Between 1924 and 1940, the Soviets sought to eradicate Islam completely from the public sphere;¹⁴⁰ mosques were shut down, *waqf* was confiscated, pilgrimage to Mecca was forbidden, and fasting during the month of Ramadan was outlawed.¹⁴¹ With markedly less success, the Soviets also attempted to alter traditional relations within society, for example, by bringing more women into the public sphere, though oftentimes this backfired with the women becoming ostracized by community members.¹⁴²

But to argue that there was a revival of Islam in the public sphere because of the easing of state restrictions in 1988 is an oversimplified explanation of the centrality that Islam came to occupy in the anti-state movements. In order to explain how Islam became a political force in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, we need to go back to the years of Soviet control over Central Asia; arguably, it was more than fifty years ago that the battle lines were first drawn. (As we shall discuss in Chapter Three, this phenomenon had parallels with how the Chinese Communist Party understood the threat from religious revivalism in Xinjiang in the 1990s.)

¹³⁹ Cohen, “Hizb ut-Tahrir.”

¹⁴⁰ Roy, “*Qibla* and the Government,” 53.

¹⁴¹ Tazmini, “The Islamic Revival,” 64.

¹⁴² Fierman, “The Soviet “Transformation,” 24.

In 1940, the Soviet government established the Central Asian Spiritual Directorate of Muslims (SADUM), in an attempt to regulate the construction and registration of mosques, appoint clergy, and dictate the subject matter of sermons. This marked a shift in Soviet policy from earlier, when the state had sought to stamp out religion altogether. Now the Soviet Union sought to regulate, instead of eradicate Islam.¹⁴³ After the German assault in July 1941, the Soviet Union found itself preoccupied with defense of its European frontiers. Threatened in the west, maintaining stability within the Central Asian hinterlands became an important objective for the Soviet leadership. In order to appease Muslims, four offices of religious administration (*muftiat*), were established. Though Shari‘a remained outlawed, effort was taken to demonstrate that Islamic law and Soviet law did not necessarily clash.¹⁴⁴

After the end of the Second World War, the *muftiat* remained in place; the Soviet Union now sought to use the *muftiat* as a bridge to reach out to the Arab world. Nonetheless, this did not result in a permanent easing of restrictions on Islam; another wave of suppression followed under President Nikita Khrushchev (1958-1964). During his tenure, twenty-five percent of all official mosques were shut down. State suppression was especially severe in Tajikistan, where sixteen out of thirty-four mosques were shut down, and in Uzbekistan, where twenty-three out of ninety mosques were closed.¹⁴⁵ Soviet policies towards Islam in Central Asia were synthesized in a statement by President Khrushchev, where he noted that, “Communist education proposes the liberation of consciousness from religious prejudices and superstitions which still hamper some Soviet people from full demonstration of their creative powers.”¹⁴⁶

Soviet policy towards Islam continued unchanged through the 1960s with one important exception. Beginning in the 1960s, a select number of students were sent abroad to study in “friendly” Sunni countries. The purpose of this policy was both to strengthen cultural links with countries of the Middle East and North Africa, and to

¹⁴³ Tazmini, “The Islamic Revival,” 65.

¹⁴⁴ Lapidus, *A History*, 706; Olcott, “Islam and Fundamentalism,” 23; Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 150; and Roy, *The Foreign Policy*, 2.

¹⁴⁵ During the same time, none of the four official mosques in Turkmenistan were shut down. Out of twenty-six and twenty-four mosques in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan respectively, only one in each republic was shut. As Olivier Roy suggests, “These figures are indicative of the weight of Islam in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan compared with the other three republics.” *The New Central Asia*, 150.

¹⁴⁶ Tazmini, “The Islamic Revival,” 65

educate Soviet Islamic scholars - educated in Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Jordan - who could enjoy recognition from their peers in Muslim countries. An unintended consequence of this policy was that the students sent abroad came into contact with, and were often influenced by, the Muslim Brotherhoods in the Arab world.¹⁴⁷ The links between the official ulama and the Muslim Brotherhoods would become important between 1990 and 1992, when money earmarked for mosques and madrasas poured in from across the Islamic world.

While the Soviet Union had sought to regulate Islam, unofficial or parallel Islam continued to thrive during the entirety of Soviet rule. Official and parallel Islam were not always mutually exclusive. Very often there was a strong link between the official ulama and unofficial mullahs, since the official clergy usually had their introduction to Islamic teachings through the unofficial mullahs.¹⁴⁸ Though the extent to which parallel Islamic institutions pervaded Central Asian society during Soviet rule is hard to gauge, it is likely that there was at least one unofficial prayer house or mosque in every community. These would serve as schools where children were taught the Quran, and whose volunteer clerics were called upon during rites of passage such as marriage and death.¹⁴⁹ With pilgrimage to Mecca forbidden, the local mullahs would recommend pilgrimage to a local shrine.¹⁵⁰ These parallel practices kept Islam alive during Soviet rule. We need not assume that these practices were always highly secretive; the perseverance of Islamic ritual in Central Asian society compels Olivier Roy to challenge the notion that in the latter years of Soviet rule, Islam was clandestine. Though village mosques remained closed, there would be a drop in the consumption of food in canteens during the month of Ramadan. No Party cadre would be buried without the presence of a mullah.¹⁵¹ Thus, two parallel trends in Islam existed side by side during Soviet rule in Central Asia until the late 1980s.

In 1985, President Mikhail Gorbachev launched his policy of glasnost and perestroika. During the early years, the policy of political liberalization did not extend to religion. On the contrary, the years between 1985 and 1988 saw sustained attacks on

¹⁴⁷ Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 150-51.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 151.

¹⁴⁹ Olcott, "Islam and Fundamentalism," 24.

¹⁵⁰ Lipovsky, "The Awakening," 4.

¹⁵¹ Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 152-153.

Islamic traditions that were blamed for the ills of Central Asia. According to Ghoncheh Tazmini, the heightened criticism of Islam was prompted by fears of a spillover from the Mujahidin campaigns in Afghanistan, or of an Iranian-inspired Islamic revolutionary movement.¹⁵² While the possibility of the latter was minimal – the Iranian revolution was a distinctly Shi'a revolution – as we noted in Chapter One, Mujahidin resistance against the Soviet invasion had won admirers in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. This mandated a need for heightened caution on the part of the Soviet leadership.

By 1988, there was a discernible change in policy towards religion. Religious reform in the Soviet Union began in 1988, and continued to gain momentum until the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Christian and Jewish communities were the first to experience an easing of restrictions, and were allowed freedom of worship in 1988. Similar freedom was not granted to the Muslim communities. However, the changing political climate did allow for large-scale protests against state policy and in December 1988, students demonstrated in Tashkent waving green banners symbolic of Islam.¹⁵³

The tide was beginning to turn in the Soviet Union, and the CPSU came under increased pressure. Reformist elements in the Politburo, led by Alexander Yakovlev, and nationalists in the Baltic republics, exerted increasing pressure on the Soviet leadership for the decentralization of power. According to Tazmini, it was this pressure that forced the Party leadership to grant more authority to regional leaders in 1988.¹⁵⁴ This resulted in a rapid process of decentralization that allowed the republics to independently determine policy towards religion.

Restrictions on Islam were now lifted. The construction of mosques skyrocketed. In Tajikistan, for example, between 1990 and 1992, more than a thousand new mosques opened.¹⁵⁵ Prior to 1990, there had been only forty. By October 1991, there were more than a thousand new mosques in each republic, with a new mosque opening every day. Copies of the Quran and other religious material flowed into the region from Pakistan,

¹⁵² Tazmini, "The Islamic Revival," 66.

¹⁵³ Hunter, "Religion, Politics, and Security," 73.

¹⁵⁴ Tazmini, "The Islamic Revival," 66.

¹⁵⁵ Rashid, *Jihad*, 95.

Sa'udi Arabia, and other Muslim countries.¹⁵⁶ During the same time, *waqf* was restored. This was an important development as it gave the clergy an independent source of funding.¹⁵⁷

In February 1989, Muhammad Yussuf was appointed the head *mufti* in Uzbekistan, and under his patronage the construction of mosques increased rapidly.¹⁵⁸ Given his background as a state-appointed ulama, Yussuf had established connections with Arab countries under Soviet tutelage. Consequently, he was able to attract foreign funding from Arab countries. Many Islamic organizations, such as the *Rabitat al-'alam al-Islami* (Muslim World League), only donated money for mosques and madrasas directly to the state. One consequence was a growing chasm between the official ulama, that had achieved power as a consequence of half a century of Soviet patronage, and the local mullahs, who after 1988, saw a sharp increase in their power and authority at the local level. To a large extent, the conflict between the two groups was a conflict over resources that were pouring in from across the Islamic world. In the beginning, the official *muftis* were the recipients of resources from the Islamic world. So long as this remained the case, there were continuous charges of corruption levied against them. For example, in 1991, Yussuf was accused of selling copies of the Quran that had been donated by Sa'udi Arabia. Similar accusations were levied against the ulama in the Soviet republics of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.¹⁵⁹ Though it is impossible to gauge in monetary terms how much foreign funding made its way to the different Islamist groups, by any reckoning, this figure was tremendous.

Aside from the construction of mosques, vast amounts of religious material published in Pakistan and Sa'udi Arabia were brought to Central Asia. Pakistan-based Islamist organizations, such as Jama'at-i Islami, sent mullahs to Central Asia to help guide Central Asian Muslims to the righteous path. Rich Central Asian families, who had migrated to Sa'udi Arabia prior to the Soviet takeover, donated vast sums of money. In addition, the ending of restrictions on pilgrimage to Mecca meant that Central Asians

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 43, 54-55.

¹⁵⁷ Tazmini, "The Islamic Revival," 66.

¹⁵⁸ Olcott, "Islam and Fundamentalism," p. 26.

¹⁵⁹ Roy, *The Foreign Policy*, 7.

were free to travel through the Muslim world and establish new contacts.¹⁶⁰ Central Asian Muslims could now be unrestricted members of the *umma* should they so choose.

It is noteworthy that the links that were established between Muslims in Central Asia and the rest of the Muslim world did not emerge only after 1988. It is important not to jump to the simplified, and in my opinion, erroneous conclusion that the revival of Islam in Central Asia was only because public Islam was suppressed under the Soviet Union and therefore the population embraced it with particular zeal when the opportunity presented itself. While the large majority of Muslims in Central Asia were forcibly cut off from the *umma* under Soviet rule, there was a close link between the official clergy in Central Asia and the Muslim Brotherhoods in parts of the Arab world.¹⁶¹ Ironically, many such links were formed under Soviet patronage. There were also strong traditional links between the Central Asian religious elite and the traditional madrasas of South Asia. The link between the Central Asian ulama and South Asian religious institutions predated Soviet occupation of Central Asia. It was in the madrasas of Afghanistan and India that many amongst the Central Asian ulama had traditionally received their education. Historically, as Roy points out, it was not from Mashad or Qum that the ulama of Central Asia received their books, but from Lahore, Bombay, and Delhi.¹⁶² In part, the post-1989 Islamic revival was a revival of traditional linkages.

This was particularly the case with the establishment of ties with the religious elite of Pakistan. The revival of these transnational linkages was not only because of Central Asian initiative; religious elite in Pakistan were eager to reestablish the links as it fulfilled their mandate of proselytizing (*tabligh*), and also served political purposes. For example, the leader of the Jama'at-i Islami, Qazi Hussain Ahmed (b. 1938), called upon the Pakistani government to fight American imperialism along with the newly independent republics, and suggested that what the republics needed from Pakistan was not economic aid, but religious guidance.¹⁶³ The secular leadership of the new Central Asian states was hardly comfortable with this agenda. It was largely for this reason that shortly after independence, in 1992, the Uzbek government made it difficult for Pakistani

¹⁶⁰ Roy, "Qibla and the Government," 54-56.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 56.

¹⁶² Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 145.

¹⁶³ Rashid, *The Resurgence*, 215.

citizens to travel to Uzbekistan. Prior to this decision, scores of delegations – many with links to the Jama‘at-i Islami and the parallel organization, the Jami‘at al-‘ulama’-i Islami – made regular trips to the region carrying religious material printed in Lahore and Peshawar, which had been translated into Central Asian languages.¹⁶⁴ This interaction is important, for it demonstrates that Islamic revival in Central Asia was strongly internationalist, an aspect of Islam that the Soviet leadership had been cautious of.

But it would be a mistake to see the Islamic revival in Central Asia as only being due to external stimuli. An important milestone had been the creation of the *Hizb-i Nehzat-i Islami/Islam Uyghonish Partyasi* (Islamic Renaissance Party or IRP), in September 1990, in Astrakhan. The Party’s stated objective was to unite the Muslims of the Soviet Union. This was reflected in the fact that the founding conference was held in Astrakhan, and had attracted delegates from Dagestan, Azerbaijan, the Caucasus, and Tatarstan, as well as Central Asia.¹⁶⁵ The IRP opposed all forms of terrorism, as well as ethnic conflict and nationalism, and pledged to respect the Soviet constitution.¹⁶⁶ However, there was a strong emphasis on proselytizing, and Islamic justice was a prominent theme. Members of the IRP shared demographic similarities with the Muslim Brotherhoods of the Arab world, and the Jama‘at-i Islami of Pakistan: most of the members were male, urban, born in the 1950s, and educated in the sciences and engineering.¹⁶⁷

Significant conflicts of interest emerged as soon as the IRP came into existence. Surprisingly, the IRP received the strongest resistance not in the Slavic republics of the Soviet Union, but in Central Asia. In both Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, it was the four official *muftis* who resisted recognizing the Party.¹⁶⁸ The IRP, for its part, was critical of the *muftis* for not being assertive enough where religious policy was concerned.¹⁶⁹ When recognition finally came in October 1991 for the Tajik branch of the IRP, it was under the auspices of Moscow. The anti-CPSU faction, led by Russian President Boris Yeltsin, had

¹⁶⁴ Roy, *The Foreign Policy*, 8.

¹⁶⁵ Hunter, “Religion, Politics, and Security,” 74.

¹⁶⁶ Roy, *The Foreign Policy*, 3.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 3–4.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

promoted religious organizations such as the IRP, as this was seen to weaken the hold of the Communists.¹⁷⁰

Conflicts between the IRP and the *muftis* highlight two important points. First, Islam in Central Asia was not monolithic; there was conflict between the official Islam of the state-sponsored ulama, and the populist mullahs that emerged after 1988. The boundaries between the two may have been discursive prior to 1988; but events from that year onwards put into motion a process that would take the two groups further away from each other in the post-independence years. It is my understanding, that between 1988 and 1992, the fundamental contest between the two was control over resources, which during this time had amounted to vast quantities of money. After independence, the conflict transformed into one over the role Islam would play in society. Though the Soviet state no longer existed, the *muftiat* did not disappear from Central Asia. There was a role for official Islam in independent Central Asia that was similar to the role of official Islam under Soviet suzerainty.

The other notable development was that Islam entered the anti-state discourse, with the IRP becoming the vehicle for the independent mullahs in Tajikistan. Unlike in the erstwhile Soviet Union, where parallel Islam steered clear of the state, the years following independence saw mullahs in both Tajikistan and Uzbekistan aligning along into a collision course with the state. Where the Soviet Union had once exercised near absolute power in Central Asia, the post-independence unrest in the republics gives the impression that from the point of view of the insurgents, state power could not only be challenged, but overcome. I believe the anti-state actors became so emboldened because of three factors: the war economy in Afghanistan that provided access to sources of revenue and weapons; the continuation of non-representative leadership which discouraged popular participation, but which no longer had the power of the Soviet state to eliminate opposition, and finally, the rift between the *muftiat* as representative of the power of the state, and the mullahs who now challenged state power based on their ties with the transnational networks.

We now turn to the Tajik civil war and unrest in Uzbekistan's Ferghana valley to examine how these challenges to state power played out after independence.

¹⁷⁰ Hunter, "Religion, Politics, and Security," 74.

VI. The Tajik Civil War and Uzbekistan's Chronic Unrest

So far, I have suggested that both the Tajik civil war and unrest in Uzbekistan presented serious challenges to state power in Central Asia. I have also noted that these conflicts benefited from the war economy spilling out over the frontiers of Afghanistan. This much was common to both conflicts. In addition, both conflicts were rooted in the marginalization of a people who challenged state power in their quest for social justice. By emphasizing the above criteria, I am deliberately downplaying the doctrinal role of Islam as a stimulant in these conflicts. While I am not oblivious to the role of faith, I seek to explain unrest in Central Asia as one where Islam/Islamists championed the cause of the marginalized, not one that was driven by ideas of creating an Islamic Caliphate. We begin with a discussion of the civil war in Tajikistan.

Tajikistan had been the most impoverished of Soviet republics. We have already discussed that independence in Central Asia brought to power a political elite that had held key positions of power in the Soviet Union. This was the case in Tajikistan where Rakhmon Nabiev, former Secretary General of the Communist Party of Tajikistan, came to power on November 24, 1991, though with only fifty-eight percent of votes cast. Nabiev's opponent was Davlat Khudonazarov, who received thirty-eight percent of the votes, and was supported by a broad coalition, that included the IRP.¹⁷¹ Given that Nabiev's lead over his opponent was slim, (especially when compared to other Central Asian leaders who routinely win elections with very large margins), this gave the IRP sufficient leverage to challenge Nabiev's accession to power.

Amongst President Nabiev's early policies was the granting of concessions to people from his native Khojent. This resulted in protests throughout the republic, eventually becoming the central issue around which the IRP-led opposition coalesced. By March 1992, widespread protests, assassinations, and kidnappings had brought the republic to a standstill. The country was on the verge of a civil war. In April, the Gorno-Badakshan (Pamir) region declared itself autonomous. Through the summer, President Nabiev's control over the republic weakened, resulting in a short-lived agreement whereby the IRP-led coalition attained some representation. However, the IRP's

¹⁷¹ Rashid, *Jihad*, 100.

participation in the government was short-lived; in October of the same year, the Tajik Parliament chose Imamali Rahmanov, a Communist from Kulab, as Chair of the Supreme Soviet, a position that made him the de facto head of state (he would take on the title of President in 1994). After coming to power, Rahmanov appointed supporters from his native Kulab to prominent positions.¹⁷² The IRP's grievances against the new regime – nepotism, lack of power sharing, and marginalization of people from impoverished parts of the republic – were similar to grievances that had been levied against the Nabiev regime which had been successfully ousted.

A popular characterization of the Tajik civil war is that it was a conflict between “neo-Communists” and “Islamists.” There is some validity in this claim. Nabiev and Rahmanov had been Party elite in the former Soviet Union. Likewise, the “Islamist” faction, though made up of different parties and interest groups, was centered around the IRP. But these categories can also be misleading, especially since the conflict was not ideologically driven. The single most important fault line in the conflict was regional. Olivier Roy has drawn attention to the fact that the “neo-Communist” forces, sympathetic initially to Nabiev, and subsequently to Rahmanov, hailed mostly from two regions: Khojent and Kulab.¹⁷³

Likewise, the IRP-led opposition also had a regional basis, drawing their support from Gharm and the Pamirs. The Pamirs fell under the Gorno-Badakshan, much of which had remained disputed between China and Russia since the 1881 Treaty of St. Petersburg. Both Gharm and Gorno-Badakshan had been the most impoverished regions in the former Soviet Union's most underdeveloped republic. Gorno-Badakshan had been one of the last holdouts of the anti-Soviet Basmachi revolt of the 1920s. Consequently, the region had suffered from severe Soviet repression, and after the suppression of the Basmachi revolt, neglect. During the reigns of Nabiev and Rahmanov, people from both regions continued to suffer persecution at the hands of the pro-Soviet factions from Khojent and Gulab.¹⁷⁴ During the short-lived coalition government in 1992, the Pamiris and the Gharmis had assumed positions of power for the first time.¹⁷⁵ With the takeover

¹⁷² Horsman, “Uzbekistan's Involvement,” 37-38.

¹⁷³ Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 140.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 94-99.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 140.

of power by Rahmanov, people from the Pamirs and Gharm, marginalized for over seventy years, once again found themselves left out of the political process.

Thus the conflict in Tajikistan was one that was deeply rooted in the comparative underdevelopment of the republic. The Islamist dimension was not geared towards the creation of a Caliphate, or an Islamic republic, as was the case in Afghanistan under the Taliban. Rather, the IRP championed the cause of people from the marginalized parts of the republic. The Islamist dimension of the opposition was an appendage to a larger issue, which was the economic and political marginalization of people from underdeveloped regions.

Russia played a partisan role in the Tajik civil war. As per the founding agreements between CIS member-states, each republic was sovereign, and in principle, neither Russia, nor any of the other successor states could assume a hegemonic posture within the CIS. As we have discussed, provisions for peacekeeping, a joint military command, and Russian protection of CIS borders allowed Russia to continue pursuing its interests. By supporting the Nabiev/Rahmanov faction, Russia not only interfered in the political process of an independent republic, but played a partisan role by supporting a regime that was faced with widespread opposition.¹⁷⁶

With the exception of the capital Dushanbe, where they remained neutral, the Russian military provided important military support to the Rahmanov regime. This can be gauged from the number of Russian troops in the republic. At the end of 1992, there were over ten thousand Russian troops in Tajikistan. The following year, in 1993, this number increased to eighteen thousand. In 1994, there were twenty-one thousand Russian troops in Tajikistan. In 1996, Russian troop deployment reached an all time high of twenty-five thousand.¹⁷⁷ Russian units such as the 191st Motorized Regiment and the 201st Motor Rifle Division engaged in combat against the IRP-led coalition. In addition to taking part in actual combat, Russian forces were also responsible for arming the Rahmanov regime.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ In the opinion of a Tajik opposition leader, without Russian support, the Rahmanov regime could not have survived widespread opposition. "Opposition Leader Interviewed," *London Al-Hayah* (November 30, 1993). In Black, *Russia and Eurasia*, 1993.

¹⁷⁷ Jackson, *Russian Foreign Policy*, 148.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 147. The 191st Motorized Regiment and the 201st Motor Rifle Division were made of soldiers who had been part of 40th Army in Afghanistan and had been withdrawn to Tajikistan after the end of

In my opinion, Russia's partisan role in the Tajik civil war was because of two closely interlinked reasons. First, Russia wanted to ensure the presence of a Moscow-friendly regime in Tajikistan. In doing so, Russia was actively ensuring that the Soviet-era oligarchy remained in power. The possibility of an Islamist regime in power was an outcome that Russia sought to prevent. The other reason for Russia's involvement was the fact Tajikistan shared a 1,200-kilometer long border with Afghanistan, where the conflict showed no sign of abating. Given Russia's continuing influence in the Central Asian periphery, I believe it is fair to suggest that in Russian strategic thinking, Tajikistan was still a peripheral region of the Russian state. This position is credible if we consider that Russian troops still guarded the foreign borders of the CIS. With the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan still posing a threat to regional security, Russia probably did not consider the Rahmanov regime capable of stopping collaboration between the IRP-led opposition, and the regime of President Rabbani in Afghanistan, who was also a Tajik, as was his Defense Minister, Ahmed Shah Masood (1953-2001).

Russia also contributed to the escalation of the conflict by becoming a source of weapons. For the resistance, one source of weapons was Afghanistan. Another source was the Russian army: many soldiers in the Russian army sold their weapons or bartered them for food or alcohol, often as a result of not having been paid for long periods of time.¹⁷⁹ The Nabiev/Rahmanov faction was also a recipient of military assistance from Uzbekistan, partly because of the large Uzbek population in Khojent. Prior to the civil war, approximately twenty-four percent of Tajikistan's population was Uzbek, mostly located in Khojent.¹⁸⁰ Another reason of Uzbek support for the Nabiev/Rahmanov faction was that Uzbekistan feared that the conflict could spread beyond Tajikistan's borders and contribute to the Islamic revival in Uzbekistan.

Though there were a number of parties in the opposition, they were led by the IRP under the leadership of Mullah Nuri and Mullah Himmatzade. Both were from Gharm, as was the head *mufti*, Qazi Turajanzade (b. 1954). An important difference between the Tajik civil war and the conflict that would ensue in Uzbekistan was the close alliance

Soviet occupation. In addition, there were also "an undetermined" number of troops under the Interior Ministry and approximately two thousand border guards under the KGB.

¹⁷⁹ Pirseyedi, *The Small Arms Problem*, 47, 54.

¹⁸⁰ Horsman, "Uzbekistan's Involvement," 40.

between the head *mufti* in Tajikistan, Qazi Turajanzade, and local mullahs such as Nuri and Himmatzade who drew their support not from the state, but from the community.¹⁸¹ Solidarity along ethnic lines spread from Tajikistan to Afghanistan, as tens of thousands of Gharmi refugees crossed the Amu Darya into Afghanistan to escape the Rahmanov regime.¹⁸² In Afghanistan, the IRP established bases in Kunduz and Taloqan. Afghan Defense Minister Masood provided military and logistical support to the IRP commanders (both Russia and Uzbekistan were strongly opposed to Afghanistan's support, and carried out bombardment of IRP camps in Afghanistan, and also engaged in indiscriminate bombing of Afghan frontier towns between 1992 and 1995).¹⁸³

In Afghanistan, Tajik refugees were trained, armed, and sent back to Tajikistan to fight, as IRP leaders traveled to Iran, Pakistan, and Sa'udi Arabia in search of funding and weapons.¹⁸⁴ In addition, the drug export networks were important for financing the anti-government coalition. Narcotics were transported out of Afghanistan by the IRP, and sold in Russia both for internal consumption, and export to Europe. Money from drug sales was brought back to Afghanistan where it was used to purchase weapons for the IRP-led coalition. Additional weapons were procured from Chechnya, India, Iran, and Pakistan.¹⁸⁵ In Pakistan, Mullah Nuri established contacts with the so-called "Afghan Arab" networks. With the help of these organizations, many based in Peshawar, Mullah Nuri was able to orchestrate forays into Tajikistan and establish a strategic foothold in the Gharm valley by 1996.¹⁸⁶

By 1996, the two sides had fought themselves into a stalemate. Between 1993 and 1996, the United Nations sponsored five rounds of negotiations, all of which had failed. As mentioned above, during his stay in Afghanistan and visits to Pakistan, Mullah Nuri had established contacts with transnational Islamist groups. In 1997, the Taliban captured Kabul, thus bringing them significantly closer to controlling the entire country. The IRP had to make an important decision. On the one hand, it was coming under pressure from the largely Pashtoon Taliban to escalate the war in Tajikistan. On the other hand, Afghan

¹⁸¹ Roy, *The Foreign Policy*, 10.

¹⁸² Roy, *The New Central Asia*, 140-41.

¹⁸³ Horsman, "Uzbekistan's Involvement," 38-39; and Magnus and Naby, "Afghanistan and Central Asia," 615.

¹⁸⁴ Rashid, *Jihad*, 103-4.

¹⁸⁵ Olcott and Udalova, "Drug Trafficking," 10; and Pirseyedi, *The Small Arms Problem*, 55-56.

¹⁸⁶ Roy, *The Foreign Policy*, 18-19.

President Rabbani, himself a Tajik, was losing ground to the Taliban. To stall this process, President Rabbani pressured the IRP not to give in to Taliban demands and instead make an alliance with President Rahmanov. In the meantime, relations between President Rahmanov's government and Uzbekistan had become tense over alleged Uzbek involvement in Tajikistan's internal affairs. This led to a growing fear of Uzbek hegemony. Thus, at around the same time, Tajiks, in both Afghanistan and Tajikistan, were faced with two new regional challenges, the Taliban, and Karimov's Uzbekistan.¹⁸⁷

It was these developments that forced the warring factions to negotiate a ceasefire. The IRP now entered into a power-sharing alliance with the Rahmanov regime. That the Taliban threat was a very real one is indicated by the fact that in 1998, Ahmed Shah Masood, who was the former Afghan Defense Minister and an IRP supporter, was allowed to establish a base in President Rahmanov's stronghold, Kulab. It is noteworthy that not just the IRP, Iran, and President Rahmanov, but now Russia was also supporting the Northern Alliance.¹⁸⁸

The Tajik civil war constituted an important event in the post-independence period in Central Asia. A few points are of particular interest to this study. The most important is that the Tajik civil war adapted to the specific modalities of the Central Asian region. These included benefiting from the availability of weapons and narcotics that were a result of the Afghan conflict, as well as networking with foreign combatants, such as the so-called "Afghan Arabs." Put in other words, there were a number of institutions in the greater Central Asian region – arms and narcotics bazaars, training camps, and madrasas – that made it possible for the Tajik insurgents to carry out a highly transnational struggle in which the borders between Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iran were crossed seemingly at random. From this, we can safely assume that there was also a transport and logistics infrastructure in place, by which arms, narcotics, and individuals could move across international boundaries with ease. What this demonstrates is that in the greater Central Asian region, the primacy of the nation-state had been undermined by the perseverance and increasing sophistication of the war economy. In addition, the conflict was an example of how the cause of a marginalized group within

¹⁸⁷ Horseman, "Uzbekistan's Involvement," 39; Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 101-103; and Roy, *The Foreign Policy*, 38-39.

¹⁸⁸ Roy, *The Foreign Policy*, 22-23.

society came to be championed by Islamists. This is not the same as saying that the insurgency was an Islamist one, or one that sought to increase the role of Islam in public or political life.

This was not the case with the insurgency in Uzbekistan. While the warring factions in Tajikistan managed to coalesce around a Tajik national identity by 1997, the insurgency in Uzbekistan became a threat to state power and the security of the greater Central Asia region only in 1998. But through the 1990s, anti-state sentiments had germinated in Uzbekistan, laying the foundation for a violent and highly coordinated movement that to this day poses a threat to regional security. Let us explore the background of the movement.

In the early 1990s, a populist movement emerged in Uzbekistan's Ferghana valley whose objectives supposedly transcended the capture of state power, and apparently included the formation of a Caliphate in the greater Central Asian region. Dubbed the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) by foreign observers, the movement not only challenged state power in Uzbekistan, but supposedly also propagated a Sa'udi-like literalist interpretation of Islam.¹⁸⁹ The IMU fits Olivier Roy's description of an Islamic movement that is not grounded within a nation-state, and that disregards national constitutions and secular law.¹⁹⁰

In Tajikistan, the IRP had led the broad coalition against the state. The IRP did not have the same level of success in Uzbekistan. One reason was the heavy-handed tactics of President Karimov who refused to tolerate any form of Islamic organization from the beginning. President Karimov's strong aversion to Islamist groups probably stemmed from the experience of neighboring Tajikistan, the role of the IRP in the Tajik

¹⁸⁹ Contemporary literature, mostly that produced by journalists and government sponsored think tanks around the world, refer to the insurgent movement as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. Given that the movement is an insurgency that does not directly engage in public relations, our information about this organization comes exclusively from the above two sources. Further, it is unclear to me whether participants in this movement actually thought of themselves as being members of an organization that had hierarchies, a name, and a structure, or whether this structure is the imposition on the insurgency by people who write about the movement. In addition, I am cautious about the emphasis that foreign observers place on the IMU's decision to create a Caliphate or their adherence to Sa'udi orthodoxy. My skepticism stems from the fact that from what we know about the IMU, the primary focus appeared to be championing the plight of the marginalized in the impoverished Ferghana valley, and not the creation of a Islamic polity. Yet another problem with the above is that it fits too neatly in with the Uzbek/US/Russian/Chinese discourse that sees all opposition to the status quo in Central Asia as being led by Islamists who have strong connections to, and minimal difference with the Taliban.

¹⁹⁰ Roy, "The Islamic Movement."

conflict, and the influx of foreign *tablighi* organizations in Uzbekistan in the year following independence. What President Karimov may have been afraid of was not that Islam would take hold amongst the people, but that religious organization could become a nucleus around which opposition to his power could coalesce. This was an obvious conclusion to be drawn from the role of the IRP in Tajikistan's civil war.

Consequently, in Uzbekistan there was a zero-tolerance policy towards Islamist organizations. Starting in 1992, local religious leaders began disappearing in prisons. From the very beginning, the Uzbek government sought to severely limit the political and social role of the IRP. As we have already mentioned, when the Party was established, it faced strongest opposition not from the Slavic republics of the former Soviet Union, but from the official *muftis* in Central Asia. The rift between the *muftis* and the mullahs meant that the IRP played only a marginal role in Uzbekistan. Tajikistan had been an exception in that the mullahs and the *muftis* had found the common ground of marginalization by the ruling factions.

The politicization of Islam in Uzbekistan grew out of the revived interest in Islamic traditions at the end of perestroika; as we have discussed, the latter days of perestroika saw the emergence of the unofficial mullahs who had managed to establish a popular support base for themselves. Such was also the case in the Namangan district in Uzbekistan's Ferghana valley where mullahs Tahir Yuldeshev and Juma Namangani emerged as local leaders who early on demanded that Islam Karimov establish Shari'a in the country. Disillusioned with the Uzbek branch of the IRP, whom they described as being "in the pay of the government," Namangani and his followers set up the Adalat Party in the Ferghana valley that opened up hundreds of madrasas.

These madrasas served a social function: literacy was imparted to the students, and the children were also provided with free lunch, which was a boon in an economically depressed area. Funding came from Sa'udi Arabia, in part from the *Ahl-i Sunnah* movement.¹⁹¹ Not surprisingly then, the Islam that was being propagated in these madrasas had strong doctrinal resonance with the literalist Sa'udi interpretation of Islam. Subsequently, some who took up teaching in the madrasas often traveled to Sa'udi Arabia; many became fluent speakers of Arabic. Others had had connections with

¹⁹¹ Rashid, *The Resurgence*, 78.

Mujahidin groups and Islamist networks that had sprung up in Afghanistan and Pakistan during the Afghan war. Following crackdowns by the Uzbek government in 1992, Namangani and Yuldeshev fled to Tajikistan. Namangani stayed in Tajikistan fighting alongside the Tajik IRP, while Yuldeshev took up residence in Peshawar until 1998, where he established contacts with the “Afghan Arabs” who would aid him in his struggle in the Ferghana Valley.¹⁹² The civil war in Tajikistan, and the continuing struggle in Afghanistan against the Northern Alliance provided battle experience for the IMU, which they would later apply in Uzbekistan’s Ferghana valley. Though opposed to the ending of the civil war in Tajikistan, Namangani opted to remain in the country, establishing a network of heroin smuggling from Afghanistan into Russia that provided funds for his combatants.¹⁹³ In 1998, the IMU established bases in Afghanistan near Kabul, and shortly afterwards openly threatened to overthrow the regime of President Karimov.¹⁹⁴ This was akin to a declaration of war against the Karimov regime. In 1998, there were assassination attempts on President Karimov and kidnappings in the Ferghana valley. Also, beginning in 1999, the IMU launched attacks from Afghanistan through Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan into Uzbekistan’s Ferghana valley each summer. These attacks continued until the US assault on Afghanistan on October 8, 2001.

The IMU’s sophisticated military operations have been comprehensively described elsewhere.¹⁹⁵ Our interest is in accounting for the insurgency both within the context of Uzbekistan’s internal situation, and in that of the greater Central Asian region. Within Uzbekistan, the IMU sought to champion the plight of the marginalized, similar to the IRP in Tajikistan. Given their Islamist underpinnings, this put them on a collision course with the government. From the beginning, President Karimov’s regime had a zero-tolerance policy towards organized Islamic activity outside state patronage. During the first decade of independence, the state’s anti-Islamist rhetoric grew harsher. In 1998, President Karimov made his famous statement: “[The IMU Islamists] must be shot in the head. If necessary I will shoot them myself.”¹⁹⁶ In April 1999, he declared that he would

¹⁹² Rashid, *Jihad*, 137-141.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 148-154.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 153.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, esp. 137-187.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 146.

arrest any father whose son joined the IMU, adding that: "If my child chose such a path, I myself would rip his head off."¹⁹⁷

For the most part, President Karimov remained true to his threats. In Uzbekistan, men were sometimes arrested for having a beard and women for wearing veils.¹⁹⁸ According to one account, forty percent of prisoners were convicted for religious reasons.¹⁹⁹ Oftentimes, the security forces had been known to place a small amount of narcotics or a few bullets on those arrested to implicate them.²⁰⁰ Recent reports by international human rights organizations document widespread use of torture. The following, from a year 2000 report by Human Rights Watch (HRW), describes the state-sponsored abuse and is worth quoting at length:

Police held detainees incommunicado for up to six months, regularly denying suspects access to an attorney until after the state had obtained a confession. Police and courthouse guards demanded bribes from relatives who wanted to give detainees food and medicine or sought to attend their relatives' trials.

Torture remained routine and new methods of abuse were reported in 2000. In addition to hundreds of reports of beatings and numerous accounts of the use of electric shock, temporary suffocation, hanging by the ankles or wrists, removal of fingernails, and punctures with sharp objects.... Male and female detainees were regularly threatened with rape. Police made such threats in particular against female detainees in the presence of male relatives to force the men to sign self-incriminating statements. Police also regularly threatened to murder detainees or their family members and to place minor children in orphanages. Self-incriminating testimony obtained through torture was routinely admitted by judges, who cited this as evidence, often the only evidence, to convict. Courts did not initiate investigations into allegations of mistreatment by police.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 150.

¹⁹⁸ Tazmini, "The Islamic Revival," 73.

¹⁹⁹ Hunter, "Religion, Politics, and Security," 85.

²⁰⁰ HRW, "World Report 2001: Uzbekistan."

Prison conditions were harsh, with prisoners routinely denied adequate food, medicine, and sanitary facilities. Authorities did not inform relatives of prisoners' whereabouts for months at a time, and guards demanded bribes for deliveries of food and other necessities. Prison officials often arbitrarily extended inmates' sentences on false charges of infractions. Muslim prisoners who prayed were punished with beatings and solitary confinement.... Authorities continued to deny international monitors access to prison and detention facilities.²⁰¹

But the extreme use of force by the state did not suppress the IMU. Part of the reason may be that the IMU attempted to provide an alternative to the authoritarianism of President Karimov's regime. In an interview given to Voice of America in 2000, Yuldeshev stated that the goals of the IMU were, "Firstly, fighting against oppression within our country, against bribery, against the inequities and also the freeing of our Muslim brothers from prison.... Who will avenge those Muslims who have died in the prisons of the regime? We consider it our obligation to avenge them and nobody can take this right away from us."²⁰² The rhetoric of social justice was powerful, especially in impoverished regions such as the Ferghana valley, where there was up to eighty percent unemployment.²⁰³ Additionally, there was little chance for public political participation in Uzbekistan. Presidential elections were held in 2000, in which President Karimov supposedly won 91.9 percent of the votes. Even the United States, that until recently has turned a blind eye towards human rights abuses in Uzbekistan, was forced to admit that the elections were "neither free nor fair," and offered voters "no true choice."²⁰⁴ Under such circumstances, the IMU with its promise of social reform had a powerful appeal. Supposedly, Juma Namangani's guerillas always paid for food when they traveled through the villages and he reportedly paid his fighters monthly salaries of between a

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² Rashid, *Jihad*, 148.

²⁰³ Ibid., 82.

²⁰⁴ HRW, "World Report 2001: Uzbekistan."

hundred and five hundred dollars.²⁰⁵ In a region wracked by extreme poverty and state oppression, it is not hard to see why the IMU developed a following.

Uzbekistan's internal situation explains part of the IMU's appeal, but to fully understand how the organization came to effectively challenge state power, we need to explore the regional modalities. Unlike the Tajik civil war, which ended in a UN-negotiated ceasefire in 1997, the IMU-led insurgency picked up momentum after the Taliban consolidated their hold over Afghanistan. Also, unlike the Tajik civil war, where the conflict remained largely confined within the borders of Tajikistan, the IMU-led insurgency became a destabilizing force all over Central Asia. For our purpose, this is perhaps the most important aspect of the insurgency in Uzbekistan: the insurgents in Uzbekistan had a distinctly internationalist outlook. The IMU-led insurgency was a regional movement, which drew combatants from across the greater Central Asian region and the Caucasus, including Chechnya and Xinjiang.²⁰⁶ We shall address Uighur participation in regional Islamist movements in the subsequent chapters. Until 1996, however, the political situation was still evolving, and as yet, there was no direct threat to Central Asia or China.

VII. Assessing China's Silk Road Diplomacy

After independence, the challenges faced by the Central Asian republics had the potential to adversely effect China. Faced with these challenges, how did China's diplomacy respond?

As I have suggested, after the Cultural Revolution, Xinjiang experienced one of the longest stretches of stability in its modern history. The independence of Central Asia created the possibility of increased economic activity in Xinjiang through the establishment of close economic ties; simultaneously, the end of Soviet rule also raised the prospect of instability from the Central Asian republics adversely effecting Xinjiang. The Chinese leadership was aware of both the promise and the challenges that arose out of the independence of Central Asia. Premier Li Peng's visit to Central Asia was illustrative of the dual nature of China's approach: China was willing to engage in

²⁰⁵ Rashid, *Jihad*, 166-67.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 133, 141, 145, 174.

economic cooperation with the republics but expected the Central Asian republics to ensure that unrest, particularly on the part of the émigré Uighur organizations, did not spill into Xinjiang. We can take this to be the foundation of China's approach towards the region in the immediate years following independence.

In the summer of 2002, Ahmed Rashid suggested to me that China did not have a Central Asian policy.²⁰⁷ What Rashid argued was that China did not have a clearly articulated position about its own role in the region; this was based on his firsthand experience in Central Asia where there was uncertainty, and some suspicion of the role of China. There is some validity to his argument. Unlike other global and regional powers, China did not encourage democratization and the building of open societies (a position adopted by the United States); did not seek to lock the Central Asian republics in binding economic alliances (arguably what Russia sought); did not emphasize ethnic similarities and/or promote cultural exchanges (the stance of Iran and Turkey); and did not seek to engage the religious leadership (as did Pakistan and Sa'udi Arabia). The aforementioned regional and global countries saw Central Asia as an arena that could be drawn into their orbit through alliances based on the above commonalities. Unlike these countries, China entered into the region gradually. But I do not agree that China did not have a Central Asian policy in the early years. China's policy was strategic at a level of safeguarding Xinjiang, and opportunistic at a level of seeking economic cooperation with Central Asia that would promote stability in the region. In addition, China correctly believed that economic cooperation with Central Asia would benefit Xinjiang.

One of the clearest articulations of China's initial policy towards the independent republics is to be found in an article by Xing Guangcheng published in 1998. In Xing's analysis, economic cooperation featured prominently in China's immediate bilateral diplomacy, because economic stability would help attain social and political stability in a region that had experienced a rapid and unexpected transformation. He writes:

For China, a Central Asia which is capable of overcoming its economic difficulties and getting out of its economic crises has a better chance of achieving economic prosperity and political stability. China can benefit greatly from its

²⁰⁷ Interview in Lahore, Pakistan, June 2002.

stable and prosperous neighboring states. Only when Central Asian states are politically stable and economically stable can Sino-Central Asian economic co-operation be conducted effectively and smoothly. Such economic co-operation can and will speed up economic development in the Northwest of China. It can therefore be argued that *to a large extent the stability and prosperity of Northwest China is closely bound up with the stability and prosperity of Central Asia*. It is, rightly, because of this consideration that China advocates and promotes active trade and economic co-operation between China and Central Asian states for common economic prosperity.²⁰⁸

Moreover, unlike the United States that sought to mold the Central Asian political climate, China did not interfere in the Central Asian political process. In the establishment of diplomatic relations, China emphasized the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (*heping gongchu wuxiang*).²⁰⁹ This emphasis is noteworthy since these principles allowed for divergences within political systems. (Similar flexibility was not always shown by other countries, such as the United States, where the emphasis on human rights after the Andijan uprising on May 12 and 13, 2005, led to strained relations between the US and Uzbekistan.) Similarly, when Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen stressed that differences in social systems and ideology should not stand in the way of bilateral relations, he was articulating a framework for bilateral relations that could weather differences between China and Central Asia while still maintaining cordial relations.²¹⁰

In another study, Xue Zhundu and Xing Guangcheng described Sino-Central Asian relations as “good neighbors, good partners, good friends” (*hao linju, hao huobian, hao pengyou*).²¹¹ While on first reading this appears to be an oversimplification, it also indicates breadth and flexibility in foreign relations. It must be emphasized that a certain degree of flexibility was essential for China, because China – unlike most other regional and global states that were engaging Central Asia – actually neighbored Central Asia, and

²⁰⁸ Xing, “China and Central Asia,” 35. Emphasis in original.

²⁰⁹ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 65-66.

²¹⁰ Xing, “China and Central Asia: Towards a New Relationship,” 33.

²¹¹ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 63.

could not distance itself from the region. Whatever transpired in Central Asia would impact China's Xinjiang autonomous region whose ethnic nationalities blended seamlessly into the ethnic landscape of the greater Central Asian region. For this reason, if no other, China could not afford a fallout or even soured diplomatic relations with Central Asia on the basis of ideological differences. Diplomatic tension would adversely effect Xinjiang, as had been the case during the Sino-Soviet split. Nor was going back to the stalemate of the 1960s and 1970s a viable alternative. Not only had the Sino-Soviet stalemate been a no-win situation, but also, as Xing noted, the independence of Central Asia was an indicator that the world had moved beyond the Cold War.²¹² It was in China's best interest to establish close relations with Central Asia.

In a later essay (2001), Xing suggested that Sino-Central Asian diplomacy marked a new beginning in China's relations with the region. Consider: "It is possible for China to establish entirely new relations with three neighboring states [Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan] ... As the Central Asian states are newly independent, there are no long-standing problems in Sino-Central Asian international relations."²¹³ But in a Chinese language account, coauthored with Xue Zhundu, Xing does not take an entirely conciliatory stance. The authors point to the fact that historically, the Soviet Central Asian border was the source of conflict, namely because of the Soviet role in supporting the TIRET, the Three Districts Revolution, and the ETR. In addition, in 1962, the Soviet Union had promoted instability in Xinjiang's border regions. They further identified the most pressing problems in Sino-Central Asian relations as the problem of ethnicity (*minzu wenti*), the problem of religion (*zongjiao wenti*), the problem of borders (*bianjie wenti*), and the problem of nuclear weapons (*hewuqi wenti*).²¹⁴ With the exception of the nuclear weapons that Kazakhstan had inherited from the Soviet Union, all of which were transferred to Russia by April 1995, the outstanding issues identified by Xue and Xing are those that had a historic precedent. Though to my knowledge the conflict between China and the Soviet Union in Central Asia has never featured in diplomatic dialogues between China and the Central Asian republics, they have clearly featured in Chinese strategic thinking. Perhaps not surprisingly, Chinese scholarship does not make a

²¹² Xing, "China and Central Asia: Towards a New Relationship." 39.

²¹³ Ibid., 34.

²¹⁴ Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 83-84.

distinction between the nature of organizations such as the Hizb ut-Tahrir (*yi za bu te*), the IMU (*Wuzibiekeshitan yisilan yundong*), and sees these movements, along with the entire spectrum of South Asian Islamist movements, as terrorist.²¹⁵

Of the above identified problems, that is, those of ethnicity, borders, and religion, the problem of ethnicity was said to be the most grave. The fundamental manifestation of this problem was that ethnic groups inhabited the greater Central Asian region irrespective of national boundaries. At the risk of some generalization, we can agree that the Han had historically identified with the region that constitutes central and coastal China; but in the Central Asian frontier region, there was no correlation between ethnic groups and political boundaries. The Kazakhs were a good example of an ethnic group that straddled international frontiers, with some 7.7 million Kazakhs living in Kazakhstan, and 1.1 million in China. Likewise, Central Asia had a large population of Uighurs too.²¹⁶ Though numerically smaller, we shall see that émigré Uighurs posed more of a challenge to China because of their higher degree of organization. Liu Gengchen described the ethnic situation in Central Asia as a “maze,” pointing to the different ethnic groups, the large population of Slavs who migrated during Russian rule, and the demarcation of the Central Asian republics by Stalin in the 1920s.²¹⁷ Zheng Yu and Li Jianmin saw the pluralism (*duoyuanhua*) of the former Soviet Union as contributing to the rise in ethnic extremism (*jiduan minzu zhuyi*).²¹⁸ After independence, ethnic solidarity between the people of Xinjiang and Central Asia became an important concern for Beijing. As we will discuss in Chapter Three, this would add to the instability in Xinjiang in 1996 and 1997, as émigré groups in Kazakhstan would openly challenge Chinese rule in Xinjiang.

Challenges arising out of the regional ethnic mosaic were linked to problems stemming from religion, which was the other pressing challenge identified by scholars in the PRC. As is well known, the role of religion in the PRC was restricted. This was also so in the Soviet Union until 1988. Yet, as we noted, with the lifting of restrictions on religious congregation and practice in Central Asia, Islam emerged as a potent social and

²¹⁵ Pan, ““Dong tu” kongbu,” 296-297. See also Wang, “Feierganna,” 203-206.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 85-86. The population figures are those cited in the text.

²¹⁷ Liu, “Ethnic Harmony and Conflict,” 73-77.

²¹⁸ Zheng and Li, *Dulianti, shi nian*, vol. 1, 204.

political force. Chinese scholars took a cautious view of the sudden interest in Islam in Central Asia, suggesting that religious extremism was a progression from a heightened interest in Islam. Li Jingjie saw growing Islamicization, illustrated by the rapid construction of mosques in the country, as being an important factor leading to the Tajik civil war.²¹⁹ Concurrently, in Liu Gengchen's analysis, the fact that the opposition was led by the IRP explains the increasing popularity of Islam in Tajikistan.²²⁰ For Xue and Xing, the Tajik civil war was influenced by religious extremism (*zongjiao jiduan shili*).²²¹ Though analysts outside of China have taken similar positions,²²² these arguments tend to overlook the role of regional marginalization, thus missing what in my opinion is an important point: that Islamists championed the cause of the marginalized.

Liu also suggests that the ethnic question in Central Asia was tied to "the ethnic circumstances" in the region. Insofar as Liu suggests that this may have resulted in tension between the Turkic and Tajik people of Central Asia (who are mostly Hanafi Sunnis), and the Slavic Russians (many of whom adhere to Orthodox Christianity), there is merit to his argument. But religious strife between Central Asia's ethnic groups in the years after independence has not plagued the region; I do not agree with his observation: "Among the Muslims ... there is sectarian strife. The confrontation between revolutionary Muslim elements and Islamic fundamentalism is a good example of this conflict."²²³ Though I find this to be an oversimplification, the perspective is noteworthy as it is representative of the emphasis placed by Chinese scholars on the growing importance of Islam in everyday life. The situation in Central Asia was cause for concern since it could have grave ramifications for Xinjiang; In my meetings with scholars in the PRC in 2003, nearly all were unanimous in pointing to the threat that Central Asia posed to Xinjiang through giving impetus to separatist movements. In practical terms, this meant that China had to engage the Central Asian states in a manner that would ensure that China's interests of maintaining stability within its frontiers would be preserved, but

²¹⁹ Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 104. Li's analysis also stressed the reforms under President Gorbachev, and how through the decentralization of power, traditional power structures were challenged in Tajikistan.

²²⁰ Liu, "Ethnic Harmony and Conflict," 76.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 86-87.

²²² See for example Walsh, "China," 283.

²²³ *Ibid.*

at the same time, China would not come across as being hegemonic through the imposition of its own political system on the region.

Chinese pragmatism also stemmed from their appreciation of the fact that the region would attract the interest of foreign countries. The United States had strategic objectives in Central Asia, though in the initial years following independence, US posturing was not deemed threatening by China. According to Xing, the US initially supported Turkey's initiatives in Central Asia; by exerting a strong influence through its ally, the United States attempted to balance Afghan, Chinese, Iranian, and Russian influence in the region.²²⁴ Thus, from the very beginning, China was not only geographically bound to the region and its myriad of instabilities, but there was also an awareness that Central Asia could become a potential arena of Sino-US rivalry. But at the same time, I have come across no evidence to suggest that China hoped that the region would become its exclusive sphere of interest during this time (or a sphere exclusively divided between China and Russia). There was no attempt to exclude the influence of the United States, its allies, or NATO from the region (with the exception of Tajikistan, in 1994, all Central Asian countries had joined NATO's Partnership for Peace, PfP, Program). As we shall discuss in Chapter Four, this pragmatic approach would serve China well after the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, following which the United States would deploy its military forces on the very edge of China's Central Asian frontiers.

Conclusion

Marked by violent insurgencies, continued rule by the Soviet-era oligarchy, corruption, poor economic performance, and large-scale criminal activity within or just beyond their borders, the Central Asian republics did not get off to a particularly auspicious start. Such was the bitter reality that Central Asians had to face as they gingerly entered the global community of independent nations. Insofar as the independent republics went through a painful transition as a result of the straining of economic ties with Moscow, one can appreciate the reluctance on the part of the Central Asian leaders to sever ties with the Soviet Union. These teething pains of independence notwithstanding, it is also clear that

²²⁴ Xing, "China and Central Asia: Towards a New Relationship," 40-41.

the leaders of the independent republics failed to encourage popular participation in the political process, while simultaneously failing to halt a downward economic spiral. While the breakup of the Soviet Union meant that Central Asia could escape one aspect of its past, namely direct Russian rule, it was far from being the proverbial dawn of a new era.

Coupled with the presence of Afghanistan's robust war economy on its borders, the prospects for Central Asia's stability were poor. Tajikistan became embroiled in one of the most vicious civil wars of the late twentieth century, and insurgency in Uzbekistan posed a serious challenge to President Islam Karimov's regime. All Central Asian republics found themselves awash in Afghan opiates as drug traffickers crisscrossed the region in an attempt to find the most secure route to European markets. Despite much-touted drug seizures in recent years, it is clear that the narcotics seized were minimal compared to what got through. The drug trade brought together a motley crew of interest groups (some acting independently, others in conjunction with different parties), that included the Pashtoon trucking mafia, the Taliban, the Northern Alliance, the IMU and Tajik insurgents, the Russian mafia, Russian and Central Asian border guards, Central Asian politicians, and possibly, small groups of Uighurs who played a marginal role in this grandiose enterprise. At the turn of the twentieth-first century, it was narcotics, not luxury goods that were traded along the ancient Silk Road.

These developments boded poorly both for the Central Asian republics, as well as for regional countries such as China. With the challenges stemming from non-state organizations and networks, China had to deal with threats on its Central Asian borders that were markedly different from the aggressive posturing of the Soviet Union through much of the twentieth century. Though it is not clear to me that China appreciated the magnitude of these threats during this time, Chinese relations began on a good note by establishing friendly relations with the Central Asian republics. In particular, the sharp increase in trade with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan were indicative of the important role that China had assumed in a short period of time. In developing close economic relations with the Central Asian republics, China had taken an important step toward developing close relations with the republics. Strategic partnership was the next step, and we shall explore this process in the following chapter.

Was China up to the Central Asian challenge during the first stage of Sino-Central Asian relations? I would cautiously answer in the affirmative. In particular, I believe it was to China's advantage to recognize that Russia would play a disproportionate role in the region; by respecting the existing balance of power, China simultaneously sought to work within the regional power structures. China's strategy appeared to be one by which it sought to derive the maximum benefit from the region without disrupting the status quo. China had already begun normalizing relations with Russia and this reduced the possibility of a Sino-Russian clash of interests in Central Asia. Strong Russian presence in Central Asia also reduced the possibility of Central Asian leaders themselves drifting towards pan-Turkic or pan-Islamic blocs, or drifting entirely into the US orbit at this time. Though compared to its total foreign trade, China benefited little from trade with the Central Asian republics, at the regional level, the benefits appear to have been paying off. As we noted, with the independence of the Central Asian republics, Xinjiang's overall trade received a tremendous boost. Thus, with the exception of the security concerns, which would come sharply into focus during the next stage, China had reason to be guardedly optimistic with regard to its initial Central Asian diplomacy.

3.

Broadening the Scope of Sino-Central Asian Relations, 1996-2001

Introduction

On May 26, 2003, the Information Office of the State Council of the PRC released a white paper titled "History and Development of Xinjiang," which documented state-led developments in the autonomous region during the Ninth FYP (1996-2000). According to the white paper, by 2001, the autonomous region had established commercial relations with 119 countries and regions, with trade valued at \$1.77 billion in that year. Sixty-seven percent of Xinjiang's exports had been in manufactured goods.¹ This represented a notable increase from a decade ago: recall that Xinjiang's foreign trade during the 1980s had totaled five hundred million dollars. The sharp increase in international trade was attributed to the strategic location of Xinjiang as a result of which, the region had formed "an omnidirectional, multi-level and wide-range opening pattern by expanding the links with foreign countries and China's various provinces along the borders, bridges (Eurasian continental bridges) and trunk communication lines to become China's frontline in opening to the West."²

The white paper listed other aspects of development within the autonomous region, which suggests that far from being a remote and neglected corner of the PRC, Xinjiang had received special attention during the 1990s, particularly during the second half of the decade. This included a sharp increase in subsidies for the region, the development of transport infrastructure, and investment in the region's oil and gas industry, all of which led to the creation of new employment opportunities.³ Though Xinjiang became one of the primary recipients of investment from the center after Premier Zhu Rongji (1998-2003) launched the Western Development Initiative in 1999, the white paper suggests that heavy investment in Xinjiang had been well underway by the mid 1990s.

¹ Information Office, "History and Development." See the section titled "The Economic Development of Xinjiang."

² Ibid.

³ Ibid. See the section titled, "State Support for the Development of Xinjiang."

According to Gaye Christoffersen, the Chinese government had pre-planned that funds for the development of Xinjiang would not be available until at least the Eighth FYP (1991-1995).⁴ In other words, Beijing decided to focus on western development only after the coastal areas had already seen a decade or so of intensive capital investment. But irrespective of the long-term state planning, the sudden independence of Central Asia shifted the spotlight to Xinjiang, which went from being a peripheral region to China's gateway to the new republics, and potentially to markets further afield. In other words, I am suggesting that the rapid development in Xinjiang from the mid-1990s was largely a consequence of the growing importance of the region following the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The first five years of Sino-Central Asian diplomacy, that is, until 1996, had marked the initial phase of relations between the countries. During this time, cordial diplomatic relations were established, all sides agreed to peacefully resolve border disputes, and China emerged as an important trading partner for the new republics. China had realized that the independent republics faced economic and political challenges, and thus actively sought to engage the republics in an attempt to curtail economic, and consequently political instability in Central Asia. A central assumption on the part of the Chinese government had been that internal stability within the Central Asian republics would also have a stabilizing effect on China's frontier region. In this chapter, I identify and discuss important developments in China's Central Asian diplomacy between 1996 and 2001, which I take to be the second stage in Sino-Central Asian relations.

This chapter is divided into five parts. In part one, I discuss what was arguably the most notable development in Sino-Central Asian relations during this stage, the creation of a multilateral forum, often referred to as the Shanghai Five (*Shanghai wuguo*). On April 26, 1996, the heads of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, along with Russia, signed an agreement in Shanghai that initiated confidence-building measures in the border areas; these included the reduction of troops within a hundred kilometers of the international borders, and transparency in troop deployment in the region. Confidence-building measures were deepened during a subsequent multilateral summit held the next year. By creating transparency in the border areas, the signatories were

⁴ Christoffersen, "Xinjiang," 131-133.

ensuring that the borders would not be a source of conflict as they had been since the 1881 Treaty of St. Petersburg. It should be stressed that until 1997, the objective of the multilateral forum was focused on confidence-building mechanisms; there was nothing in the multilateral agenda that could be construed to suggest that the signatories were creating a bloc in opposition to any other country.

The multilateral mechanism was retained after 1997. In 1998, leaders of the five states met in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and during this summit began jointly addressing issues of regional security, which from here on would become an important multilateral concern. In particular, the Shanghai Five countries saw the conflict in Afghanistan as having a destabilizing effect on the region. The subsequent summit, convened in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in 1999, also witnessed a new development, which was concern over NATO military action in the Balkans. During the subsequent summit, held in the year 2000, in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan's President, Islam Karimov, attended the summit as an observer.

There are two issues I wish to highlight with regards to the Shanghai Five diplomacy. First, the multilateral agenda evolved gradually; deepening the agenda was a step-by-step process, and I believe this was an essential element in the endurance of the forum. Consider the fact that during the first two years, the signatories focused exclusively on confidence-building measures in the border areas. This measured pace became characteristic of not only the Shanghai Five diplomacy, but also the initiatives of the subsequent Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Second, multilateral initiatives did not make bilateral cooperation irrelevant. This was particularly true with regard to Sino-Russian relations, which became increasingly critical of US unilateralism. During the first five years of multilateral cooperation between the Shanghai Five countries, bilateral diplomacy amongst member-states continued.

It is erroneous to assume that a multilateral forum such as the Shanghai Five could comprehensively address all issues of international concern. An important case in point was the development of Central Asia's energy reserves that attracted the world's attention following independence. I discuss this aspect of Central Asia (and Azerbaijan's) foreign relations in part two. This section begins with a discussion about energy reserves in the region. While substantial, the region's energy reserves do not put it in the same

league as other oil-rich parts of the world, such as the Middle East. I argue that the energy reserves in the region became the pretext for international rivalry between the United States and its regional allies (Azerbaijan and Turkey), and Russia. This was significant as it was largely the region's energy reserves that drew Central Asia into the world's spotlight, leading to great power posturing as the United States sought to undermine Russia's traditional influence over Central Asia. In an arena that was marked more by competition than cooperation, the United States and its allies sought to develop the region's energy resources to their advantage. China chose to distance itself from the strategic tussle unfolding in Central Asia. I suggest that this may have been because of a desire to let the proverbial dust settle before China entered Central Asia's energy sector. In part three, I discuss China's interest in Kazakhstan's energy sector, which grew out of China's increasing energy consumption (in 1993, China had become a net importer of oil).

For China, a major setback was that its much-touted offshore energy reserves had yielded little oil through the 1990s. Consequently, there was heightened interest in developing oilfields in the Tarim, which in the 1980s were expected to yield as much as two hundred billion barrels of oil. The years between 1993 and 1995 marked the height of exploration of the Tarim. However, by the end of 1995, it became obvious that the region would only yield a fraction of what had initially been forecasted, and Xinjiang's oilfields could not match the output from China's now-mature oilfields in the northeast. Consequently, China began looking towards importing oil from Kazakhstan and to this end acquired drilling rights in the country in 1997.

If cooperation in the energy sector was indicative of the promise of Sino-Kazakh bilateral relations, China's security concerns in Xinjiang were a hallmark of the challenges that independence of Central Asia led to. In part four, I survey security in Xinjiang since the beginning of Reform era, arguing that the independence of Central Asia promoted instability in the autonomous region. I also explore the security concerns as they were expressed by the Party leadership. These concerns included caution at foreign influence within Xinjiang, and the erosion of the Party's authority at the grassroots level. Similar to what transpired in the last years of perestroika, Xinjiang witnessed the emergence of "parallel" religious activity that challenged the Party's

authority. Though many of the issues under discussion in this section predate 1996, they are discussed here since they constituted an important impetus behind the launching of a countrywide campaign in 1996 that sought to address these security challenges.

In April 1996, the Chinese government undertook a massive effort to crack down on criminal activity. In Xinjiang, in addition to cracking down on illegal religious establishments and punishing local cadres who publicly engaged in religious practice, the campaign targeted anyone thought to be supporting separatism. The state crackdown continued through 1996. In February 1997, violence flared-up in the Ili region, which was quite possibly a reaction to the government's policies in the region. The Chinese government and émigré Uighur organizations presented diverging accounts of what transpired during the unrest. The Chinese government depicted the people engaged in the unrest as irrational, violent, and driven by religious zeal. But according to the Kazakhstan-based Uighur organization that was championing the cause of the Xinjiang Uighurs, the opposite had been the case, with the Chinese state engaging in an indiscriminate repression of the Uighurs. These diverging narratives are an insightful indication of the degree of polarization between the two extremes: the state with its policy of zero-tolerance for separatist threats, versus elements within Xinjiang's Uighur population, who chose to militarily engage the Chinese state despite the extremely low chance of success.

The period between 1996 and 2001 marked an important stage in relations between China and its Central Asian neighbors. On the one hand, there was potential for increasing the cooperation that had begun during the first stage of Sino-Central Asian relations. In particular, Central Asia's energy sector held great promise for China's burgeoning energy needs. But the same energy sector was also an arena of furious international competition, which indicated that in its relations with Central Asia, China would have to contend with variables that had the potential to seriously undermine China's diplomatic efforts: intense international rivalry over significant but limited resources, strategic posturing by countries big and small, and the ever-present instability that threatened to undo China's state building efforts in Xinjiang since 1949.

We begin with the creation of the multilateral mechanism by which China sought to address some of these new challenges.

I. The Development of Multilateral Diplomacy

Following their summit in Shanghai on April 26, 1996, the heads of China, Russia, and the republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan released an agreement titled, “Russian Federation, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan and People’s Republic of China on Confidence Building in the Military Field in the Border Areas.” This agreement marked the beginning of multilateral diplomacy between the five countries. In subsequent years, the multilateral diplomacy was referred to as the “Shanghai Five,” which implies the existence of a formal organization. This would not be the case until 2001; Wang Li has referred to the multilateral diplomacy between 1996 and 2000 as the Shanghai Five mechanism (*Shanghai wuguo jizhi*).⁵

In the previous chapter we noted that by the end of 1995, China had established close relations with the Central Asian republics, and in particular, had become an important trading partner for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Trade between China and the Central Asian republics continued to increase over the next five years. In 1996 Sino-Central Asian trade totaled \$778 million, \$872 million in 1997, \$955 million in 1998, \$1.39 billion in 1999, and reached \$1.81 billion in the year 2000.⁶ The sharp increase in trade was illustrative of deepening Sino-Central Asian relations.

Another important step in the strengthening of relations had been that all countries had resolved to settle border disputes peacefully. China and Kazakhstan had taken important steps in this regard beginning in April 1994; likewise, China and Kyrgyzstan had also expressed a willingness to peacefully resolve the border issue. Though there is scant scholarly information about the actual process, what we do know is that process of demarcating the borders continued after 1996. Between 1997 and 2002, the borders with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan were settled.⁷ This included the frontier in the Pamirs, which had been unsettled since 1891. According to the CIA, Tajikistan ceded a thousand square kilometers in the Pamirs to China, in exchange for China giving up its

⁵ Wang, “Zhongguo duobian waijiao,” 513.

⁶ Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 377; and Xue and Xing, *Zhongguo yu Zhongya*, 117.

⁷ Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 379. After April 1994, border accords were signed with Kazakhstan in September 1997, and July 1998; with Kyrgyzstan in July 1996, and August 1999; and with Tajikistan in July 2000, and May 2002.

claim on twenty-eight thousand square kilometers within Tajikistan.⁸ With all sides agreeing to peacefully resolve the border issue, steps could now be taken to enhance multilateral cooperation.

An important characteristic of the Shanghai Five mechanism was its gradualist approach;⁹ on a year-by-year basis, the agenda of the signatory countries expanded very slowly. This was true from the beginning; when the heads of the five states met in Shanghai for the first time, they began with a specific agenda: confidence building in the border areas. Noting that, “maintenance of calm and stability in the border area is an important contribution to maintenance of peace in the Asian-Pacific region,” the signatories called for “mutual non-use of force or threat of force,” and a “renunciation to obtain unilateral military superiority.”¹⁰ These conditions were to be achieved through measures regulating military presence in the border areas, including the exchanging of information on deployment, refraining from military exercises directed at another party, restricting the scale of the troop exercises, and inviting observers from signatory countries to monitor troop exercises. Should there be a larger, unexpected deployment of troops in the border regions, other parties were to be notified.¹¹

The agreement also detailed procedures relating to the above, which included regulations concerning the number of military personnel in the border region, the type and quantity of armament being used, the number of times annually that military exercises could be conducted, the channels through which such information would be relayed to the other parties, and how far in advance other parties should be notified.¹² The agreement also established guidelines for observers overseeing the military exercises, and regulations concerning the date, time, entry, and departure of the foreign observers.¹³ Military exercises along the waterways were also regulated.¹⁴ Additionally, the agreement called for respectful treatment of citizens from the other countries, and called

⁸ “The World Factbook: Tajikistan.” A similar claim was made to me in September 2003 at the CASS where a scholar noted that China could have claimed a third of Tajikistan but chose not to.

⁹ Wang, “Zhongguo duobian,” 516.

¹⁰ “Russian Federation ... in the Border Areas.”

¹¹ Ibid., Article 2.

¹² Ibid., Article 3 to Article 5.

¹³ Ibid., Article 6.

¹⁴ Ibid., Article 7.

for continuing cooperation between all parties in furthering cooperation in border areas.¹⁵ Finally, the agreement spelled out what the military terms in the treaty referred to.¹⁶

Confidence building in the border region was the sole purpose of this agreement. There was no mention of regional security, nor were there provisions for increasing economic cooperation through enhanced trade or economic cooperation. No third party was mentioned, and there was nothing that suggested a broader or hidden agenda. There was no indication that the signatories were creating a regional bloc. Rather, the agreement had a very clear objective: to immediately achieve transparency in military activity along the border areas. Scholars in the PRC have suggested that security concerns in Central Asia, such as Afghanistan's civil war, the ensuing unrest in Tajikistan, and the effects that this had in Kyrgyzstan, were an important impetus for the Shanghai diplomacy.¹⁷ While this was indeed the case after 1998, I remain skeptical about the extent that security concerns were a stimulus behind the initial summits. The first two summits were focused on enhancing confidence building in the border regions only. By regulating military activity, the signatories hoped to achieve transparency in the border areas that had been a source of diplomatic tension and military confrontation since the 1881 Treaty of St. Petersburg.

Transparency along the frontier also minimized, if not altogether ruled out the possibility of secret troop deployment or aggressive posturing towards a neighboring state. Most of the conflicts on the Sino-Soviet frontier had been skirmishes, which implies that these outbreaks had taken place because of the breakdown of communication and misunderstanding in the border region. But despite the fact that these had been localized conflicts, these skirmishes often involved the large-scale use of force, and almost always had the potential of escalating into a full blown war. After the 1996 agreement, if the signatories abided by the agreement – and thus far there have been no grievances that this has not been the case – this possibility was reduced.

Another reason for the importance of the Shanghai agreement was that it brought border security to the forefront of diplomatic relations; in the first phase of its relations with Central Asia, China had established wide-ranging bilateral economic relations. The

¹⁵ Ibid., Articles 12 and 13.

¹⁶ Ibid., "Annex to the Agreement."

¹⁷ Li and Ma, *Dangdai Guoji*, 156-157; Su, *Yatai hezuo*, 129; and Wang, "Zhongguo duobian," 516.

1996 agreement suggested that it was time to begin resolving the most outstanding issue between the signatory states. It was only after the borders were resolved that other bilateral and multilateral concerns could be comprehensively addressed. Considering that all outstanding border issues were resolved in the next five years, it does appear that the signatories saw confidence building measures in the border regions as the first step towards stronger relations.

Finally, the Shanghai agreement was important because it created a multilateral mechanism between China, Russia, and the Central Asian republics that allowed for the continuing development of a multilateral agenda that addressed a widening array of regional and global issues. Wang Li has placed considerable stock in the fact that since the 1980s, China had been an advocate of multilateral cooperation (*duobian hezuo*), having joined a number of multilateral institutions.¹⁸ Sino-Central Asian relations presented a new arena for multilateral cooperation, especially given that the signatories shared common borders, the same ethnic minorities, similar geographical features, and the same ancient history.¹⁹ For Wang, these similarities made it logical for China and Central Asia to focus on areas of common concern.

Su Hao has likewise viewed multilateral security cooperation as symbolic (*fu*) of contemporary international economic and political reality (*xianshi*).²⁰ The implication here is that multilateral cooperation was a more responsible approach to international relations than unilateralism (*danbian zhuyi*), a criticism that would be levied against the United States with increasing frequency in the following years.²¹ My own understanding is that the shift to multilateral diplomacy illustrated a resolve to openly and jointly address issues of common concern, and thus, deepen cooperation between the neighboring states. This resolve was predicated on another assumption, which is not only did the signatories share similar concerns, but there was also agreement on how these should be resolved, which the signatories would seek to do by expanding the Shanghai mechanism in the following years.

¹⁸ Wang, "Zhongguo duobian waijiao," 512.

¹⁹ Ibid., 517-518.

²⁰ Su, *Yatai hezuo*, 131.

²¹ Ye, "Danbian zhuyi," 59-65; and Zhang, *Xin Meilijian*, 2

Does the fact that the agreement was limited diminish its importance? I do not believe so. That the initial agreement had a narrowly defined objective was perhaps responsible for the success of multilateral cooperation. It is uncertain to what extent multilateral diplomacy between the signatories would have succeeded had the agenda been an all-encompassing one from the very beginning. As Jia Qingguo of Peking University has argued, “[T]he success of the Shanghai Five is possible because (1) they have focused their attention on areas that promote mutual interests; (2) the countries involved share similar international norms of behavior; and (3) they have taken a gradualist approach which allows time to build up trust and coordination amongst themselves.”²²

Though created to serve a different purpose, there is some merit in comparing the Shanghai mechanism with the CIS. While a primary function of the CIS was to facilitate inter-state cooperation amongst republics that had previously been part of the same state, and thus continued to share many structural ties, as per its mandate, the CIS also addressed security issues that included safeguarding stability in Central Asia. In other words, there was some overlap between the concerns of the CIS and the latter-day agenda of the Shanghai mechanism. But unlike the CIS, which failed to account for the asymmetry in economic and military might, the Shanghai diplomacy put the onus for internal security on the actual states, and not on military assistance by others. Therefore, not only did the multilateral diplomacy progress gradually, but this cooperation did not allow for interference in another country’s affairs on the pretense of promoting stability (as was the case with Russia and Uzbekistan’s role in the Tajik civil war).

The creation of a multilateral mechanism did not preclude bilateral diplomatic initiatives. In July 1996, President Jiang Zemin visited Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan; during the trip important border agreements were reached with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.²³ In an important gesture, China agreed to suspend nuclear testing in Xinjiang from September 1996. That this declaration was made in Almaty, Kazakhstan, is significant because since 1991, there had been repeated protests in Central Asia against Chinese nuclear testing in Xinjiang. (Recall that all of China’s nuclear tests have taken

²² Jia, “The Success.”

²³ Ibid. ; and “Jiang Zemin Addresses Kazakhstan Parliament.” *Xinhua*, July 5, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-132.

place at Lop Nor in Xinjiang.)²⁴ In addition, Jiang broached two important issues in a speech to the Parliament in Kazakhstan.

The first issue addressed the growing economic gap between developed and developing countries. Describing the international economic order as “unfair and unreasonable,” Jiang advocated that developed nations were “duty-bound to take effective measures to help [developing nations] shake off backwardness and poverty.” Calling for the developed countries to “lift trade protectionism targeted against developing nations,” and to “abandon discriminate trade policy,” Jiang argued that, “Global economy and the sustained economic development of developed nations should not establish [*sic*] on the long-term economic backwardness of the vast number of developing countries.”²⁵ Under these circumstances, south-south cooperation between developing countries with complementary economic, political, and social structures could lead to conditions that would be mutually beneficial. Arguing, “south-south cooperation should be multifold, multilevel, and multiform, from economic, political to cultural and social cooperation,” Jiang argued for intensifying cooperation with Central Asia.²⁶ Though his argument was phrased in diplomatic convention that called for mutual benefit for both developing and developed countries, the address was a clear proposal to develop cooperation at the widest possible level. The call for wide-ranging cooperation was significant as it indicated that China was not seeking cooperation in handpicked fields, but rather wished for a closer relationship in which the neighbors could cooperate on a range of issues. As we saw in the previous chapter, Li Jingjie had identified the broadening of cooperation as one of the principles that Premier Li Peng had sought to pursue during his April 1994 visit to the region.²⁷

The distinction between developing and developed countries, in which President Jiang identified China as a developing country, was important, for as he implied, there was a shared agenda amongst developing nations that was often at odds with the interests of the developed world. While no developed countries were mentioned in the address, and nor was there a discussion of the conflicting agendas, President Jiang nonetheless

²⁴ “Jiang Zemin Addresses Kazakhstan Parliament.” *Xinhua*, July 5, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-132; and “Kazakhstan Unhappy with Chinese Nuclear Test,” *OMRI Daily Digest* 113, Part 1, June 11, 1996.

²⁵ “Jiang Zemin Addresses Kazakhstan Parliament.” *Xinhua*, July 5, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-132.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 375.

called for further cooperation between China and the Central Asian republics, while leaving open the possibility that their interests might not always be complementary to the interests of the developed nations. As this study will demonstrate, one such conflict has been the development of Kazakhstan's energy resources. While it would be unwise to suggest that in 1996 President Jiang foresaw the international struggle that would break out over the region's energy resources, what he was suggesting was that in the future the two countries could share an agenda that might not be complementary to that of the developed world.

President Jiang addressed another important issue of bilateral concern: non-interference in the other country's internal affairs. Jiang noted: "We hope we will forever respect each other ... and refrain from interfering in each other's internal affairs. China will continue to support the Central Asian nations' efforts in safeguarding their independence and sovereignty, and respect their selected modes of development."²⁸ This was a particularly important issue in Sino-Central Asian, and especially Sino-Kazakh relations. As we shall see in the following section, Kazakhstan had a large Uighur population, and was also home to émigré Uighur organizations, some of whom opposed China's policies in Xinjiang. As we noted previously, during Premier Li's tour of Central Asia in 1994, the Chinese government had pressured the Kazakhstan government to crack down on anti-China Uighur activity in Kazakhstan.

President Jiang's aforementioned statement was a thinly veiled reference to what China considered to be an essential foundation of bilateral relations between China and the Central Asian republics: no support whatsoever for Uighur aspirations for independence. Even prior to his arrival in Shanghai in April 1996, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev had categorically stated that he would not raise the Uighurs' concerns at the summit.²⁹ Likewise, the Kazakh Foreign Minister Kasymzhomart Tokayev had warned the Uighurs in China to not try succeeding or exploiting the "Islamic factor."³⁰ Prior to the Shanghai agreement, the Kyrgyzstan government also imposed restrictions on the Uighur organization *Ittipak* (Unity), as the organization was

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ "Nazarbayev to Ignore Uighur Pleas While in China," *OMRI Daily Digest* 82, Part 1, April 25, 1996.

³⁰ "Kazakhstan Warns Uighurs in China Against Secession," *OMRI Daily Digest* 78, Part 1, April 19, 1996.

seen to be interfering in internal Chinese affairs.³¹ Though the Central Asian leadership had nothing to gain by supporting émigré Uighur activity in Xinjiang – the Soviet-era leadership was not drawn to “pan-Turkism,” or “pan-Islamism,” that could have led to support for Uighur political aspirations – the high degree of economic cooperation between China, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, ensured that China could count on full cooperation from its new neighbors in stemming the flow of separatists and propaganda into Xinjiang. Central Asian checks on Uighur political organizations were thus a crucial, but mostly unstated aspect of the confidence building measures adopted by China and its Central Asian neighbors.

The Central Asian leadership was sensitive to Chinese demands, and after 1996, there were crackdowns on Uighur organizations in Kazakhstan; this included the sentencing of thirty-two Uighurs in Almaty for an unauthorized rally outside the Chinese embassy on April 29, 1997.³² The following month, in May 1997, Kazakh officials spoke out against any possible involvement in Xinjiang by the Uighur diaspora. As discussed later in this chapter, in February 1997, unrest had broken out in the Ili region that borders Kazakhstan; it is likely that heightened vigilance in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan was a response to the unrest in Xinjiang. Though émigré organizations in Kazakhstan had championed the cause of Uighurs in Xinjiang, authorities in Kazakhstan had strongly denounced separatist activity in Xinjiang adding that, “Kazakhstan ... is carrying out a policy of non-interference into the domestic affairs of the neighboring states.”³³

An indication that China’s policy was working can be gleaned from a statement made by a Uighur organization in Almaty, where on June 18, 1997, a spokesperson for the Uighur Revolutionary Front was reported to have said that the émigré organizations were not counting on the Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan governments anymore to help attain the independence of Xinjiang from China. Following a visit by the Chinese Defense Minister Chi Haotian (1993-2003), to the two countries in June 1997, Kazakhstan intensified its surveillance of Uighur organizations. Likewise, Kyrgyzstan announced a zero-tolerance policy for Uighurs instigating unrest in Xinjiang, stating that

³¹ “Temporary Ban on Uighur Society in Kyrgyzstan,” *OMRI Daily Digest* 70, Part 1, April 9, 1996.

³² “Court Sentences 32 Ethnic Chinese for Unlawful Rally,” *Interfax*, April 29, 1997. In FBIS-SOV-97-119.

³³ “Moscow Embassy Releases Statement on Uygyur Unrest in China,” *ITAR-TASS*, May 7, 1997. In FBIS-SOV-97-127.

the position of China and Kyrgyzstan on “separatism and religious extremism” was “identical.”³⁴

By 1997, there was increasing confidence between signatories of the Shanghai accord. The second summit of the Shanghai Five countries took place in Moscow on April 24, 1997, where the heads of state agreed to further reduce military presence in the border areas to the lowest levels possible between friendly neighbors. Furthermore, troop deployment was now to be purely defensive.³⁵ Besides these agreements, the actual agenda did not proceed beyond that outlined in the 1996 agreement.

But this did not impede the development of bilateral agendas amongst the signatories. An important issue of bilateral concern for China and Russia was opposition to the global order in which the United States emerged as the dominant power. On April 23, 1996, China and Russia had issued a joint statement where they had called for the “multipolarization of the world,” and the establishment of a “new international order.” In a thinly veiled criticism of the United States, the two countries had rejected “hegemonism and power politics,” and also called for an end to the “Cold War mentality.” The two countries also stressed the primacy of the UN, arguing that the organization, “as the most representative and authoritarian organization composed of sovereign states ... ought to be allowed to play an important role in the establishment and maintenance of a new international order.”³⁶

A similar declaration was again made by President Jiang Zemin and President Boris Yeltsin following the summit in Moscow on November 11, 1997.³⁷ China and Russia were not speaking on behalf of the Central Asian countries, and their thinly veiled declarations against the perceived hegemony of the United States, and their wish to see the role of the UN strengthened, was the position of these two countries only. This suggests that while the multilateral agenda evolved gradually between the Shanghai Five countries, multilateral diplomacy did not impede the development of bilateral agendas.

³⁴ “Uighur Separatist Exiles See End to C. Asia Help,” *Hong Kong AFP*, June 18, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-169.

³⁵ Jia, “The Success,”; Li and Ma, *Dangdai guoji*, 159; and Xu, “Shanghai hezuo,” 523.

³⁶ “Text of Chinese-Russian ... April 23, 1997.”

³⁷ In addition, the most important aspect of the November bilateral declaration was that both sides agreed that the 4,200-kilometer long eastern section of the Sino-Russian border had been accurately mapped, with only demarcations of the 55-kilometer long western portion left to be completed “within the agreed time period.” “Text of Chinese-Russian ... November 11, 1997.”

But the Sino-Russia bilateral agenda should not be confused with the evolving multilateral agenda of the signatories of the Shanghai accord.

Nonetheless, it is possible that the increasing cooperation between China and Russia, and the development of their bilateral diplomatic agenda influenced the multilateral agenda of the Shanghai forum by prompting it to gradually evolve beyond one strictly concerned with confidence building in the border areas. The third meeting of the signatories of the Shanghai Five countries was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on June 3, 1998. The communiqué following the meeting suggested the broadening of the agenda. Institutionally, the signatories decided that the annual meetings would not be held only amongst heads of state, but foreign ministers would also meet on a regular basis. By itself, this suggested that all countries felt the need to increase their cooperation. Moving beyond confidence building in the border regions, the communiqué stressed the need for greater economic cooperation between the signatories, the development of transport infrastructure, and the construction of oil and gas pipelines.³⁸ As we have discussed, China already engaged in trade bilaterally with all the signatories; likewise, there was some bilateral trade between all the countries. Nonetheless, this was an important indicator that the signatories felt the need to take their economic cooperation to a higher level.

An important development during this summit was the emphasis on regional security.³⁹ Signatories singled out terrorism (*kongbu zhuyi*), splittism (*fenlie zhuyi*), and extremism (*jiduan zhuyi*), as important multilateral concerns,⁴⁰ noting: “The parties are unanimous that any form of national splittism, ethnic exclusion and religious extremism is unacceptable.” The signatories also signaled out transnational crime as an area of multilateral cooperation: “The parties will take steps to fight against international terrorism, organized crimes, arms smuggling, the trafficking of drugs and narcotics, and other transnational criminal activities and will not allow their territories to be used for the activities undermining the national sovereignty, security and social order of any of the five countries.”⁴¹ The communiqué thus highlighted concerns over developments that

³⁸ “Joint Statement of Kazakhstan ... July 3, 1998.”

³⁹ Xu, “Shanghai hezuo,” 525.

⁴⁰ Wang, “Zhongguo duobian waijiao,” 513.

⁴¹ “Joint Statement of Kazakhstan ... July 3, 1998.”

bode poorly for security in the region. It is noteworthy that while the communiqué expressed concern over the proliferation of nuclear weapons in South Asia (India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons on May 11 to 13, and May 28 respectively), the signatories made specific reference to the situation in Afghanistan noting that,

[A] series of recent events show that the international community is far from achieving the goal of ensuring a lasting peace and stability.

The parties are concerned over the tensions in Afghanistan. They note that greater efforts should be made to promote a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in that country.⁴²

It is probably not a coincidence that Afghanistan was the first country to be named directly in an official communiqué of the Shanghai Five countries. In 1998, the Taliban regime took control over Kabul, eventually confining President Rabbani's government to the northeastern province of Badakshan. As we have discussed, the rise of the Taliban was made possible by a complex web of regional networks that tapped into the ready supply of small arms and narcotics; in the communiqué, these were identified as areas of concern by the signatories. In addition, the Taliban takeover of the country was not a nationalist movement in the way the Tajik civil war had been; by capturing state power, the Taliban sought to inculcate and support movements in the region that were sympathetic to a Sunni literalist interpretation of social and state structures, both of which were a threat to China, Russia, and the Central Asian republics. By acknowledging this new threat, the July 3, 1998 declaration was an important agreement for it was illustrative of new areas of joint cooperation amongst the yet non-institutionalized forum.

While multilateral diplomacy expanded its scope in 1998, Sino-Russian bilateral relations developed yet further. During President Jiang's November 1998 visit to Moscow, both countries addressed new concerns: besides concerns over nuclear proliferation in South Asia, and instability in Afghanistan, both China and Russia expressed concern over the situation in Kosovo, military action against which had not been led by the UN. Consequently, both China and Russia argued for the increased

⁴² Ibid.

involvement of the UNSC, arguing that, “Any attempt to bypass the Security Council will lead to damage to the existing peacekeeping mechanism and to chaos in international affairs, and will bring about the fact of putting strength above international law.”⁴³ This highlighted an important concern, the implications of which went beyond NATO action in Kosovo. This was the ability of the US and its allies to act unilaterally, and the inability of multilateral institutions, such as the UN to stop the United States. In addition to their criticism of US-led military engagement in the Balkans, China and Russia also made the historic declarations that their entire border, including both the eastern and the western half, had been “clearly delimited in the field.”⁴⁴

The next summit of the Shanghai Five signatories was held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on August 25, 1999. The signatories now implicitly expressed concern over events in Kosovo. For example, while observing the principles of respecting human rights as set out in the UN Charter, the “Bishkek Statement” warned: “The protection of human rights should not be used as an excuse to interfere in others’ internal affairs.”⁴⁵ The protection of human rights had been the pretext for NATO military action in Kosovo. The manner in which the issue of human rights within the PRC effected China’s international relations through the 1990s was a complex process. Irrespective of the actual state of human rights, the perceived human rights abuses within the PRC had served as a leveraging tool for the international community against China. More specific to this study, continued and complete suppression of dissent in the Chinese Inner Asian regions of Tibet and Xinjiang, and the international condemnation this drew, was seen by China as interference by foreign countries in its internal affairs. Likewise, Russia received widespread condemnation for its handling of the two Chechen wars (1994-1996, 1999-). With human rights abuses now being used as a pretext for military engagement in the Balkans, the signatories were making a subtle but clear statement against contemporary norms in international behavior.

Military engagement on the pretext of protecting human rights was particularly problematic for China as there was a possibility that international attention could be

⁴³ “Joint Statement ... November 23, 1998.”

⁴⁴ “Russian-Chinese Joint ... November 24, 1998.”

⁴⁵ “Bishkek Statement.”

drawn to the human rights situation in Xinjiang. Consider the following argument by Pan Zhiping:

The Central Asian and the West Asian ethnic separatist groups have gone all out to seek support from the United States and other Western countries, in an attempt to build an anti-China alliance ... headed by the United States, in implementing a strategy aimed at “Westernizing” and “dividing” China ... [T]hese ethnic separatist forces have made an attempt to “internationalize the issue of Dongtu [East Turkestan] independence.... Especially, after the Kosovo War broke... various Xinjiang ethnic separatist forces at home and abroad have also intensified efforts in forging ties with other separatist forces, such as “Tibet independence” forces, “Taiwan independence” forces, and “democracy movement” forces.⁴⁶

This was precisely the scenario that the Central Asian states hoped to avoid, and with the UNSC sidetracked, the Shanghai Five countries saw multilateralism as being threatened. It is noteworthy that the signatories argued that the “multipolar process of the world is the general trend ... favorable to long-term stability of the international situation.”⁴⁷ My understanding of the Chinese position is that the stress on multilateral cooperation was synonymous with the primacy of the UNSC, in which the PRC had veto power, as the authoritative decision making body. Therefore, NATO military engagement in the Balkans was not considered to be multilateral even though the military campaign received some degree of support from nearly all NATO members. Though the “Bishkek Statement” did not go as far as contemporary Sino-Russian declarations in its implicit critique of US-led policies, the declaration was nonetheless significant insofar as it took a stand on NATO military activity in the Balkans.

The “Bishkek Statement” indicated an emphasis on addressing issues of regional security. The signatories vowed to enhance efforts to crack down on “narcotics trafficking, arms smuggling, illegal migrations and other forms of cross-border crimes,” noting that they would not allow use of their country as a base to undermine the

⁴⁶ “PRC Academic on ‘Three Evil Forces’ Threatening Xinjiang’s Stability,” *Hong Kong Ta Kung Pao*, August 10, 2001. In FBIS-CHI-2001-0810.

⁴⁷ “Bishkek Statement.”

sovereignty of any of the other five countries. Attention was once again drawn to the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan, which “constitutes a serious threat to the regional and international peace and stability.” Once again, Afghanistan was the only country that was identified by name.⁴⁸ By the turn of the century, the Shanghai forum had emerged as an organization which had fulfilled the purpose of enhancing transparency in military activity in the border areas, was gearing itself to tackle issues of regional security, and which, at the same time, made a subtle but obvious stand on the need for a multipolar global order.

The fifth summit of the Shanghai Five countries was held on July 5, 2000, in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. This summit was noteworthy as Uzbekistan’s President Islam Karimov attended as an observer. The multilateral agenda was enhanced considerably. First, the countries agreed to create a “regional mechanism for the five countries to conduct multilateral cooperation in all areas.” This would lead to the creation of the SCO in the summer of 2001. Now that “trust, transparency and predictability and monitoring in military activities” had been achieved, the heads of state called for the acceleration of military cooperation, including conducting joint military exercises. Where the 1998 summit had put into place a mechanism whereby experts and foreign ministers could also meet, the heads of state now called for an institutionalization of regular meetings of defense ministers from the five countries. In addition, the countries agreed to establish an anti-terrorism center in Bishkek.

Similar to the Bishkek summit of 1999, the declaration following the Dushanbe summit focused on regional concerns. But there was one important addition in the statement released following this summit: this was the explicit criticism of the US-proposed Theatre Missile Defense (TMD), even though the United States was not identified. The declaration stated: “[T]he 1972 ABM Treaty banning the establishment of National Missile Defense system must be unconditionally safeguarded and strictly abided by.... [T]o deploy Theatre Missile Defense system [*sic*] in the Asia-Pacific will undermine stability and security in that region and lead to an escalation of an arms race.”⁴⁹ The July 5 declaration by the five countries was followed by a Sino-Russian

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ “Dushanbe Statement.”

bilateral statement on July 18, in which President Jiang and President Vladimir Putin criticized the United States for attempting to implement TMD. Consider: “[T]he US programme to establish national missile defense, a system prohibited under the ABM Treaty, has aroused great concern. China and Russia hold that this programme is ... aimed at seeking unilateral military and security superiority. Such a programme, if implemented, will give rise to most serious negative consequences.”⁵⁰ It could certainly be argued that parallels existed between the Sino-Russian declarations and the position of the Shanghai Five countries. But the difference is equally noteworthy, namely, that in the former, the critique was muted and there was nothing to suggest that the Central Asian republics wanted to align themselves into a bloc along with China and Russia against the United States.

The following year marked another important stage in multilateral diplomacy; it was on June 15, 2001, that the Shanghai Five countries institutionalized the multilateral mechanism through the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. In its Charter, the SCO established a formal agenda that we shall discuss in the following chapter; nevertheless, here is it worth noting that in the years leading up to 2001, the Shanghai Five countries were gradually expanding their agenda. This included declarations to the extent that a multipolar world was conducive to international stability. Likewise, criticism against TMD was an important declaration that was suggestive of regional cooperation that went beyond security challenges in the Central Asian region. Since the 1996 meeting, an informal mechanism had been developed through which the multilateral interests of the signatory states could be promoted.

Another indication of the broadening multilateral agenda is discernable in a joint communiqué issued following the first foreign ministers’ meeting that was held in Moscow on April 28, 2001. The ministers drew attention to instability in Afghanistan, calling for the international community to comply with UN Resolution 1267 of October 15, 1999, and Resolution 1333 of December 19, 2000, which imposed sanctions against the Taliban. Though the situation in Afghanistan had been referred to in previous meetings, the heads of state had called for a resolution of the conflict in the country and had not called for direct action against the Taliban. In addition, the foreign ministers

⁵⁰ “Joint Statement ... on Anti-Missile Defense.”

expressed concern over the situation in the Middle East, in particular over the need to “promote a comprehensive Arab-Israeli settlement on the basis of the Madrid principles, primarily UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.”⁵¹

The communiqué also called for the lifting of sanctions against Iraq in compliance with Security Council resolutions, and also called for respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Balkan states. The foreign ministers also stressed compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1244 for the resolution of the “Kosovo conflict.”⁵² Iraq and Kosovo were areas where many Western countries, led by the United States, were actively involved, though the communiqué stopped short of identifying the United States or its allies by name. This is an important point: in 2001, the multilateral forum was not attempting to create a bloc in opposition to the United States or its allies. This view is contrary to the perspective of some western analysts who saw the Shanghai forum as being an attempt to curtail US influence in the region.

One of the most virulent advocates of this position was Stephen J. Blank of the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College, according to whom Central Asia was an arena where Russia and China were seeking to forge a new anti-US alliance. Consider the following from his testimony to the House Armed Services Committee on July 19, 2000: “Undoubtedly, the Sino-Russian partnership is overtly anti-American. Both partners embrace positions on major issues of international security in direct opposition to the United States and its allies in the UN. And they are particularly active in doing so across Central, South, and East Asia.” Later in his testimony, Blank argued that both China and Russia were “illiberal and revisionist states that cannot accept today’s status quo and are seeking to overthrow it.” Commenting that both countries suffered from profound insecurity, Blank insisted that the countries’ threat perception, “undermines the deeply felt pretensions of being a great power in both states ... hence the virulence of the anti-American rhetoric and deeply felt need for a United Front against Washington from Central Asia to the UN.”⁵³

It is an over-simplification to see the Shanghai forum as attempting to curtail US power in the region. All the newly independent republics had cordial relations with the

⁵¹ “Joint Communiqué of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.”

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Blank, “Testimony.”

United States and were the recipients of US aid. Relations between the United States and Uzbekistan became particularly close through the second half of the 1990s. Furthermore, the Central Asian republics eagerly sought Western investment in their underdeveloped energy sector. In addition, all states were members of NATO's PfP Program. The Central Asian republics stood to gain from the involvement of the United States in the region; the economies of China and Russia were also intertwined with the United States'. While it is true that China, Russia, and the three Central Asian republics jointly condemned international developments that went against their national interests, such as NATO military action on the pretext of safeguarding human rights, it is a mistake to assume that these five states shared a similar international vision. In its early years, the Shanghai Five mechanism was most successful in addressing multilateral confidence building mechanisms, and addressing issues of security. In other sectors, such as development of the region's energy resources, cooperation was strictly bilateral.

Development of the region's energy resources is an essential part of the Central Asian story after independence. Furthermore, it is impossible to discuss the development of the region's energy resources without considering the lobbying by both foreign governments and by oil companies that often acted on their behalf. Chinese scholars have been aware that foreign interest in the region's energy resources was not only to harness the region's untapped oil and gas reserves, but served the interests of the United States and its allies in an attempt to limit the role of Russia, and to a lesser extent, Iran.⁵⁴ As we shall discuss in the following section, some within the US foreign policy lobby openly admitted that containment of Russia was a foreign policy agenda, a fact that the Russians were not oblivious too.

Foreign interest in Central Asia's energy resources began immediately after independence; but until 1997, China was conspicuously absent from the diplomatic wrangling that ensued over the development of the energy sector. But the early contest for energy is still important for this study, as it helped define the regional balance of power. One particularly noteworthy point is that in the development of Central Asia's energy sector, cooperation was largely bilateral, suggesting that not all the countries of the Shanghai forum shared the same interests. This point will become particularly

⁵⁴ Luo, "Meiguo zai Zhongya," 116; and Zheng and Zhao, "Lengzhan hou," 9-12.

apparent in the following chapter when we will discuss how Russia reneged on an energy deal with China, opting to supply oil to Japan instead. Therefore, while I maintain that the Shanghai mechanism was extremely successful in certain respects, such as addressing issues of security, in areas such as the development of the region's energy sector, it proved less effective.

II. Central Asian Energy: Fuel for the Future or Fuel for Containment?

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the hitherto untapped energy reserves of Central Asia and the Caucasus lay bare for foreign exploration and extraction. With the exception of Azerbaijan, the Soviet era had seen limited investment in the region's energy sector. Subsequently, the 1990s saw frenzied international interest; the last oil rush of the twentieth century had begun. By the year 2000, over eighty oil companies had operations in Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus.⁵⁵

Today it is abundantly clear that Central Asia is not the new Middle East. Notwithstanding the actual size of the energy reserves – and I illustrate that these might not be as large as was initially estimated – development of the region's energy sector has taken place at a glacial pace. A host of factors mitigated the initial exuberance and created a risky investing environment. Foremost amongst these was the geographical reality: with exception of Georgia, the Central Asian republics, and those of the Caucasus, are landlocked deep within the Eurasian landmass. In order to transport Central Asian energy to global markets, costly oil pipelines must be laid that transit at least one neighboring country. Though the cost of oil is presently at an all time high, this was not so prior to US-led attack on Iraq in March 2003; in 1998, the price of oil had dropped to less than ten dollars a barrel. With low costs of oil and relative stability in the Middle East at the end of the 1990s, there was little incentive to invest heavily in Central Asian energy. This was especially so if we consider that the high investments in Central Asia could be offset by low oil prices, political uncertainty, and oil reserves that were estimated, but not proven to be high. This leads to a question that this section seeks to answer: given a risky investment environment, why was there so much interest in the region's potential energy reserves? The answer, I argue, had as much to do with strategic

⁵⁵ Karl, "Crude Calculations," 31.

posturing than developing the region's energy sector in the most effective way possible. My approach in this section is two-fold: first, I suggest that the energy reserves in Central Asia and the Caspian today, while not negligible, are modest compared to what was estimated in the early 1990s. Second, I argue that the foreign interest in Central Asia and Azerbaijan's energy sector has been strongly influenced by outside countries' foreign policy considerations.

The inclusion of Azerbaijan in the following discussion may warrant qualification as the country is removed from Central Asia by the Caspian Sea. A discussion of Central Asia's energy resources is impossible without considering Azerbaijan. Notwithstanding the fact that any westward export of energy from Central Asia would have to transit the Caspian and the Caucasus, within Western strategic thinking, Azerbaijan occupies an important position as the gateway to the Caspian Sea and Central Asia. This was the argument made by President Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski (1977-1981), when he noted: "[Azerbaijan] is the cork in the bottle containing the riches of the Caspian Sea basin and Central Asia." In keeping with a view of foreign relations that is largely determined by geopolitics, Brzezinski continues: "The independence of Central Asia can be rendered nearly meaningless if Azerbaijan becomes fully subordinated to Moscow's control."⁵⁶ As the following discussion suggests, developments in the energy sector were as much about extending Russian and US spheres of influence, as they were about accessing the region's energy resources.

Besides being landlocked, location within the Eurasian landmass means that Central Asia and the Caucasus share borders with a host of countries; combined, the region spans from eastern Turkey to the frontiers of China. Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, many of the regional countries on the periphery of Central Asia and the Caucasus sought to bring the newly independent republics within their economic and political orbit, though this is probably truer for the countries of Central Asia than the Caucasus. (This may be because, with the exception of Azerbaijan, the other two countries that make up the southern Caucasus, Armenia and Georgia, do not have notable energy reserves, nor is their location seen to be as important in current Western strategic

⁵⁶ Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, 46-47.

thinking as Central Asia's.) All of a sudden, Central Asia became everyone's backyard into which they sought to extend their influence.

We have explored aspects of China's relations with Central Asia and explored some of the ties that continued to bind the region to Russia after 1991. Other countries also sought to project their influence in Central Asia. Most prominent amongst such countries were India, Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey. Central Asia was said to be rich in mineral resources, and, in addition, being centrally located in the Eurasian heartland, of strategic importance for regional powers seeking new allies. Therefore, the breakup of the Soviet Union laid the region bare on two fronts: potential exploitation of energy resources, and simultaneously, removal of Soviet control which had meant that the republics could now engage independently with the international community. Not surprisingly, for foreign countries engaging with the new republics, cooperation in the energy sector was closely linked to strategic interests. For these reasons, it was attractive for regional powers to establish lasting relations with their new neighbors.

Not to be left out was the United States, which despite its geographical remoteness was an active player, both through American oil companies operating in the region, and at the diplomatic level. American posturing in the region was seen to be critical for maintaining what Brzezinski termed "American primacy." In his book published in 1997, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, Zbigniew Brzezinski saw Eurasia as critical to shaping the post-Cold War world where America had to project its influence to remain the primary political arbitrator. Brzezinski argued, "The defeat and collapse of the Soviet Union was the final step in the rapid ascendance of a Western Hemisphere power, the United States, as the sole, and indeed, the first truly global power."⁵⁷ He went on to insist:

American foreign policy must remain concerned with the geopolitical dimension and must employ its influence in Eurasia in a manner that creates a stable continental equilibrium, with the United States as the political arbitrator.

⁵⁷ Ibid., xiii.

Eurasia is thus the chessboard on which the struggle for global primacy continues to be played.⁵⁸

China, too, had a stake in the region's energy. As we have discussed, China's long porous borders with Central Asia warranted a proactive foreign policy. Till now, we have examined the origins of the diplomatic initiative between the Chinese and the Central Asian states, noting that border demarcations, security concerns, and economic cooperation were a means of strengthening bilateral ties between China and her new neighbors. But a growing concern for the Chinese government in the second half of the 1990s was the realization that with China's rapid modernization, energy consumption was not only rising, but there was a shift away from the consumption of coal, which had traditionally been China's primary source of energy, to oil, in which China was not self-sufficient. In addition, China's traditional oilfields in the northeast were maturing. Consequently, after 1997, China began looking towards the Central Asian republics, in particular Kazakhstan, as a source of oil. By doing so, China became involved in the international competition for access to Central Asia's energy.

The crux of the international rivalry was the direction of the export pipelines. It is important to note that the multi-billion dollar investments in infrastructure were decided less by the countries where the energy reserves were present, and more by foreign governments, investors, and foreign policy lobbies abroad. This boded poorly for the ability of the Central Asian republics to influence the investment of foreign capital. At times foreign countries actually blocked proposals that arguably could have benefited the Central Asian republics more.

In the years following the independence of Central Asia, Russia continued its monopoly over the limited oil exported out of Kazakhstan, and likewise, maintained a monopoly over natural gas from Turkmenistan. The United States, through the 1995 Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, ensured that neither oil from the Caspian region, nor natural gas from Turkmenistan transited Iran to the Persian Gulf despite the fact that this was the shortest route to world markets.⁵⁹ The initial decade after independence was also marked

⁵⁸ Ibid., xiv.

⁵⁹ Katzman, *Iran*, 3

by the creation of blocs with Azerbaijan, Turkey, and the United States on one side, and by default, China, Russia, and Iran on the other (though the latter was less a bloc since there was less cooperation in the energy sector between these countries in the 1990s).

A discussion of foreign interest in Central Asia's energy sector must begin with the obvious question: exactly how much energy resources actually exists in the region? Straightforward though this question might be, there are few precise figures. At the turn of the twenty-first century, the consensus amongst many in the United States was that the region was abundant in energy reserves, though just what the exact figures were, no one was certain. The United State governments' figures from 2001, drawn from the Energy Information Administrations' (EIA) website, for the proven, not estimated reserves for Central Asian oil and gas varied between 10 to 17.6 billion barrels for Kazakhstan, and between and 3.6 to 12.5 billion barrels for Azerbaijan. Estimated reserves for the two countries were as much as 92 and 32 billion barrels respectively.⁶⁰ In the year 2000, estimates put forward by the United States Department of Energy put Central Asia's potential oil reserves at up to two hundred billion barrels of oil.⁶¹ Industry estimates from the time were more conservative, with possible oil reserves varying between thirty to fifty billion barrels of oil. The region was also said to have substantial natural gas reserves. At 102 trillion cubic feet, Turkmenistan was then estimated to have the world's third largest proven gas reserves, after Russia and Iran.⁶²

Today's figures from British Petroleum (BP) are more conservative, and correspond more closely to the above industry estimates. BP's annual survey, the *Statistical Review of World Energy 2005* puts Azerbaijan's proven oil reserves at seven billion barrels of oil, or 0.6 percent of the world's total. Kazakhstan's proven reserves are more substantial at 39.6 billion barrels of oil, or 3.3 percent of the world's total proven oil reserves.⁶³ When considering the figures for Kazakhstan, it is important to keep in

⁶⁰ In the energy industry, estimated reserves means that there is a fifty percent chance of existence. The figures of ninety-two billion barrels of estimated reserves for Kazakhstan, and thirty-two billion barrels for Azerbaijan, come from official data provided by the Energy Information Administration, July 2001. <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/caspgrph.html>. (Accessed December 1, 2001). The contents on the EIA website have now changed, and the page now does not provide energy estimates. For similar estimates from March 1999, with Kazakhstan said to possess possible reserves of eighty-five billion barrels, and Azerbaijan, twenty-seven billion barrels of oil, see the testimony of Ariel Cohen, "U.S. Interests."

⁶¹ Karl, "Crude Calculations," 49.

⁶² Lubin, "Turkmenistan's Energy," 108. Lubin does not cite the source of her estimates.

⁶³ BP, *Statistical Review 2005*, 4.

mind that these include offshore reserves in the Caspian Sea. In May 2003, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Russia reached an important agreement as a result of which the three countries agreed upon a framework to divide oil reserves in the northern Caspian Sea, such that Azerbaijan received eighteen percent, Kazakhstan twenty-seven percent, and Russia nineteen percent of the Caspian's oil.⁶⁴ Kazakhstan's onshore reserves are comparatively modest; prior to the agreement on the division of the northern Caspian Sea, in 2004, BP had estimated Kazakhstan's onshore oil reserves at nine billion barrels of oil, or then 0.8 percent of the world's total.⁶⁵ Turkmenistan's proven oil reserves currently stand at 0.5 billion barrels of oil, less than 0.05 percent of the world's total, and Uzbekistan's proven oil reserves are said to be 0.6 billion barrels of oil, just 0.1 percent of the world's total reserves. Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have no substantial oil reserves. To put this in global perspective, according to BP's 2005 estimates, the United States has proven oil reserves of 29.4 billion barrels (2.5 percent of the world's total), China has 17.1 billion barrels (1.4 percent of the world's total), Venezuela 77.2 billion barrels (6.5 percent of the world's total), Iran 133 billion barrels (11.1 percent of the world's total), Iraq 115 billion barrels (9.7 percent of the world's total), Saudi Arabia 262.7 billion barrels (22.1 percent of the world's total), and the Russian Federation has 71.2 billion barrels (6.1 percent of the world's total).⁶⁶ BP figures for Turkmenistan's proven gas reserves stand at 2.9 trillion cubic meters, or 1.6 percent of world's total. In comparison, the United States has 5.29 trillion cubic meters (2.9 percent of the world's total), China has 2.23 trillion cubic meters (1.2 percent of the world's total), the Russian Federation has 48 trillion cubic meters (26.7 percent of the world's total), and Iran possess 27.57 trillion cubic meters of proven natural gas reserves (15.3 percent of the world's total). BP currently lists eleven countries that have more natural gas reserves than Turkmenistan.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ EIA, "Caspian Sea"; Yang, "Nengyuan lingyu," 12. The May 2003 agreement was a landmark agreement that resolved a dispute preceded the breakup of the Soviet Union. The issue at hand was whether the Caspian Sea was an inland sea, a position taken in the post-1991 era by Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, in which case the energy reserves were to be divided per the International Convention of the Law of the Sea that stipulates that the resources were to be allocated per their proximity to the nearest country, or whether the Caspian was a lake, a position taken by Russia, by which the energy resources would be divided equally amongst the countries concerned. For a good discussion on how this conflict evolved following the breakup of the Soviet Union, see Becker, *Russia and Caspian Oil*, 4-12.

⁶⁵ BP, *Statistical Review 2004*, 4.

⁶⁶ BP, *Statistical Review 2005*, 4.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

While these figures suggest that Central Asia and Azerbaijan do possess substantial energy reserves, they are by no means amongst the world's largest reserves. Consequently, comparisons with the Middle East, or even Latin America, are unjustified. In addition, while the region is endowed with natural gas and oil, these resources remained under-exploited by the Soviet Union, which chose to develop the Central Asian republics as export oriented economies for cash crops. Oil output in the region was limited under the Soviet Union. Shortly after independence, in 1994, the total oil production for Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan was 193 and 430 thousand barrels a day respectively. In comparison, during the same year, the United States was producing 8,389 thousand barrels per day, the Russian Federation 6,419 thousand barrels per day, Sa'udi Arabia 9,084 barrels per day, and China 2,930 barrels per day.⁶⁸ Therefore, during Soviet rule, not only did Central Asia's energy resources remain under-exploited, but after independence, the Central Asian states inherited an underdeveloped energy sector. Though the Soviet Union had been aware of Central Asia's energy resources, these resources were set aside for exploitation in the twenty-first century.⁶⁹ Additionally, the little oil and gas that was extracted from Central Asia during Soviet rule was exported out of the republics.

This led to logistical peculiarities that outlived the Soviet Union. For example, for at least three years after the breakup of the Soviet state, Kazakhstan imported natural gas from Uzbekistan, even though Kazakhstan possessed enough natural gas for internal consumption. Likewise, while an oil pipeline transported crude oil from western Kazakhstan to Russia, Kazakhstan was dependent on crude oil from Russia for refinement in its eastern refineries.⁷⁰ After 1991, Turkmenistan found itself relying on Russian pipelines to sell natural gas to CIS member-states. However, Russia refused to sell natural gas from Turkmenistan to countries outside the CIS, as natural gas was an important Russian export. In the years following the breakup of the Soviet Union, energy played a critical role in the shaky Russian economy, accounting for half of the country's export earnings, one third of the federal budget revenues, and one quarter of its revenue. In addition, the Russian Federation's monopoly on transit routes for Turkmenistan's gas

⁶⁸ Ibid., 6.

⁶⁹ Olcott, *Central Asia's New States*, 147.

⁷⁰ Hunter, *Central Asia*, 69; and Olcott, "The Growth," 208.

meant that prices were kept artificially low. Selling natural gas from Turkmenistan was not a priority for the Russian Federation, and neither was maximizing profit for the Turkmen government. (Russia was not the only country exploiting the Central Asian republics from within the CIS. Ukraine, which imported gas from Turkmenistan, fell back on their payment, entering a long dispute with Turkmenistan, thus forcing the latter to cut off supply in 1996⁷¹). But this did not mean that Russia was willing to disengage itself from the region's energy sector either. On the contrary, Russian monopoly over pipelines gave the country unique leverage over its former periphery. In 1995, for example, Russia was able to exploit its monopoly to win a fifteen percent share in Kazakhstan's Karachaganak oil field.⁷² These examples not only highlight continued Russian control over the region's limited energy infrastructure, but highlight another important point in the years following independence: not only were the newly impoverished economies unable to develop export pipelines, they were also unable to make the investment required to develop energy reserves in their own country for internal consumption.

Consequently, Russia was in a position to continue its leverage over the region because at the time of independence, the limited pipelines that did exist were ones that ran from Central Asia and Azerbaijan to Russia. There were only two pipelines of significance: one that ran from western Kazakhstan to the Black Sea Russian port city of Novorossiisk, and another that began in Baku, Azerbaijan, which also terminated at Novorossiisk. As a means of maintaining Russia's stake in the region's energy sector, the former was upgraded in a joint venture by the Caspian Petroleum Consortium (CPC), which was established in 1992. The Russian Federation, and Russian oil companies, Lukoil, and Rosneft, controlled more than thirty-five percent of the CPC shares. By comparison, the share of the Kazakhstan government and Kazakhstan's oil companies was less than twenty-one percent. Other companies such as Oman oil and Chevron had smaller shares in the project. Oil started flowing through the upgraded pipeline in 2001. Nearly a full decade after independence, the CPC-pipeline was the only major project to be completed. While this marked an important stage in the development of the region's

⁷¹ Lubin, "Turkmenistan's Energy," 108.

⁷² Rutland, "Paradigms for Russian Policy," 164-175.

energy sector, the completion of the project came with a sobering qualifier: the final cost totaled \$2.6 billion, nearly double of what was initially estimated.⁷³

The Tengiz-Novorossik pipeline attracted attention due to its high cost and the fact that the Russian Federation and Russian oil companies had large shares in the project. But a much greater controversy surrounded the construction of an even longer pipeline that was to begin in Baku, Azerbaijan, would transit through the Georgian capital of Tbilisi, and terminate on the Turkish Mediterranean port of Ceyhan (the project came to be known as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan or BTC). The BTC pipeline had been on the drawing boards since at least 1994. No other project in the region illustrated the struggle for influence and control over resources by global and regional powers with the intensity this project did. The BTC pipeline route was finally approved in November 1999, and began pumping oil in 2005; though an in-depth study of the project is not warranted here, let us briefly consider aspects of the controversy surrounding this project as it illustrates how oil companies came to represent the foreign policy interests of the western countries, especially those of the United States.

During the Soviet era, oilfields in Azerbaijan were the most heavily developed in Central Asia and the southern Caucasus. Perhaps as a result of the region's relative accessibility to Europe, or because the region already possessed modest oil infrastructure, Azerbaijan became the focus of foreign oil companies seeking to invest in the region. In 1993, an international consortium, the Azerbaijan International Oil Co. (AIOC) was formed, whose shareholders included some of the largest oil companies in the West.⁷⁴ The purpose of the AIOC was to develop the region's energy resources for export. This was not without its challenges, the biggest of which was that much of the energy reserves lay below the Caspian Sea. Besides the high cost of offshore exploration and extraction, till recently, the division of resources within the Caspian Sea was disputed amongst the littoral states. An equally complex challenge was determining the export route.

⁷³ Robert M. Cutler, "The Caspian Pipeline Consortium Beats the Skeptics," *Central Asia Caucasus Analyst*, September 12, 2001. http://www.cacianalyst.org/September_12_2001/September_12_2001_CPC_BEATS_SKEPTICS.htm (accessed December 1, 2001). The initial estimates for the pipeline had been \$1.4 billion.

⁷⁴ EIA, "Caspian Sea Regional Brief." Led by BP, the consortium today includes some of the world's largest oil companies such as Chevron, Texaco, Total, and Exxon Mobil.

Three routes were under consideration. The first route, and most economically feasible, was a route from Baku, Azerbaijan, through Iran to the Persian Gulf. The second option was linking the oilfields in the Caspian to the CPC infrastructure, whereby the route would terminate in the Russian Black Sea town of Novorossiysk. From there, oil would be transported by oil tankers through the Straits of Bosphorus and Dardanelles. The last, and economically least feasible proposition was building the BTC pipeline. In addition to oil from Azerbaijan, the BTC pipeline could potentially transport oil from Kazakhstan; natural gas from Turkmenistan could also be linked to this infrastructure by the construction of underwater pipelines through the Caspian. At just over 1,700 kilometers in length, and expected to cost anywhere between two to four billion dollars, the feasibility of the BTC pipeline was questionable. It was uncertain whether there would ever be enough oil output to make this investment economically feasible.⁷⁵ Though the first two options were economically and logistically more feasible than the BTC pipeline, these options were not considered: the route through Iran because of the United States' refusal to allow US companies to do business with the country, and also because of US government laws that disallow doing business with companies that engage in business with Iran. The option of linking up with the CPC pipeline was also ruled out because of Western countries' desire to reduce Russian leverage over Caspian oil resources. In 1997, Zbigniew Brzezinski forcefully argued for diversifying export routes from the Caspian:

If the main pipelines to the region continue to pass through Russian territory to the Russian outlet on the Black Sea at Novorossiysk, the political consequences will make themselves be felt even without any overt Russian power plays. The region will remain a political dependency, with Moscow in a strong position to determine how the region's new wealth is to be shared.⁷⁶

These objectives were articulated by US Congressman Doug Bereuter (R-NE): "Stated US policy goals regarding energy resources in [Central Asia] include ... breaking

⁷⁵ Ebel and Menon, "Introduction," 9.

⁷⁶ Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, 140.

Russia's monopoly over oil and gas transport routes ... encouraging the construction of east-west pipelines that do not transit Iran; and denying Iran dangerous leverage over the Central Asian economies."⁷⁷ In addition, since 1994, Ankara had been expressing concern over the large number of oil tankers transiting the Turkish straits. The Russian government dismissed Turkish concerns as a ploy to limit Russian control over the region's energy resources, drawing attention to the 1936 Convention of Montreux that required the straits be kept open to merchant ships of all nations.⁷⁸

The construction of the BTC pipeline began in May 2002. That till a decade after independence, only one major project, the CPC pipeline, had been undertaken points to an important aspect of foreign interest in Central Asia's energy sector: despite the intensive pipeline politics that characterized foreign interest in the region, the actual capital invested was limited. Consider the fact that at the end of the twentieth century it was estimated that the region required between fifty and seventy billion dollars in foreign investment to fully develop the region's energy sector.⁷⁹ By the end of the last century, seventy billion dollars had indeed been pledged; however, the amount invested fell far short at little over four billion dollars.⁸⁰ On average, constructing oil pipelines in the challenging regional terrain cost a million dollars per every mile.⁸¹ But the lack of capital or logistical challenges were not the only reason why capital was not invested.

Two reasons explain the lack of foreign investment. First, as we discussed, oil and gas reserves in Central Asia paled in comparison to other oil rich regions, such as the Middle East, South America, or the North Sea. Second, the political uncertainty within Central Asia, along with the logistical challenges that exporting energy from the region entailed, ensured that the number of projects that began were far fewer than the projects initially proposed. Does this mean that the oil companies were caught off-guard when they began operating in the region, and that the region was an inappropriate region for investment? The recent "Caspian Sea Regional Analysis Brief" by the EIA supports this position. Consider the following statement taken directly from their website:

⁷⁷ "U.S. Interests."

⁷⁸ Becker, *Russia and Caspian Oil*, 34. For a discussion on the controversy between Turkey and Russia surrounding the passage of oil tankers through the Turkish straits, see Aras and Foster, "Turkey," 234-237. See also Stephen Kinzer, "Fearless Turks' Big Fear? Oil Tankers," *New York Times*, October 24, 1998.

⁷⁹ Tarock, "The Politics," 815.

⁸⁰ Kemp, "U.S.-Iranian Relations," 147.

⁸¹ Anderson, "NATO Expansion," 135.

[I]n recent years, new oil finds and production performance in the Caspian region have not met levels that had been expected in the 1990s. At any rate, the Caspian Sea's production levels, even at their peak, will be much smaller than OPEC countries' output. Production levels are expected to reach 4 million barrels per day... in 2015, compared to 45 million [barrels per day] for OPEC countries in that year.⁸²

This suggests that oil reserves in the region fell short of initial expectations. Yet there was every reason to be suspicious of the oft-quoted high figures of the 1990s – proven reserves were always modest; it was the estimated reserves that were touted as though they actually existed and were accessible for quick disbursement to world markets. Through the 1990s, it was a popularly touted misconception that the region might have between four to five trillion dollars worth of oil and natural gas reserves.⁸³ This was not only a misconception, but it was a misconception that was convenient for countries such as the United States that had strategic interests in the region.

It is probably only partly correct that investors were unaware that the region did not possess the initially estimated reserves. The very fact that through the 1990s actual investment was approximately ten percent of that pledged suggests that beneath the hyperbole there was caution within the energy industry. But while the oil industry was cautious about making heavy investments in the region, the possibility of large energy resources fit conveniently into the United States foreign policy framework. In an oft-cited speech made on July 21, 1997, at the Paul S. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot (1994-2000), argued that both political developments and energy reserves in the region were of interest to the United States.

The consolidation of free societies, at peace with themselves and with each other, stretching from the Black Sea to the Pamir mountains, will open up a valuable trade and transport corridor along the old Silk Road, between Europe and Asia.... If economic and political reform... does not succeed, if internal and cross border

⁸² EIA, "Caspian Sea."

⁸³ Kudava and Craft, "Developing Nonproliferation," 208.

conflicts simmer and flare the region could become a breeding ground of terrorism, a hotbed of religious and political extremism, and a battleground for outright war. It would matter profoundly to the United States if this were to happen to an area that sits on as much as 200 billion barrels of oil.⁸⁴

Talbot argued that competition for Central Asia's oil resources was not the driving factor for US policy. He suggested:

Over the last several years, it has been fashionable to proclaim, or at least predict, a replay of the "Great Game" in the Caucasus and Central Asia. The implication, of course, is that the driving dynamic of the region, fueled and lubricated by oil, will be the competition of the great powers to the disadvantage of the people who live there.... Our goal is to avoid and actively to discourage that atavistic outcome.... The Great Game ... was very much of the zero sum variety. What we want help bring about is just the opposite: We want to see all responsible players in the Caucasus and Central Asia be winners.⁸⁵

Though Talbot suggests that oil was not determining United States policy, and that a new "Great Game" was not being played out in the region, less than a year later, on February 12, 1998, Congressman Bereuter, presiding over the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, used the exact same phrase – the "New Great Game" – to describe US interests in the region. Consider his opening remarks: "[T]he collapse of the Soviet Union has unleashed a new great game, where the interests of the East India Trading Company have been replaced by those of Unocal and Total."⁸⁶ In September 1998, the role of energy in US foreign policy was candidly articulated by the commander of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM), General Anthony C. Zinni (1997-2000), when he said that, "[United States'] strategy is basically energy driven, or its at least one of the prime considerations in determining our interests."⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Talbot, "A Farewell to Flashman,"

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ "U.S. Interests."

⁸⁷ Zinni, "Avoid a Military Showdown."

From this we can infer that the possibility of significant energy reserves in Central Asia gave the United States incentive to consolidate a foothold in the region. Of course, it was highly questionable whether the United States would ever be a major consumer of Central Asian oil, especially with the Americas expected to supply increasing amounts of the oil that was consumed within the United States.⁸⁸ The United States' interest in the Caucasus and Central Asia extended beyond securing energy reserves for their internal consumption. A 1998 report published by the United States Air Force think tank, RAND Corporation, argued that Russia wished to integrate members of the CIS into "an economic and political union." Furthermore, "Integration may be attempted ... by national authorities to change the formal institutional structure of their international relations ... and ... the creation of international linkages via market processes at the enterprise or sector level."⁸⁹ In an essay published in the year 2000, Stephen Blank described the US role in the region as a containment of Russian interests. Consider the following: "For Russia ... control of ... energy sources and their transportation to the world market means leverage, if not control, over the producer states' destinies. Politics, not economics, dominates current and future decisions about pipelines and major investment projects."⁹⁰ Blank categorically rejected Talbot's position that the conflict in the region would not divide the players amongst winners and losers, instead arguing that

[L]iberal paradigms of geo-economics that dominate much writing about international affairs is misplaced. Notwithstanding its rhetoric about win-win outcomes, the United States in practice does not share the view of an automatically benevolent new world order that is tirelessly proclaimed by many US academics and officials. The growing US involvement in the Caspian region is in the highest degree strategic or even geopolitical to enhance US and not other states' interests. It combines all the traditional instruments of power, superior economic potential and military prowess, and a commitment to integrating the area more fully into the West in terms of both defense and economics. The quest for energy, which is the source of all the talk of the new great game between

⁸⁸ Ebel and Menon, "Energy, Conflict and Development." 2.

⁸⁹ Becker, *Russia and Caspian Oil*, vii

⁹⁰ Blank, "The United States," 136.

Russia and the United States, cannot be understood apart from or separated from more traditional competitive geo-strategies aiming to integrate the Transcaspian into a Western or Russian *ecumene*.⁹¹

According to Blank, US policy was based on breaking Russian domination over the southern CIS member-states. If the United States failed to do so, Russian domination of these states would threaten regional security, diminish sovereignty, and would create an exclusive Russian sphere of influence, “perhaps even a restored union.”⁹² This is in keeping with an approach to foreign policy that saw Russia (and potentially other powers), carving out exclusive spheres of influence. As Blank had forcefully asserted in an essay published in 1997, “[Russia] ... shows that it continues to believe in its “propriety” relationship with Central Asia and that its energy policy is little more than a protection racket.” In Blank’s analysis, energy played a key role in the new foreign relations paradigms. He argued, “Energy policy is ... part of a larger overall Russian policy aimed at keeping Western states, especially the United States, out of Central Asia, preserving the region as an exclusively Russian sphere of influence.”⁹³

In the years following the independence of Central Asia, Russia did try to maintain leverage over Central Asian energy. With the energy sector contributing substantially to Russia’s impoverished post-Soviet economy, and with increasing international interest on the part of foreign oil companies, and governments, to control Caspian resources, it is not surprising that Russia attempted to thwart foreign influence in its former periphery. We saw this with regard to Russia’s control over transit routes from Central Asia, specifically oil from Kazakhstan and natural gas from Turkmenistan. The BTC pipeline proposal, despite its lack of feasibility when compared to the other export options, came to represent the struggle between Russian and the Western energy lobbies. At different points after 1994, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), attempted to thwart the proposed pipeline at the diplomatic level.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid., 137.

⁹³ Blank, “Russia and China,” 41.

⁹⁴ Becker, *Russia and Caspian Oil*, 6-12.

But for all the misgivings about Russia's interference in Caspian energy, the role of the United States and its regional allies has been strikingly similar. It is noteworthy that though the current administration of President George W. Bush (2001-) is closely linked to the energy industry in the United States and the Middle East, the close relationship between the presidency and the energy sector is not without precedence. President Bill Clinton's administration (1993-2001) also courted oil companies, and used energy as a foreign policy tool in the Caspian region. Though the Clinton administration claimed that they were supporting multiple pipelines, and that pipelines such as the CPC's complemented the US government's vision of multiple export routes, the Russian government remained unconvinced.⁹⁵

In August 1997, Azerbaijan's President Heyder Aliyev (1993-2003) was received in Washington with full honors, and President Clinton himself witnessed the signing of a deal between Amoco and the government of Azerbaijan. President Clinton had extended the invitation to President Aliyev at Amoco's behest (in the following months Amoco contributed fifty thousand dollars to the Democratic Party).⁹⁶ The following year, in 1998, Energy Secretary Bill Richardson (1998-2001) defended the BTC proposal by saying that the route addressed concerns about "America's energy security," and was also about "preventing strategic inroads by those who don't share our values." He elaborated: "We're trying to move these newly independent countries towards the West ... We would like to see them reliant on Western commercial and political interests rather than going another way. We've made a substantial political investment in the Caspian, and it's very important to us that both the pipeline map and the politics come out right."⁹⁷ Likewise, Clinton's special envoy to the Caspian region asked the oil companies to see the proposed pipelines not purely in their economic context, but "in a broader political and economic context ... [not ignoring] political considerations and political realities."⁹⁸ Finally, on November 18, 1999, with Clinton present, the presidents of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and

⁹⁵ Dan Morgan and David B. Ottaway, "Pipe Dreams: The Struggle for Caspian Oil," *Washington Post*, October 6, 1998.

⁹⁶ Dan Morgan and David B. Ottaway, "Azerbaijan Riches Alter the Chessboard," *Washington Post*, October 4, 1998.

⁹⁷ Stephen Kinzer, "On Piping Caspian Oil, U.S. Insists Cheaper, Shorter Way Isn't Better," *New York Times*, November 8, 1998.

⁹⁸ Stephen Kinzer, "Oil Companies Delay Decision on Caspian Pipeline," *New York Times*, November 14, 1998.

Turkey – all countries with close relations to the United States – signed the Istanbul Protocol as a result of which the fate of the BTC project was sealed.

Disputes over the potential pipeline routes was partly a means of containing Russia, as Stephen Sestanovich, Ambassador-at-Large and Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for the Newly Independent States (NIS) testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on May 20, 1998, where he asserted that “[The United States] absolutely rejects the idea of a Russia [*sic*] sphere of influence.”⁹⁹ But the policy of containment went beyond securing access to Caspian energy reserves for Western oil companies; at a rhetorical level, there was an attempt to facilitate Russia’s “transition to a modern, market-based economy,” which according to Sestanovich meant support for democracy, human rights, and religious freedom within the country. Sestanovich quoted Secretary of State Madeline Albright (1997-2001), as saying: “Our highest priority is to ensure that NIS countries [*sic*] build peaceful ties with the West through free-market engagement and reliable democratic institutions.”¹⁰⁰

Regardless of the interests of the United States in creating open and democratic institutions in Russia for its own sake – and I do not wish to speculate on the sincerity of US foreign policy – what is important is that by engaging with Russia, the United States hoped to make the former adversary correspond closely with American interests in the region. Key amongst this was non-proliferation of nuclear and missile technology, especially export of Russian technology to Iran. Throughout Sestanovich’s testimony there is an underlying expectation that by engaging, not isolating Russia, recent Russian-Iranian cooperation could be thwarted.¹⁰¹ Thus energy was part of a broader US agenda that sought to increase US influence in the region. Alongside energy, the eastward expansion of NATO, and the inclusion of all the Central Asian republics in NATO’s PfP Program, was also an attempt to bring the newly independent republics into the Western orbit.

Through the protracted negotiations over the potential routes, Turkey, along with the Azerbaijan, emerged as important US allies in the decade following the collapse of the Soviet Union. With the BTC pipeline carrying 200,000 to 300,000 barrels per day

⁹⁹ Sestanovich, “U.S. Policy Towards Russia.” See the section titled “Russia and its Neighbors.”

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., See section titled “Introduction.”

¹⁰¹ Ibid., See section titled “Security/Non-proliferation.”

during 2005, and up to 500,000 barrels per day by 2006,¹⁰² it is uncertain how much Turkey can hope to gain from the project in the near future. Nonetheless, Turkey had been a key supporter of the project during the planning stages, and at one point even claimed that it would be willing to foot costs that were incurred above \$2.7 billion.¹⁰³ Despite questions about the long-term financial benefits for Turkey, Turkey was keen to ally itself with the United States. For Turkey, close cooperation with the United States and Europe was important given the ongoing desire by many within Turkey's secular leadership to join the European Union.

Likewise, Turkey was important for Western governments, who wished to see Turkey, rather than any other Islamic country, project its influence in Central Asia. Since the Central Asian republics became independent in 1991, Western governments have upheld Turkey as a model of a secular democratic Muslim state for the Turkic Central Asian republics.¹⁰⁴ The Russian government was uneasy with Turkey's inroads in Central Asia.¹⁰⁵ The Russian MFA had denounced the 1994 "Turkic Summit" in Istanbul as "a brainwashing meeting with Pan-Turkist aims."¹⁰⁶ In addition, Turkey had to be careful not to antagonize Russia as Turkey's trade with Russia was ten times larger than its trade with the newly independent republics.¹⁰⁷ Despite Turkey's efforts to make inroads into the region, Turkey could not replace Russia in Central Asia. Despite the common Turkic heritage, Turkey's overtures were limited by its lack of economic might; in the mid-1990s, Turkey had a foreign debt of fifty-five billion dollars, and relatively low foreign exchange reserves of nineteen billion dollars. For largely these reasons, the volume of trade between Turkey and Central Asia remained very low.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, for the most

¹⁰² EIA, "Caspian Sea," See section titled "BTC."

¹⁰³ Jones, "Turkish Strategic Interests," 60.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 59. Turkey was the first to open embassies in the new Central Asian states and the following year, all Central Asian heads of state, with the exception of Tajikistan, visited Turkey during the sixty-ninth anniversary of the country. In the subsequent years, Turkey also initiated cultural exchange (broadcasting Turkish television), and assisted in the setting up of small economic ventures (such as telecommunication systems, banks and factories). Olcott, *Central Asia's New States*, 26.

¹⁰⁵ Peimani, *Regional Security*, 51-52.

¹⁰⁶ Hunter, *Central Asia Since Independence*, 138.

¹⁰⁷ Olcott, *Central Asia's New States*, 26.

¹⁰⁸ Peimani, *Regional Security*, 98-99.

part, at the diplomatic level, Russia and Turkey have tried to depict that their relationship in Central Asia as one of mutual cooperation.¹⁰⁹

In most policy papers produced in the United States during the Clinton era, there was a fear that Russia might recreate a sphere of influence in the Caucasus and Central Asia. At a rhetorical level there was an attempt to bring Russia into what Clinton dubbed the “European mainstream.”¹¹⁰ But in reality, Russia found itself outside and sometimes as an adversary to this European orbit whether it was with regard to NATO’s eastward expansion, non-proliferation, disputes over access to and export of energy, or regional conflicts such as that in Nagorno-Karabakh (1992-1994), where Russia’s support for Armenia was in opposition to the strong support given to Azerbaijan by Turkey. After President Vladimir Putin took office in 1999, his first visits abroad were to Tajikistan (November 1999), Uzbekistan (December 1999), and Turkmenistan (May 2000). Both Chinese and Western analysts took this to mean, possibly correctly, that the new leader was going to play a more assertive role in its near abroad.¹¹¹

By the end of the twentieth century, China gradually began making inroads in Central Asia’s energy sector. Unlike Russia, during this time China was not seen as a serious competitor for the region’s energy resources. On the contrary, as we shall discuss subsequently, at least one analyst was dismissive about the possibility that China would actually be developing oilfields that it had acquired in Kazakhstan in 1997. Few predicted that an oil pipeline would link China and Kazakhstan in 2005. But with a rapid increase in energy consumption in China in the 1990s, and with the country’s own oil reserves proving to be disappointing, China needed to develop a strategy that could secure energy for the country’s rapid modernization. How China’s energy production and consumption changed, and the role that Central Asia would play in China’s energy strategy, is explored in the following section.

III. China’s Evolving Energy Needs

Unlike other countries that were keen to tap into Central Asia’s energy sector and transport energy from the region for economic and strategic reasons (Russia, Turkey,

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 101.

¹¹⁰ Sestanovich, “U.S. Policy Towards Russia.” See under “Introduction.”

¹¹¹ Jonson, “Russia and Central Asia,” 100-104; and Zhao, “Zhongya xingshi.” 55.

Iran, India, Pakistan), or for mostly strategic reasons (the United States), China's response to Central Asia's supposed energy bonanza was initially muted. Unlike the aforementioned countries, China played little or no role in the debates surrounding the routing of the Caspian's energy resources, largely because being to the east of Central Asia, the westward routes were of little immediate consequence.

From a strategic perspective as well, China did not interfere in the debates surrounding the potential routes. While the United States and its regional allies spent a decade trying to curtail Russia and Iran's influence in the Caspian region, the Chinese engaged in low-profile negotiations with Kazakhstan to import oil and gas. At the end of 2005, China began importing oil from Kazakhstan, concluding what may be the most successful project so far to exploit the region's energy resources. Unlike the strategic positioning of the United States and Russia with regard to the region's energy resources, the approach taken by China was pragmatic with an eye to providing China with a steady and diversified supply of oil. The evolution of Sino-Central Asian cooperation in the energy sector until 2001 is covered in this section with subsequent developments covered in the next chapter.

In 1949, China's energy sector was highly underdeveloped, and was predominantly geared towards deriving energy from coal, of which China has the third largest supply after the United States and Russia. Annual oil output was a mere 120,000 metric tons, or 900,000 barrels. By the end of the First FYP (1953-1957), China's oil output had increased twelve-fold, though coal still accounted for 96.96 percent of China's energy output. Oil production continued to increase rapidly from thereon; by 1962, annual output was at seven million metric tones, or just over fifty million barrels of oil, which then increased to thirty million metric tones, or more than two hundred million barrels of oil per year by 1972. While China's reliance on coal decreased during this time, coal still constituted more than eighty percent of energy output in the years prior to 1978.¹¹²

During the 1970s, China became an exporter of oil, exporting to Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, and Thailand.¹¹³ This suggests the development of

¹¹² Ling, *The Petroleum Industry*, 3-5.

¹¹³ Bartke, *Oil*, 40-41.

three important trends in the PRC during the early decades. The first was the rapid development of the energy sector in the PRC from 1949 to 1976, which corresponded to the overall industrial development during this time. Maurice Meisner has drawn our attention to the fact that contrary to popular perceptions that see the Mao years as exclusively emphasizing rural modes of production, rapid industrialization also occurred. As a result, China became one of the most industrialized countries in the world in little more than a quarter of a century.¹¹⁴ This rapid growth was reflected in the energy sector as well, leading one analyst to observe in 1977, that “there can be no possible doubt regarding the excellent progress China’s oil industry has made.”¹¹⁵ Second, the nature of energy consumption was such that coal, which was available in most parts of China, was the primary source of fueling the industrialization process. On the other hand, oil was mostly located in the geographically remote northeast (in oilfields such as Daqing), and was also projected to exist in large quantities in Gansu and Xinjiang. However, during the Mao era, and the subsequent decade, these remained largely, although not entirely, undeveloped because of the massive investment that would be required to exploit these resources.¹¹⁶ In addition, there were said to be substantial deposits in the disputed South China Sea. Third, based on consumption patterns within the PRC, we can postulate that there was relatively little consumption of oil, which was then mostly consumed by civil aviation, shipping, military, and mechanized farm equipment.¹¹⁷

As the 1970s progressed, important changes took place within China’s energy sector. First, geologists discovered that though China still had abundant reserves of coal, the most accessible veins were either running low, or had been depleted. This meant that coal had to be excavated either through the more remote veins, or mined in the more remote parts of the country, and then transported to the industrial areas. Both scenarios meant rising costs of energy.¹¹⁸ Second, during the 1980s, the pattern of energy consumption underwent important changes as China began attracting foreign industry. In addition, the rapid increase in personal vehicles and the rising standards of living meant

¹¹⁴ Meisner, *The Deng Xiaoping Era*, 189. Between 1949 and 1976, total industrial output increased thirty-fold, and heavy industry increased ninety-fold. Even during the decade of the Cultural Revolution, industrial production increased by ten percent annually.

¹¹⁵ Bartke, *Oil*, 12.

¹¹⁶ Ling, *The Petroleum Industry*, 6

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 33-38.

¹¹⁸ Harrison, *China, Oil*, 13.

that a shift occurred whereby China went from being an exporter of oil in the 1970s, to being a net importer beginning in 1993.¹¹⁹ Finally, another important development was that the country's estimates for offshore energy reserves, especially in the Bohai Gulf, were scaled back considerably from estimates made in the mid-1970s. In the early 1970s, China was estimated to have extremely large offshore reserves. Although estimates varied, contemporary analysts suggested that the Bohai Gulf alone could have had more than a hundred billion barrels of oil, or ten times the oil of the Persian Gulf, or enough oil for Asia's consumption over the next fifty to sixty years.¹²⁰ Others estimated that sixty-five to seventy-five percent of China's reserves might actually lie in the northwest of the country.¹²¹ Although limited oil production and refinement was taking place in Xinjiang as early as 1959 at the Karamai oilfields located between the Altai mountains and the Tianshan, for the most part the region was considered inaccessible and logistically unfeasible for large-scale exploitation until the 1990s.¹²²

By 1990, China's energy needs were still predominantly being met by coal; the fuel supplied 76.2 percent of the country's energy needs. Oil accounted for 16.6 percent of the energy consumed, and natural gas 2.1 percent. The remaining 5.1 percent was made up by hydro-electricity. These figures remained relatively steady over the next five years, with figures from 1995 marking a slight increase in oil consumption and a corresponding decrease in coal consumption.¹²³ But energy consumption figures from 2001 are markedly different, where the percentage of coal consumed declined to 67 percent, oil increased to 23.6 percent, and natural gas and hydro-electricity made up 2.5 percent and 6.9 percent of the total energy consumed. The reason for these changes, as Philips Andrews-Speed suggests, was the shutting down of many state-owned enterprises and a shift from heavy to light industry.¹²⁴ In addition, private vehicle ownership was rising steadily.

Interest in Xinjiang's energy reserves in the early 1990s was not only a result of rising oil consumption, and the maturing of the traditional oilfields of Daqing and Shengli

¹¹⁹ Andrews-Speed, *Energy Policy*, 11.

¹²⁰ Harrison, *China, Oil*, 20, 37, 42-45; and Ling, *The Petroleum Industry*, 57.

¹²¹ Harrison, *China, Oil*, 38.

¹²² Ibid., 38; and Ling, *The Petroleum Industry*, 68.

¹²³ Andrews-Speed, *Energy Policy*, 11. Figures for energy consumption in 1995 were coal 74.6 percent, oil 17.5 percent, natural gas 1.8 percent, and hydro-electricity 6.1 percent.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

in the northeast, but also because a decade of offshore exploration had yielded little in terms of large energy deposits. Between 1982 and 1993, Western oil companies had spent \$3.2 billion searching for offshore oil with little luck.¹²⁵ For foreign oil companies, offshore exploration had proved financially unviable; for the Chinese government, the failure to find and extract significant oil from its offshore reserves through the 1980s was an indication that offshore reserves, which in the 1970s were estimated to be as large as a hundred billion barrels, were instead quite modest. In 1992, total offshore production was 3.5 million tons, or just over 25 million barrels of oil, constituting a mere 2.5 percent of China's total output. The Bohai Gulf, that in the 1970s was thought to rival the Persian Gulf, produced just over 7 million barrels of oil during that year.¹²⁶ With offshore production disappointing, the Chinese petroleum industry turned its sights to the Tarim and its promise of large, untapped energy resources.

Based on seismic data from the 1980s, experts within China's oil industry believed that the Tarim had reserves of 80 to 180 billion barrels of oil,¹²⁷ though by the early 1990s these estimates had been scaled back to 70 billion barrels.¹²⁸ This was still a very substantial quantity; in 1991, besides the Tarim reserves, China's total recoverable reserves were estimated at 24 billion barrels.¹²⁹ Put another way, had these estimates for the Tarim been correct, China's oil reserves would have quadrupled. Consequently, during the Eighth FYP (1991-1995), Xinjiang became a "national priority region," which gave it priority in purchasing equipment and deploying construction teams. The exploration of oilfields took place simultaneously with construction of highways through Xinjiang's inhospitable Taklamakan desert.¹³⁰

Systematic exploration of the Tarim began. According to one account, in 1991, the CNPC had already invested \$20 million in drilling a discovery well.¹³¹ Though the location of their projects was not specified, in early September 1992, the China Petro-Chemical Corporation (CPCC) announced that it was investing more than RMB 10

¹²⁵ Carl Goldstein, "Crude Optimism: Peking Pins Faith on Oil tenders," *FEER*, February 11, 1993, 53.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ Pamela Yatsko, "Oh, Well: China's Tarim Basin is Providing a Big Disappointment," *FEER*, September 19, 1996; and "Tarim Basin, A Promising Oil Resource," *Beijing Review*, November 20-26, 1989.

¹²⁸ Carla Goldstein, "Final Frontier," *FEER*, June 10, 1993.

¹²⁹ Carla Goldstein, "Oil men on Silk Road," *FEER*, 4 March 1993.

¹³⁰ Li Rongxia, "Tarim Basin: New Hope for China's Oil Industry," *Beijing Review*, April 24-30, 1995.

¹³¹ Carla Goldstein, "Oil men on Silk Road," *op. cit.*

billion, which in addition to yielding large amounts of polyester, synthetic ammonia, and urea, was expected increase the petroleum output in Xinjiang by 10 million tons, or 7.3 million barrels of oil by 1995.¹³² In addition, the China government also opened the region to foreign exploration in 1993. A total of 68 companies paid up to \$600,000 for seismological data (after which the bidding would begin), for individual oil wells spread out over five blocks in the southeast of the Taklamakan. These wells were specifically earmarked for foreign development. Consortiums of foreign companies that included Exxon, Agip, BP, and Texaco secured blocks. Though the region was remote and inhospitable, with oil wells needing to be three times as deep as regular wells, there was great expectation of discovering large quantities of oil.¹³³ Thirty thousand workers labored on the oilfields in the Tarim. In what would then have been a major investment, the CNPC agreed to foot the bill for a proposed nine to twelve billion dollar pipeline to transport the oil to the coastal areas (the limited oil produced in Xinjiang had traditionally been transported by rail).¹³⁴

By 1995, China was reporting proven oil and gas reserves of 300 million tons, which could yield up to two billion barrels of oil. Chinese oil companies already drilling in the field exceeded their target of annual extraction of five million tons by the end of the Eight FYP.¹³⁵ Proven reserves were expected to pass seven billion barrels of oil by the year 2000. These were significant reserves, though of course nowhere near what had initially been projected, and what the foreign companies had been hoping for. By the end of 1995, it became abundantly clear that the Tarim's oil reserves might have been grossly overestimated. At the end of 1995, when the Chinese government announced that eight more blocks were being opened for development by foreign companies, the response was lukewarm. Thus, within a short span between 1993 and 1995, the Tarim went from being a coveted region for development by foreign companies, to one that was not worth investing in.¹³⁶ Though foreign interest ebbed, the region continued to see high levels of investment from the Chinese energy companies, and was touted to equal Daqing in

¹³² "Xinjiang to Establish Petrochemical Bases," *Xinhua*, September 1, 1992. In FBIS-CHI-92-172. As a result of these developments, it was projected that Xinjiang would become the largest chemical fertilizer and fiber production base in Northwest China.

¹³³ Pamela Yatsko, "Oh, Well: China's Tarim Basin is Providing a Big Disappointment," *op. cit.*

¹³⁴ Carla Goldstein, "Final Frontier," *op. cit.*

¹³⁵ Li Rongxia, "Tarim Basin: New Hope for China's Oil Industry," *op. cit.*

¹³⁶ Pamela Yatsko, "Oh, Well: China's Tarim Basin is Proving a Big Disappointment," *op. cit.*

annual oil output by 2008.¹³⁷ As we shall discuss in the subsequent chapter, after 2001, while internal investment in China's energy sector intensified, particularly with the construction of pipelines that would link the energy reserves of the western regions with the coastal areas, this investment was mostly in the development and transport of natural gas.

With energy consumption on the increase, and the Tarim not yielding the quantity of oil that was initially expected, China began to explore the possibility of importing oil from the newly independent republics of Central Asia. In 1996, experts from the CASS, the CNPC, and the State Planning Commission called for the construction of a pan-Asian pipeline bridge which would see the construction of oil and gas pipelines spanning the Eurasian landmass from the Middle East through Central Asia, China, and continuing to Japan, and the Republic of Korea (ROK). What the Chinese experts were proposing was an energy web that could import up to a fifth of the foreign oil into East Asia. The Chinese planners hoped that the proposed infrastructure could be linked with the pipelines that were being planned to transport energy from the Tarim to the coastal areas.¹³⁸ The proposed trans-Asia energy web was in keeping with a greater role that was being envisioned for Xinjiang, by which the autonomous region would act as a bridgehead for the countries of Central Asia who could also rely on Chinese transport infrastructure to move goods across China. Improvement in transport facilities, such as the Urumqi to Kashgar railway that was opened in 1999, was also intended to facilitate the movement of foreign traders in the region.¹³⁹ By 1999, Central Asian republics were already trading with the ROK, Japan, United States, Australia, Thailand, and Malaysia through Chinese ports.¹⁴⁰

Beginning in 1997, the Chinese began pursuing oil and gas projects in Central Asia. During that year, the Chinese government secured contracts to develop two oilfields in Kazakhstan at Aktyubinsk and Uzen, that were valued at \$4 billion and \$1.3 billion

¹³⁷ "Xinjiang Said PRC's Next Major Petroleum, Gas Producer," *Xinhua*, February 22, 2001. In FBIS-CHI-2001-0222. According to projections made in the beginning of 2001, by 2008, Xinjiang's annual output of oil was expected to reach 50 million tons.

¹³⁸ "Experts Call for Pan-Asia Continental Oil Bridge," *Xinhua*, June 16, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-117.

¹³⁹ "Xinjiang's Effort to Become Trade Center," *Renmin ribao*, November 30, 1999. In FBIS-CHI-1999-1229.

¹⁴⁰ "PRC Said Becoming Gateway for Central Asia," *Xinhua*, June 8, 1999. In FBIS-CHI-1999-0608

respectively.¹⁴¹ Factoring in the cost of pipeline construction from Kazakhstan to China, the Chinese government pledged \$9.5 billion in Kazakhstan's energy sector.¹⁴² But in doing so, the Chinese government now found itself in a conflict with Western oil companies. To secure development and exclusive production rights at Uzen for example, the Chinese had to outbid Amoco, Texaco, and Unocal.¹⁴³ In 1999, just two years after the agreement, a skeptical analyst in the *RFE/RL Newsline* suggested that China had actually not been committed to constructing a pipeline from Kazakhstan to Xinjiang, but had outbid the Western companies to secure a sphere of influence in the region; in other words, "China may ... have sought to extend its influence over Kazakhstan with promises it was unlikely to fulfill."¹⁴⁴ Of course, with a pipeline from Kazakhstan to China becoming operational in December 2005, we know that this has not been the case. Notwithstanding the fact that 1998 saw some of the lowest oil prices in recent history, (which made investments in pipelines unfeasible at the time), and notwithstanding the fact that it was unlikely that construction of a pipeline from Kazakhstan to China would begin just two years after an agreement was reached, the position of the analyst was an indicator that many in the Western world reacted to China's entry into Central Asia with a mixture of caution and skepticism.

At the risk of some generalization, I believe that foreign analysts have not been sensitive to China's growing energy needs; we shall see this in the following chapter, when we survey the reaction to China's development of oilfields in Kazakhstan and acquisitions of energy reserves elsewhere in the world. Maintaining a steady and secure supply of oil is a national security concern for most countries, and China is no exception. After 2001, China's energy security became an important concern for many analysts within the PRC who have written extensively on the topic.¹⁴⁵ Prior to 2001, and the subsequent engagement of Western countries in the Middle East, there was comparatively less emphasis on the need for energy security; rather, the emphasis was on diversifying

¹⁴¹ Andrews-Speed, *Energy Policy*, 64.

¹⁴² "On Sino-Kazakhstan's Bright Future Trade," *Xinhua*, March 27, 2000. In FBIS-CHI-2000-0327.

¹⁴³ Michael Lelyveld, "Kazakhstan: Pipeline Projects to China Become Pipe Dreams," *RFE/RL*, July 8, 1999. <http://www.rferl.org/features/1999/07/f.ru.990708131844.asp> (accessed November 9, 2005).

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁵ Shan, "Shi lun shiyou," 5-11; Tian, "2002 nian Zhongguo," 24-30; and "Zuohao baozhang shiyou."

the supply of oil. The overall Chinese assumption, which was largely sound, was that the more diverse the supply of energy, the more secure it would be.

After China became a net importer of oil in 1993, its primary source was from countries of Southeast Asia, namely Indonesia and Malaysia. However, by the middle of the decade, China was increasingly relying on oil from countries such as Sa'udi Arabia, Iran, Oman, and Yemen. By 1996, between thirty and thirty-five percent of China's oil imports were from the Middle East (at this time China was not importing natural gas).¹⁴⁶ Looking to the future, China's dependency on imported oil was projected to increase continuously: in the twenty-five year period between 1996 and 2000, demand for oil was expected to grow at 3.8 percent, which meant an increase in consumption from 3.5 million barrels per day to 8.8 million barrels per day, while China's internal production of oil remained stagnant.¹⁴⁷ Though China was the fifth largest producer of oil in the world in 1997, it was also the third largest consumer.¹⁴⁸ Thus, it was in China's best interest to secure a share in diverse energy rich countries of the world. Besides Central Asia, Chinese companies actively engaged in the development of energy in the Sudan (which in 1998 was the largest energy development project undertaken by a Chinese company, with an expected capacity of eight million tons or over fifty-five million barrels of oil by the end of the century), Venezuela, and Peru. In addition, Chinese companies were also involved in the development of the natural gas industry in Bangladesh, Thailand, and Malaysia.¹⁴⁹

Because of its proximity, importing oil and gas from Central Asia offered benefits to China that other distant regions did not. The first advantage was that energy imported from Central Asia could be transported via planned pipelines into China. Yet another benefit was that the energy could be imported overland without having to transit through the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, and the Taiwan Straits, that is through routes that were hard to protect. A study published by the RAND Corporation in the year 2000, argued that China saw the United States' role in East Asia as threatening China's energy security. The author suggests that Chinese investment in Central Asia's energy sector was

¹⁴⁶ Andrews-Speed, *Energy Policy*, 66-68.

¹⁴⁷ Downs, *China's Quest*, 5.

¹⁴⁸ Si Liang, "Article Views PRC's Petroleum Strategy," *Zhongguo tongxun she*, March 24, 1998. In FBIS-CHI-98-083.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

because the PRC was threatened by American power.¹⁵⁰ To be sure, the 1990s saw a worsening of Sino-US relations over the previous decade, with tensions rising particularly during the Taiwan Straits crises of 1995 and 1996; this heightened tension was sometimes reflected in the Chinese press and academia, which are the sources that the RAND analyst has used to gauge the need for energy security. But it must also be kept in mind that during the same decade of worsening diplomatic Sino-US relations, economic interdependence between the two was growing. To what extent China was threatened by the possibility of a maritime energy embargo is debatable, though this idea found resonance also amongst Russian analysts who by the year 2000, were calling for increased energy cooperation between Russia and China through the construction of oil pipelines.¹⁵¹

A similar argument was made in an article by Zhu Xingshan and Zhou Dadi that appeared in *Guoji shiyou jingji* (International Petroleum Economics), where the authors argued that by 2020, China would be importing fifty percent of its oil, as a result of which, China should not only diversify its sources of procurement, but also diversify means of transport, and build stockpiles.¹⁵² But it is my argument that while there may have been concern over energy security prior to 2001, this concern intensified in the years following active US engagement in the Middle East. The hypothesis that I propose is that it was less the fear of an energy embargo in the Taiwan Straits in the pre-2001 years, and more a fear of increasing US control over the sources of energy in the Middle East that prompted the need for China to be more proactive about its energy supply. This occurred after 2001, and shall be addressed subsequently.

There may be another factor for China's delay in developing energy projects in Central Asia, which was that China was mindful of the tussle over Central Asian energy between 1991 and 2000, and chose to distance itself from it. Within China there was an appreciation that the US was seeking to influence the direction of the export pipelines and by doing so, was encroaching on Russia's traditional sphere of influence (*Eluosi de*

¹⁵⁰ Downs, *China's Quest*, 44-46.

¹⁵¹ For example, see, "Russia seeks 'Energy Alliance' with PRC," *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, April 4, 2000. In FBIS-CHI-2000-0407. I explore the plans to construct pipelines carrying energy from Russia to China in detail in the following chapter.

¹⁵² Zhu and Zhou, "Ruhe kandai Zhongguo," 5-8.

chuantong shili fanwei).¹⁵³ Zhu Qihuang has suggested that given the strategic tug of war between oil companies and the governments they represented, and given the uncertainty of the Caspian reserves, the 1990s were not an opportune time for investment by Chinese companies. Finally, in September 2002, construction of the BTC pipeline began. Writing shortly afterwards, Zhu argued that this marked an opportune moment for China to invest in Central Asia's energy sector.¹⁵⁴ From this perspective, we see China exercising its proverbial patience, stepping into the arena only after the decade-long controversy over pipeline routes was settled. Zhu also suggests that China showed increased confidence investing in Central Asia's energy sector because of its multilateral diplomacy with the Central Asian states. However, I am uncertain about the extent that multilateral diplomacy eased China's entry into the region's energy sector. Cooperation in the energy sector was almost entirely a bilateral venture; multilateral agreements could do little to facilitate this process, besides perhaps increasing mutual confidence through joint measures. It is my understanding that multilateral diplomacy was geared towards addressing issues where there was a strong convergence of interests; the multilateral initiative was not an attempt to address all issues of international concern in Central Asia.

In the following sections we discuss the area where multilateral cooperation was perhaps most successful: in addressing, though not always resolving, the region's security concerns. As we noted earlier, concern over regional security became paramount after the 1998 summit in Almaty, which followed nearly two years of unrest in Xinjiang. Insofar as 1997 marked the last years when there was large-scale unrest in Xinjiang, we can perhaps argue that from China's perspective, the emphasis on regional security paid off. In the following two sections we explore the buildup to unrest in Xinjiang in 1996 and 1997, and how it manifested itself in the region.

IV. Internal and External Dimensions of Instability in Xinjiang

In our discussion on the evolution of multilateral diplomacy between China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, we noted that the Almaty summit of 1998 marked a shift in emphasis from confidence building measures in the border areas to

¹⁵³ Wang, "Yingxiang diqu jushi," 10.

¹⁵⁴ Zhu, "Zhongya youqi," 32-37.

emphasis on regional security. That regional security appeared on the multilateral agenda was suggestive of an enduring challenge to state power across the region. The very fact that the issue featured in the multilateral agenda indicated that members of the Shanghai forum believed that cooperation was an effective way of addressing these transnational challenges.

Of course, challenges to state power across the region were not uniform, but differed widely in content. On the one hand, the most devastating conflict of the region, the Tajik civil war, was fought amongst regional factions who finally coalesced after they were threatened by the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan. Though the opposition to the Tajik government was led by the IRP, an Islamist organization, the IRP drew its support based on the economic and political marginalization of regional groups. There was no call for the creation of a Caliphate, or the implementation of Shari'a, that is, there was no attempt on the part of the IRP to use the state as a tool for the promotion of Islam. The other conflict that had adversely effected stability was the insurgency rooted in Uzbekistan's Ferghana valley. Unlike the civil war in Tajikistan, a conflict mostly confined within the borders of the republic, the insurgency in Uzbekistan had been transnational in which combatants moved between Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and the border regions of Pakistan. In its emphasis on social justice, and in its avowed objective of overthrowing the Karimov regime, the Uzbek insurgency was different from the conflict in Tajikistan, despite the fact that at some level both movements drew on people's adherence to Islam. Straddling the internationalism of the Uzbek insurgents, and the nationalism of the IRP-led combatants, was a third group that opposed state power in the greater Central Asian region: loosely-knit Uighur organizations that sought to challenge Chinese rule in Xinjiang.

But while challenges to state power varied in the different countries, all such challenges were fed by the modalities of the greater Central Asian region and Afghanistan's war economy. In Chapter Two, we had explored the insurgency in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; here, I explore China's security concerns in Xinjiang. Though unrest in Xinjiang should not be mistaken to have challenged the state's grasp on power as it did in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, for the Chinese government, it portended of great instability. Instability in Xinjiang was a combination of ethnic/religious marginalization,

and the stimulus from instability in the greater Central Asian region. We begin with an overview of the security situation within Xinjiang after Deng Xiaoping's rise to power.

Michael Dillon has suggested that following the Cultural Revolution, Uighur opposition to Chinese rule became more nationalistic, with the establishment of at least one pro-independence party, the East Turkestan Prairie Fire Party (*Dong Tujuesitan liaoyuan dang*), in 1981. John Wang attributes the later-day rise of East Turkestan Independence Movement (ETIM), which he considers a blanket terrorist network made up of eight "major subgroups" and five "small organizations,"¹⁵⁵ as being influenced by the Chinese government's decision in the 1980s to allow Uighurs to travel to Mecca for pilgrimage "which is one of the six [*sic*] pillars of the Islam."¹⁵⁶ The 1980s witnessed sporadic demonstrations by Uighurs against the Chinese government, which appear to have been motivated by ethnic and religious grievances.¹⁵⁷ But demonstrations in Xinjiang through the 1980s were not necessarily indicative of separatism; the years between 1986 and 1989 had witnessed demonstrations across China that had often been critical of Party policies. Nevertheless, unrest in Xinjiang made the authorities weary of separatism.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Wang, "Eastern Turkestan," 575. As we shall see in the following chapter, in 2002, the United States Department of State, and the United Nations, labeled the ETIM as a terrorist organization. In Wang's analysis the ETIM is made up of the following eight groups: East Liberation Organization, East Turkestan International Committee, United Committee of Uygurs' Organization (Central Asia and Xinjiang), Central Asian Uygur Hezbollah in Kazakhstan, Turkestan Party (Pakistan), East Turkestan Islamic Movement (Afghanistan), Eastern Turkestan Islamic Resistance Movement (Turkey), and Eastern Turkestan Youth League (Switzerland). In addition, the five small organizations are: East Turkestan Islamic Party, East Turkestan Opposition Party, Shock Brigade of the Islamic Reformist Party, East Turkestan Party of Allah, and Uygur Liberation Organization.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 574.

¹⁵⁷ The major disturbances outlined by Dillon are: riots in Kashgar in October 1981, which was sparked after a Han killed a Uighur youth. During the upheavals, rioters chanted anti-Han slogans and called for independence. In December 1985, some 2,000 students demonstrated in Urumqi when the new governor was appointed. Once again, we are told, pro-independence slogans were chanted. In November 1985, Uighur students protested against nuclear testing in Xinjiang, and in June 1988, demonstrated against a book that contained racial slurs against Kazakhs and Uighurs. In December 1988, students again demonstrated against racial slurs in films and called for solidarity between nationalities. Perhaps the largest demonstration took place in Urumqi, (preceded by similar demonstrations in Qinghai, Gansu and Shaanxi) in 1989, where protestors demonstrated alleged blasphemous book. Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 60-61. For a discussion on the largely Hui protests that had taken place earlier in Beijing (based on the same allegations), and the concessions that the Chinese government made, including banning the allegedly blasphemous book, see Gladney, *Muslim Chinese*, 1-4. In Gladney's account, the Urumqi demonstration was one of the "smaller protests."

¹⁵⁸ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 59-62.

Concerns were aroused further in April 1990, following unrest in Baren, Akto county, close to Kashgar. The unrest was probably instigated by state policies such as nuclear testing in Xinjiang, birth control policies, and the expropriation of the region's natural resources by the rest of the country. Disturbances lasted for two days, during which anywhere between twenty-two and ninety people died.¹⁵⁹ According to Dillon's account, the Baren uprising was not a spontaneous rebellion, but a carefully planned uprising that was possibly supported by arms supplied by Mujahidin groups in Afghanistan. According to his account, during the uprising calls for "jihad" were made and "over 200 people came out on the streets to demonstrate, carrying torches and reading from the Qur'an as they walked and gathered for prayer."¹⁶⁰ It is entirely possible that official accounts of the uprising, on which Dillon bases his analysis, were exaggerated to give credibility to the Islamist/separatist threat in Xinjiang. In particular, the emphasis on jihad is noteworthy as it depicts the rioters as being motivated by faith, and therefore, from a materialist Marxist-Leninist perspective, irrational and driven by religious zeal; in other words, the quintessential "Other."

Sporadic unrest in Xinjiang continued. In February 1992, a bomb exploded on a bus in Urumqi, and two other bombs were "planted" that caused no injuries. Bombings occurred in February and early March 1992, in Yining, Khotan, Kashgar, Kucha, Korla, Chocheq, and Bortala that resulted in eighty casualties and damages totaling millions of Renminbi. A group by the name of the "Front for the Liberation of Uyghuristan" based in Kazakhstan claimed that it was prepared to carry out guerilla attacks in Xinjiang.¹⁶¹ The following summer, in June 1993, a bomb exploded in Kashgar that killed ten people. Again, there were supposedly a multitude of attacks in the Altashir region.¹⁶² This was followed by unrest in the Ili region and Khotan.¹⁶³ According to a report put out by the Information Office of the PRC in January 2002, three training camps were established in the Basheriq township in Yeching county, where up to sixty individuals were trained in the "theory of religious extremism and terrorism, explosion, assassination and other

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 62. The discrepancy is due to the difference in figures between the foreign and Chinese press. The Chinese press claims that twenty-two people were killed.

¹⁶⁰ For Dillon's reconstruction of the events, see *Xinjiang*, 62-65.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 67.

¹⁶² Ibid., 68

¹⁶³ Ibid., 68-70; and Millward, "Violent Separatism," 15.

terrorist skills, and physical strength. Most of the trainees later participated in the major terrorist activities, such as explosions, assassinations and robberies, from 1991 to 1993 in various parts of Xinjiang.”¹⁶⁴

On the basis on these accounts, it is clear that the early 1990s witnessed an upsurge of unrest in Xinjiang. This instability was probably not a continuation of the unrest that the region had witnessed in the previous decade. It is likely that the political changes in Central Asia were making themselves felt within Xinjiang. As we discussed in Chapter Two, through much of Central Asia, and especially in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, there had been an increase in the construction of mosques as money and religious material from foreign donors flooded the region during the last years of perestroika.¹⁶⁵ In March 1992, the Chairman of the XUAR, Tomur Dawamat (1985-1993), had noted that hostile forces from both within and outside the PRC were responsible for unrest in Xinjiang that had been instigated by the independence of the Central Asian republics.¹⁶⁶

A significant development that took place after the independence of Central Asia was that the region became a base for Uighur political organizations that opposed Chinese rule in Xinjiang. The Uighur Liberation Organization, registered in April 1991 in Kazakhstan, petitioned the UN in November of the same year to act on human rights abuses in Xinjiang. In 1992 a Free Uighuristan Party was established in Kyrgyzstan.¹⁶⁷ The emergence of such organizations following the independence of the Central Asian republics suggests that some within Xinjiang’s Muslim populations believed that Xinjiang, too, could be independent. This belief was not entirely unreasonable: after all, if the Soviet Union’s Inner Asian domain could have become independent seemingly overnight, why not China’s?¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ Information Office, “‘East Turkestan’ Terrorist Forces.” John Wang also makes reference to these training camps. Wang does not mention his sources and given that his description of the camps is nearly identical to the Information Office’s it is highly likely that he has paraphrased the official source. Wang “Eastern Turkestan Islamic Movement,” 576.

¹⁶⁵ Li, *Shi nian jubian*, 104. According to Li Jingjie, the sharp increase of mosques in the region had been an important factor contributing to heightened instability in Central Asia

¹⁶⁶ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 67.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 66-67.

¹⁶⁸ As one Canada-based analyst noted in 1998: “Current Muslim extremism in Xinjiang has clearly been inspired by the enormous changes that have reshaped Central Asia in the last decade. The independence of neighboring Muslim republics in Central Asia since the collapse of the Soviet Union has undoubtedly raised the aspirations of Xinjiang’s would-be separatists that they too can achieve autonomy. At the same time, the ignominious withdrawal of Soviet occupying forces from Afghanistan demonstrated that armed

Central Asia, particularly Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, with their large Uighur population, now emerged as important centers for pro-independence Uighur organizations. Traditionally, Turkey and Germany have been home to émigré Uighur organizations that have agitated for the independence of Xinjiang.¹⁶⁹ Though China has repeatedly expressed displeasure at these émigré political organizations being based out of Turkey and Germany, such organizations did not pose a direct threat given that they were geographically removed from China. But this changed after the independence of the Central Asian republics, when some of the émigré activity shifted to Kazakhstan. Curtailing Uighur organizations within Central Asia was amongst the first objectives of China's bilateral engagements in the region; that the émigré organizations were prohibited from openly advocating for Xinjiang's independence marks an early success for China's diplomacy in the region.¹⁷⁰

The Uighur cause was championed from within Pakistan, too, though there support for independence was predicated less on nationalist aspirations, but was instead quietly championed by Islamist organizations. The Pakistani government never openly supported movements for Uighur independence; irrespective of whether a military or civilian regime was in power, Pakistani rulers have looked to China as a stalwart against their traditional adversary, India, which was seen to have received patronage from the Soviet Union. Consequently, the Pakistani government could hardly publicly champion Uighur independence. But Uighurs seeking help in Pakistan has been a sore issue in bilateral relations, especially during the early 1990s, when the Chinese government accused Pakistani religious organizations such as the Jama'at-i Islami for supporting Uighur separatist groups. The Chinese position, articulated best by a scholar at Peking University, was that the Pakistani leadership had proved ineffective at reining in elements within the country that were engaged in carrying out agendas that were at odds with the stated position of the government.¹⁷¹

The support provided by Islamist parties to the Uighurs is such a case in point. In 1994, Ahmed Rashid estimated that one hundred Uighurs were studying at the Islamic

struggle against even the strongest and most ruthless opponent was a viable option." George, "Islamic Unrest." See the section titled "Background."

¹⁶⁹ Gladney, "Responses to Chinese Rule," 375-378.

¹⁷⁰ Olcott, *Kazakhstan*, 85.

¹⁷¹ Interview at the Department of International Relations, Peking University, September 2003.

University in Islamabad, the Sayed Maudoodi International Institute run by the Jama'at-i Islami, and similar madrasas across the country. A Uighur from Khotan, who did not disclose his name, told Rashid: "My city is not Islamic. It is full of communists who do not allow Muslims to study or pray. There is no school for *sharia* ... We want to make a new Islamic state for the Uighurs and leave China."¹⁷² The patronage of Uighur resistance from religious groups in Pakistan was based, in all likelihood, on similar principles that led the same organizations to support the Mujahidin against the Soviet Union, that is, the capturing of state power in order to bring about the victory of a Muslim group that was seen to be marginalized, displaced, and exploited (similar patronage continued after the Afghan war as the Tajik opposition and members of the Uzbek insurgency received support from networks in Pakistan). What is interesting about this networking among Islamists is that it was based on an unfaltering belief that the Islamist venture would succeed, even against insurmountable odds, although thus far the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan marks the only conflict in contemporary history whereby this process has actually succeeded in a Sunni Muslim-dominated country.

While it is impossible to gauge how many Turkic people in Xinjiang wanted to establish an independent state governed by Islamic law in Xinjiang, Rashid's Uighur informant was exemplary of a trend in the early 1990s, whereby Turkic nationalities in Xinjiang wanted to reassert their identity. Though we cannot gauge the extent to which violence in Xinjiang was motivated by the quest for statehood, assertion of the indigenous population's ethnic and religious identity was certainly an underlying factor in most episodes of unrest in the region. That the Chinese government was growing extremely concerned by the security situation in Xinjiang can be gleaned by a leaked Party document that is accessible, in the English language only, on the World Wide Web under the title "Chinese Communist Party Document #7."

"Document #7" is supposedly a record of a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CCP addressing the issue of stability in the autonomous region. The meeting was held on March 19, 1996, and presided over by President Jiang Zemin; other members in attendance are not listed. Stylistically the document reads less like minutes of the meeting, and more like directives to regional leaders. The document,

¹⁷² Ahmed Rashid, "Unwelcome Traffic," *FEER* December 7, 1995.

in its available form, was to be distributed to the Xinjiang Autonomous Region Party Committee, Lanzhou Military District Committee, related departments of the Central Committee, Party Committees of National Ministries, headquarters of Military Committees and Party groups of concerned organizations.¹⁷³ The document was probably first leaked on the website www.taklamakan.org, a site devoted to promoting the plight of the Uighurs in China.¹⁷⁴ In all likelihood, the document was uploaded to portray the Party as repressing the Turkic people of the autonomous region. The authenticity of the document is impossible to verify; I am unaware of the official Chinese position on its authenticity, though it is unlikely that the Chinese government would acknowledge the authenticity of a document that is freely available on non-government websites, and one which was classified as top secret. For this reason, the contents of this document need to be treated with caution.

These caveats notwithstanding, I believe the contents of this document to have a high degree of authenticity. Though the people who uploaded this document probably did so to present a damning portrayal of Chinese rule in Xinjiang, in reality, there is little in this document that was not publicly articulated by the leadership during the 1990s. However, this is the only document that provides a comprehensive overview of the security situation as seen by the state, which identifies two separate but intertwined issues of concern: that of foreign support for separatists, and the erosion of the Party's authority at the local level. Together, these constitute the external and internal dimensions of unrest in Xinjiang, described in the document as issues of "national separatism" and "illegal religious activity" which were working in unison, "joining hands and strengthening the infiltration of Xinjiang ... with each passing day."¹⁷⁵ China's bilateral and multilateral diplomacy sought to address the first of these issues. The second issue was addressed by a dual process of zero-tolerance for separatists and simultaneously, heavy economic investment in the autonomous region.

¹⁷³ CCP, "Document #7." Potential recipient departments and organizations are listed at the very end of the document.

¹⁷⁴ As of October 1, 2005, links from this website, including a link to "Document #7," were no longer active, though the actual web page still existed. The version of the document in my possession was accessed from <http://www.ibiblio.org/mongol-tibet/archive/topsecret.html> that was accessed on September 25, 2005.

¹⁷⁵ CCP, "Document #7," Point 1.

The United States was identified as patronizing separatists both within and outside Xinjiang. Chinese suspicion of the United States' complicity in the separatist movement is not surprising, given that the 1995/1996 Taiwan Straits crises, which was then ongoing, marked a low point in Sino-American relations. In addition, there were precedents for covert US action despite official denial. The most obvious example was the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, when the United States supported the Mujahidin while denying their involvement until 1986, when American-made antiaircraft missiles were introduced into the theatre of conflict. It is also widely accepted that the CIA supported Tibet resistance movements in the 1950s.¹⁷⁶

But it was not just the United States that was seen to be supporting unrest in Xinjiang. The document cautioned cadres: "Take strong measures to prevent and fight against the infiltration and sabotage activities of foreign religious powers."¹⁷⁷ Though these "foreign religious powers" are not identified, based on our understanding of events in the region, the reference was probably to Islamist movements in Central Asia, as well as Pakistan and Afghanistan. We get a hint of this later in the document when cadres were instructed to, "Tighten measures for controlling the border and border defense posts. Prevent the entry of outside ethnic separatists, weapons, and propaganda materials. Prevent internal and external ethnic separatists from coming together and joining hands."¹⁷⁸ Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkey were identified as countries that promote ethnic separatism in Xinjiang. Consider the following directive:

Perform the related diplomatic tasks well. Limit the activities of the outside ethnic separatist activities from many sides. Bear in mind the fact that Turkey, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are the home-bases for the activities of outside separatist forces. Through diplomacy, urge these countries to limit and weaken the activities of separatist forces inside their border. Take full advantage of our political superiority to further develop the bilateral friendly cooperation with these countries. At the same time, always maintain pressure on them.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Goldstein, "Tibet and China," 197, 217-221.

¹⁷⁷ CCP, "Document #7," Point 3.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., Point 5.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., Point 8.

The above directive was suggestive of the importance of China's multilateral diplomacy that gave China a mechanism to engage with the Central Asian states in matters that were of not only of bilateral importance, such as trade, but also with regard to China's pressing security concerns.

In the previous chapter, we noted that the Sunni revivalism in Central Asia had begun at the community level and had been facilitated by the construction of mosques, and the widespread disbursement of religious literature. Especially in Uzbekistan, the official clergy, the *muftis*, were challenged by independent mullahs whose support base comprised of individuals at the local level for whom the mullahs were a source of spiritual guidance. A similar phenomenon probably occurred in Xinjiang through the 1980s, that may have been facilitated by the easing of restrictions on religious activity throughout the country.

In their study on women's mosques in central China, Maria Jaschok and Shui Jingjun have noted a similar increase in women's mosques (*nusi*), as well as women's Quranic schools (*nuxue*), in central China since the 1980s. Although the government registered or reregistered the places of worship of the five major religions in China in 1993 and 1995, (Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism),¹⁸⁰ many of the *nuxue* had emerged as a result of grassroots initiatives.¹⁸¹ Besides the imparting of religious knowledge, these institutions served important social functions: literacy was imparted, and oftentimes, students lived and ate there as well.¹⁸² Some *nuxue* also provide students with an allowance of sixty Renminbi, and likewise, were an important source of charity for poor Muslim families. While Jaschok and Shui's study focuses on the Hui community in central China, their findings are important for our discussion as they demonstrate that amongst Muslim communities in China, mosques and Quranic schools were centers of localized power. While for the most part these were regulated by the state and under its jurisdiction, there was a danger that they could move outside the official

¹⁸⁰ Jaschok and Shui, *The History*, 164. For a place of worship to receive official recognition it had to fulfill the following criteria: 1. be a fixed site and have a name; 2. be supported by religious participants; 3. administratively be supported by followers its religious tradition; 4. have certified religious teachers who act in accordance with the dictates of the state; 5. have comprehensive rules and regulations; and, 6. rely on regular and legal sources of revenue.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 106.

¹⁸² Ibid., 107.

jurisdiction and position themselves as parallel institutions. As we discussed in Chapter Two, this is what had occurred in Central Asia, particularly in the Ferghana valley.

There was fear that a similar development was taking place in Xinjiang too. “Document #7” suggests that in the mid-1990s there were localized nodes of power within the autonomous region that were agitating for greater autonomy. Similar to the development of an anti-state grassroots base in the Ferghana valley, where mosques and madrasas became nodes of resistance, in Xinjiang too, mosques were identified as centers of resistance. Consider the directive: “Severely control the building of new mosques.... Stop illegal organizations such as underground religious schools ... and Koran studies meetings.... Register the people trained in the underground religion schools and sites one by one and tightly control them.”¹⁸³ The problem was not just with the mosques themselves, but that the mosques had resulted in the forging of strong bonds between the mullahs and the population, which was undermining the authority of the local cadres. Consider: “Most importantly, the village level organizations which have fallen into the hands of religious powers have to be organized with great attention.”¹⁸⁴ This situation could only be rectified by increasing the presence of the state at the grassroots level, and consequently, reducing the power of grassroots religious organizations.

This suggests that the Party feared that parallel religious organizations in Xinjiang were challenging the authority of the state. One way the Party sought to reassert its authority was by ensuring that cadres did not engage in religious activity. Consider: “Communist Party members and cadres are Marxist materialists, and, therefore should not be allowed to believe in and practice religion.... [P]arty members who believe in religion and refuse to change have to withdraw from membership in the party.”¹⁸⁵ Publicly engaging in religious ritual was a particularly grave problem, as it indicated the erosion of the Party’s authority at the local level.

Besides ensuring that cadres abstained from religious activity, the Party also sought to increase the reach of the state in the autonomous region. Consider the following directive:

¹⁸³ CCP, “Document #7,” Point 3.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., Point 2.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., Point 4.

Choose better party member cadres and soldiers from the PLA and the PCC to supplement the county and town-level cadre teams and improve the structure of the cadres. Trust and depend on cadres of every nationality, train a number of cadres who can determinedly defend the unity of the nation, fight against ethnic separatism and establish a close relationship with people while maintaining strong, revolutionary professionalism. At the same time, take real measures to train a large number of Han cadres who love Xinjiang.¹⁸⁶

As we discussed in Chapter One, the PCC had been the principal institution within Xinjiang's civilian military bureaucracy that had been responsible for bringing Xinjiang closer into Beijing's fold. The PCC had achieved this by being a conduit for greater Han migration to the autonomous region, and by modernizing Xinjiang's traditional economy. Now in the mid-1990s, the PCC was again being called upon to play a stabilizing role by increasing its presence in the border areas. In particular, the organization was instructed to increase its presence in southern Xinjiang.¹⁸⁷ Oases along the southern rim of the Tarim had seen little state-funded development after 1949 – as we discussed in Chapter One, Wu Aitchen had observed the dearth of state-led development in the southern Tarim during Republican rule.¹⁸⁸ Interestingly, southern Xinjiang had remained neglected after the establishment of Party rule. This may have partly been due to the lack of international borders in the region, and also due to the region's remoteness from Urumchi and the Gansu Corridor, Xinjiang's traditional gateway to the Chinese heartland.

By calling for state-led development in impoverished parts of the autonomous region, the Party was assuming that regional prosperity would lead to political stability. Though the challenges of relative underdevelopment were most acute in southern Xinjiang, the entire autonomous region was seen to be in need of economic development. Consequently, in the Ninth FYP there were preferential economic policies for the

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., Point 6 and 7.

¹⁸⁸ Wu, *Turkestan Tumult*, 246.

region.¹⁸⁹ In particular, between 1996 and 2001, there was a sharp rise in subsidies, which increased from 5.9 billion in 1996, to 18.3 billion Renminbi in 2001.¹⁹⁰

Seen as a whole, this document presents a comprehensive insight into the security concerns of the Party leadership. As a blueprint for what was to follow, the document touches on three issues that would find resonance in the leadership's concerns in the autonomous region during the next decade. These were: the role of outside influence in creating instability in Xinjiang, the erosion of the state's authority as religiously motivated groups sought to challenge the authority of the state and Party at the local level, and finally, economic impoverishment of the autonomous region as a catalyst for discontent. All three would be addressed by the state; the issue of foreign influence through multilateral diplomacy with the Central Asian republics, contested state authority by Beijing's "Strike Hard" campaign, and the relative impoverishment by economic development in the autonomous region.

V. The Strike Hard Campaigns of 1996 and 1997

In 1996, Beijing launched the nationwide "Campaign to strike severely at serious criminal offences" (*yanli daji yanzhong xingshi fazui huodong*), or the "Strike Hard" (*yanda*) campaign. The campaign was launched at the end of April, and coincided with the signing of the Shanghai Accords. Though the campaign ostensibly targeted a wide range of criminal activity – "criminal and underworld gangs," financial fraud, drug trafficking, proliferation of pornography, trade in arms and ammunition, and gambling – within Chinese Inner Asia, particularly Xinjiang, the campaign sought to redress China's growing security concerns.¹⁹¹ The unrest that occurred in 1996 and 1997 was important as it brought three of China's security concerns into focus: Islam, ethnicity, and concurrently, the role of foreign influence in contributing to instability in Xinjiang.

In this section, I seek to explore the interplay of these factors in 1996 and 1997, the period that marked the height of instability in Xinjiang's recent history; as we shall discuss in the following chapter, disturbances in the autonomous region during this time would strongly influence how China positioned itself after the global "War on Terror"

¹⁸⁹ Information Office, "Regional Autonomy." See the section titled "The Central Government's Support."

¹⁹⁰ Information Office, "History and Development." See the section titled, "State Support."

¹⁹¹ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 84.

began. For this reason it is important to construct a narrative of these events. But doing so is particularly challenging. After 1980, (and particularly after 1990 when the incidents of unrest increased), it is difficult, if not impossible to say with any degree of certainty what may have transpired during a period of unrest. The only two sources of information for this time come either from the Chinese state, or émigré Uighur organizations opposed to Chinese rule. Not surprisingly, both sources present diverging accounts. Does this mean that the recent political history of the region is out of bounds for the historian? I would argue that this is not the case, as examining the contesting narratives themselves provides us with an important glimpse of the conflict between the state and those who oppose it.

One of the first directives imposed on Xinjiang after the launch of the Strike Hard campaign was that all religious literature required government approval before it could be made public. In addition, the Party also sought to discipline those within its ranks who engaged in religious activity.¹⁹² While not always linked to separatism, the cadres' participation in Islamic rituals suggested that their loyalty to the state could be challenged because of their adherence to Islam (presumably because of Pan-Islamist principles). These concerns were articulated in the *Xinjiang ribao* in May 1996, when during a meeting of the Party's disciplinary committee, officials admitted that there were many amongst their ranks who supported the separatism of Xinjiang from China.¹⁹³

A difficult challenge faced the authorities in Xinjiang: despite the materialistic determinism that informed the world-view of the CCP,¹⁹⁴ how was the Party to ensure the loyalty of its local cadres, where loyalty to the Party meant de-linking from religious beliefs that were closely intertwined with the visibly different culture of the autonomous region? Regional officials were of the opinion that it was the weakening of their authority at the grassroots level that had allowed Islamic institutions such as seminaries, (many of which were illegal), to make inroads into the region. The only certain way of ensuring maximum control at the grassroots level was to have Han cadres working alongside their local counterparts. Dillon describes this as,

¹⁹² Ibid., 85-86.

¹⁹³ "Authorities Call for Harsh Punishment of Separatist Cadres," *Hong Kong AFP*, May 27, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-104.

¹⁹⁴ Party officials repeatedly used the *Xinjiang ribao* to express the Marxist view that religion was the "opiate of the masses." For examples see, "Authorities Call for Harsh Punishment of Separatist Cadres," op. cit.; and "Authorities Attack Politicized Islam in Xinjiang," *Hong Kong AFP*, May 23, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-102.

the chickens of the United Front coming home to roost. In order to integrate ethnic minority and religious leaders into a wider community, they had been given posts within the party and other organizations such as the local branches of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. When relative stability gave way to serious ethnic tension, these leaders were in a position to exploit the positions they had been given to exercise leadership over anti-CCP organizations.¹⁹⁵

The leadership faced a dilemma: On the one hand, the CCP did not have absolute confidence in their local cadres. But on the other hand, if they were to bring more Han cadres into Xinjiang, this would only increase tension between the Han and the minorities and reinforce their view of the Han as overlords.

It is probable that the Strike Hard campaign was planned in advance. This is likely if we assume that "Document #7" is an authentic representation of the views of the Party leadership, and that the concerns expressed therein were an ongoing concern of the leadership. Also noteworthy is that just prior to the crackdown, there was a consolidation of the Party's leadership in Xinjiang. Wang Lequan, a Han and native of Shandong,¹⁹⁶ was appointed Secretary of the autonomous region on February 10, 1996 (from 1992 to 1995 Wang served as acting secretary of the XUAR). As someone who had traditionally been cautious about the security situation in the autonomous region, it is likely that Wang was formally instated in the leadership position with the upcoming campaign in mind.¹⁹⁷

Sporadic outbursts of violence began at the end of April. Two issues are of particular importance. The first concerns the timing of the unrest. There is some evidence suggesting that the instability in Central Asia may have begun to spill into Xinjiang. For example, in May, the security forces were cautioned to be on the lookout for arms from Central Asia. "We must greatly increase control on frontier crossings, put more soldiers on duty, strengthen inspection of goods crossing the border ... and seriously stop

¹⁹⁵ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 86.

¹⁹⁶ For a description of Wang Lequan's political career, see the *People's Daily's* biography: <http://english.people.com.cn/data/people/wanglequan.shtml> (accessed October 6, 2005).

¹⁹⁷ "Communist Party Appoints New Secretary for Xinjiang," *Hong Kong AFP*, January 8, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-017; "Xinjiang Party Committee Elects Leadership," *Xinhua*, February 10, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-033; and Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 81.

weapons, splittists and reactionary pamphlets entering China,” instructed a Xinjiang People’s Armed Police circular.¹⁹⁸ In addition, in July, authorities reported capturing a small cache of ammunition, which included three guns manufactured in Pakistan.¹⁹⁹ Though this was hardly a large cache, it hinted at the presence of an arms pipeline into Xinjiang, though this by itself does not explain outbreaks of violence in most parts of the region during 1996 and 1997.

It is tempting to explain the episodes of violence in 1996 and 1997 as a reaction to the Strike Hard campaign. From this perspective, anti-state violence in the autonomous region could be seen to be a reaction to the imposition of state power. Put another way, the state would crack down on the suspected separatists, which would be followed by the insurgent elements striking back at the institutions of the state.

I am not convinced that this fully explains the violence in Xinjiang. First, considering that there was unrest in different parts of Xinjiang in 1996 and 1997, the above explanation would imply a high degree of coordination amongst insurgents through the autonomous region. Since the beginning of the global “War on Terrorism,” in 2001, the Chinese government has gone to great lengths to demonstrate that Uighur aspirations have been channeled almost entirely through transnational terrorist organizations, at the forefront of which is the ETIM. In the next chapter we shall examine the creation of this new discourse on terrorism by placing it within the context of China’s internal security concerns and simultaneously, the projection of Chinese influence at the regional level. But during 1996 and 1997, government accounts as represented through the local media, do not give any indication that instability in Xinjiang was coordinated through one particular organization.

In my reading of accounts from 1996 and 1997, I am uncertain if there was any high degree of coordination between events that took place across Xinjiang.²⁰⁰ For example, in Urumchi, on April 24, two Uighur men opened fire on police officers, killing two of them. Dillon also draws our attention to another incident in Urumchi on June 3, where Uighurs opened fire on policemen, and another incident on June 6, where, also in

¹⁹⁸ “Xinjiang Forms “Quick Reaction Forces” to Fight Separatists,” *Hong Kong AFP*, May 29, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-104.

¹⁹⁹ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 88.

²⁰⁰ It is also possible that people engaged in criminal activities may even have perpetrated many acts of violence, which either then or later was attributed to separatists.

Urumchi, a bomb targeting railway administration officials exploded killing eighteen. Dillon has described these as “attacks on police and other symbols of Chinese authority in Urumqi.”²⁰¹ Dillon sees the attack on the Imam of the Ed Gah Mosque in Kashgar on May 12, as part of a series of attacks on individuals who cooperated with the state.²⁰² To suggest that all such acts of violence were the result of Turkic ethnic grievances would impose a uniformity of purpose on the perpetrators, which is both impossible to verify, and fits conveniently into a narrative that sees these acts as resistance to the Chinese state. This is a position that the Chinese government would endorse after the PRC created a role for itself in the “War on Terror.”

There is yet another pitfall. This is the danger that arises in overemphasizing ethnic polarity in the region at the expense of disregarding non-antagonistic ethnic relations. A potential danger that may arise out of seeing the outbreaks of violence as being part of a homogenous ethnic resistance to the state is ignoring the fact that the large majority of Xinjiang’s indigenous population did not engage in acts of violence. For this reason, the ethnic question must be approached with great caution: Uighurs and other indigenous people of Xinjiang have occupied positions of power; many, if not most, benefited economically from Chinese policies in the recent years.²⁰³ Also, note that neither minority nationalities, nor Han domiciled in Xinjiang, are forced to abide by China’s one-child policy.

We also need to realize that there were two sometimes conflicting undercurrents within the anti-state movements: nationalism, which I suspect was more prevalent in Xinjiang, and Islamist, where a smaller number of Turkic people identified with developments outside the region (through participation alongside the IMU, the Taliban, or seeking religious education in Pakistan). Though I do not completely disregard claims to uniformity, the possibility that there was a particularly high degree of coordination amongst the episodes of unrest is difficult for me to endorse. Given the limited information at our disposal, it is safest to see the episodes of unrest as being unconnected.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 86.

²⁰² Ibid., 87.

²⁰³ For an example, see Kathy Chen, “Muslims in China Hate Beijing a Little Less: Recent Economic Gains Tempers Calls for Revolt,” *The Wall Street Journal*, October 21, 1994.

A related issue is the role of religion in instigating unrest in Xinjiang. I believe that it is an oversimplification to see adherence to Islam as being a unifier across Xinjiang's disparate geographical regions and ethnic groups. There is little in the unrest of 1996 and 1997 that would lead me to believe that the unrest throughout the region was motivated by a desire to establish an Islamic state, as may have been the case amongst insurgents in Uzbekistan. With regards to the role of religion in the unrest in Xinjiang in 1996 and 1997, I am comfortable arguing that what was at stake was state control over Islam, and resistance to this phenomenon amongst the population. In other words, based on my understanding of trends within Xinjiang, some of which were addressed in "Document #7," I believe that an important fault line may be similar to the one we saw in Central Asia in the final years of perestroika: the rift between the mullahs and the official clergy. This was an important divide across which struggles between the state and individuals came to be contested. As a front-page article in the *Xinjiang ribao* argued, "We must distinguish between lawful religious activities and those which are against the law, and between true believers and those who are plotting separatism."²⁰⁴

We have already seen that the Party officials were concerned about the erosion of authority at the local level, and that some local cadres still closely adhered to Islamic beliefs. There is also reason to believe that the Party was aware that there was at the very least, a limited, though operational pipeline of weapons and conceivably narcotics into the autonomous region. Combined, these created conditions that boded poorly for security. One of the purposes of the Strike Hard campaign was to curtail the possibility of further uprisings. Towards this end, through the summer of 1996, the authorities engaged in the imprisonment and detention of a large number of Turkic people. The number of people detained varies considerably; different sources put the number anywhere between four and eighteen thousand.²⁰⁵ What is certain is that suspects were detained across Xinjiang, and that a large number of the people arrested were students at seminaries and those believed to be involved in separatist activities.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ "Authorities Attack Politicized Islam in Xinjiang," *Hong Kong AFP*, May 23, 1996. In FBIS-CHI-96-102.

²⁰⁵ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 87-88; Amnesty International, "AI Report 1997: China,"

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

During the same period, an émigré organization, the United National Revolutionary Front (UNRF), based in Almaty, Kazakhstan, claimed that 450 Chinese troops had been killed in Xinjiang since April; in addition, Open Media Research Institute (OMRI), a predecessor of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), reported that the UNRF claimed to have killed twenty Chinese troops on the Pakistan-China border on July 4, 1996.²⁰⁷ The number appears to be on the high side, and it is certainly possible that the number was exaggerated. The Information Office of the State Council of the PRC does not mention this episode in their 2003 report on the ETIM.²⁰⁸ It is likely that the UNRF claims were exaggerated to give a pretense of success against the Chinese authorities, although at the same time, we should not entirely rule out the more unlikely possibility that the incident was covered up by the Chinese authorities.

In February 1997, violence flared in the Ili region. Accounts differ as to what happened. What is certain is that large-scale demonstrations took place in Yining on February fifth and February sixth, which coincided with both the Chinese New Year celebrations, and the traditional Muslim celebration at the end of Ramadan, *'id al-fitr*. It appears that up to a thousand residents took to the streets to demonstrate against the detention of Uighurs convicted of being separatists. The demonstrations quickly turned violent. From this point onwards there is divergence in the accounts. A spokesman for the UNRF in Kazakhstan described the events as follows: “[the Chinese authorities in Yining] executed 30 Uygur activists in public to show their strength during the Chinese New Year festivities.... [People] arrived in Yining from the south to join their families to celebrate the end of Ramadan.... The Chinese took advantage of the influx to put on a show of force.”²⁰⁹ A refugee who fled to Almaty after the Yining upheaval offers a slightly different description of events. According to this account, demonstrations began on February sixth, after the authorities had already detained a thousand students over the previous two days for criticizing the government for appointing clergy through administrative channels. During the protests on February sixth, “the Chinese arrested 31

²⁰⁷ World Uyghur Network News, No. 4 (July 16, 1996). <http://www.uygur.org/enorg/wunn96/wunn071696.htm> (Accessed October 10, 2005); and “Uighur Organization in Kazakhstan Reports Clashes in China,” *OMRI Daily Digest*, July 16, 1996. <http://archive.tol.cz/omri/restricted/article.php3?id=14506> (accessed October 22, 2005).

²⁰⁸ Information Office, “‘East Turkestan’ Terrorist Forces.”

²⁰⁹ “Exile Group Spokesman Speak to AFP on Riots in Xinjiang,” *Hong Kong AFP*, February 11, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-029.

demonstrators. They executed them that same day and on the seventh. Among them were 12 women aged between 15 and 26.”²¹⁰

On the other hand, a Chinese spokesperson described the same event in the following way: “A serious case of beating, looting and destruction was carried out by a small number of hostile elements in Yining city who plotted to overthrow the people’s political power and to split the unity of the motherland.... The toll of the disturbances was ten killed, and 132 innocent people were injured.”²¹¹ On May 11, the Governor of Xinjiang, Abdulahat Abdurixit (1994-), described the uprising as an illegal demonstration, in which the participants were, “very violent ... [crying] out for an Islamic kingdom.”²¹²

The aftermath of the Yining uprisings were likewise clouded in ambiguity. According to an Amnesty International report, during the house-to-house searches that followed, anywhere between three and five thousand individuals were detained;²¹³ Amnesty also mentions unconfirmed reports of summary executions immediately following the riots.²¹⁴ But in the week following the attack, a police spokesperson in Yining not only denied that executions had taken place, but also denied that there had been any disturbance in the region.²¹⁵ By the end of the month, tensions escalated further. On February 25, bombs exploded on three buses in Urumchi that coincided with Deng Xiaoping’s funeral (Deng had died on February 19). Once again, there is a discrepancy in the number of people killed, with figures varying between four and twenty.²¹⁶ The Kazakhstan-based URNF took responsibility for the explosions;²¹⁷ the Chinese

²¹⁰ “Refugee Says Uygurs Mobilize After Ethnic Riots,” *Hong Kong AFP*, February 15, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-032.

²¹¹ “Xinjiang Says 10 Killed, 132 Wounded in ‘Disturbances,’” *Hong Kong AFP*, February 12, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-030.

²¹² “Xinjiang ‘Separatists’ Said Not Behind Beijing Bombing,” *Hong Kong AFP*, May 11, 1997. In FBIS-TOT-97-131.

²¹³ Amnesty International, “Gross Violation,” See under “The 5 February 1997 Incident.”

²¹⁴ “Hundreds Detained After Ethnic Riots in Xinjiang,” *Amnesty International News Service*, February 14, 1997. <http://www.hartford-hwp.com/archives/55/040.html> (Accessed September 25, 2005).

²¹⁵ “Xinjiang Says 10 Killed, 132 Wounded in Disturbances,” *Hong Kong AFP*, February 12, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-030.

²¹⁶ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 99. Official figures put the number of killed at nine killed and sixty-eight injured. In addition, between February 22 and March 30, East Turkestan forces are said to have carried out six explosions in the Kashgar prefecture. Information Office, “‘East Turkestan’ Terrorist Forces.”

²¹⁷ “Exile Group Claims Bomb Blast in Xinjiang,” *Hong Kong AFP*, March 1, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-041.

government attributed the attacks to the ETIM.²¹⁸ Xinjiang and Tibet had already been placed on a heightened level of security following Deng's death, and Beijing was also on a high state of alert. A few days later, on March 7, a bomb exploded on a Beijing bus, in which thirty people were injured. Three days later, a spokesperson for the National Center of Eastern Turkestan based in Istanbul said that he had spoken to an individual by the name of Ahmet, in "Almaty, capital of Tajikistan [*sic*]," who claimed to have planted the bomb on behalf of the Eastern Turkestan Liberation Organization. Ahmet was quoted as saying that similar attacks would follow until the Chinese government agreed to negotiate with Uighurs.²¹⁹ The Chinese authorities denied any link between the bomb attack and separatists from Xinjiang, even though supposedly, during the heightened security following Deng's death, taxi drivers and hotel owners had been told to be on the lookout for suspicious people who looked like they might be from Xinjiang.²²⁰

While sporadic episodes of violence continued through 1997, and into the subsequent year, the demonstrations in Ili marked the last major outbreak of insurgency in the autonomous region. Following the outbreak of violence, Xinjiang authorities engaged in a massive crackdown that included large-scale detention and public trials, many of which resulted in summary executions. In September 1997, Uighur sources in Kazakhstan claimed that over the last six months, 500 people had been executed, and an addition 62,800 people had been arrested and exiled.²²¹ For the period January 1997 to 1999, Amnesty International estimates a minimum of 210 executions, which though less than the above-mentioned figure, still made Xinjiang the region with the highest number of executions within China.²²² Since many of the trials in Xinjiang were either public or publicized, the high number of executions in the region has never been in doubt.

The Xinjiang leadership went to great lengths to insist that the disturbances had been localized, arguing that stability across Xinjiang had never been threatened. Speaking in Beijing on March 14, Secretary Wang assured that security in the autonomous region

²¹⁸ Information Office, "'East Turkestan' Terrorist Forces." In his account, John Wang attributes the explosions to the Eastern Turkistan National Solidarity Union.

²¹⁹ "Beijing Bus Bomb Reportedly Work of Uighur Separatists," *Hong Kong AFP*, March 11, 1997. In FBIS-TOT-97-069. See also, "Dissident Group Threatens 'Similar Bomb Attacks' in PRC," *Taiwan Central News Agency*, March 9, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-068.

²²⁰ "A Bomb in Beijing," *The Economist*, March 15, 1997.

²²¹ Dillon, *Xinjiang*, 111.

²²² Amnesty International, "Gross Violation," See under "The Death Penalty."

was “guaranteed.” Commenting on the explosions in Urumchi, Secretary Wang said that the bombs had been planted by “a small group of terrorists ... all of whom were arrested the next day,” and assured those seeking to do business in Xinjiang that they had no cause for concern.²²³ Less than two months later, Chairman Abdurixit acknowledged that separatists had indeed sought to carry out “illegal religious activities to divide China,” but that these people had now been dealt with. “We got these people out of any state to cause harm before they even began to act,” he said. The Governor implied that the acts of violence were carried out by localized groups who were isolated from one another, and that such groups, “would never manage to transform themselves into an important force and the government can control them easily.” The Governor noted that all those involved in the recent unrest had been arrested, their trials begun, and of the seven million Uighurs in the autonomous region, “very few were terrorists.”²²⁴ The Governor also said that there was no indication that those behind the unrest had received any foreign support.²²⁵

While Chinese officials depicted the February outbreaks of violence as isolated incidents that were quickly suppressed, Uighurs in Kazakhstan sought to give the opposite impression. Through 1997, Uighur groups in exile tried to give a show of force by making claims for having carried out acts of violence against Chinese officials. Oftentimes, these have either been unreported in the Chinese press, or there is no official confirmation or denial of the events. At other times, state officials have denied these incidents ever occurred. For example, on February 15, a spokesperson for the UNRF claimed that a train carrying Han migrants to Xinjiang had been derailed, though the spokesperson could not give details about the number of casualties, if any.²²⁶ I have not found mention of this incident in official Chinese sources. The following month, exiled Uighurs in Kazakhstan claimed to have carried out two bomb attacks, one in Urumqi, at “a meeting place for police,” and another on a bus traveling from Yining to the capital.

²²³ “Xinjiang Secretary Says Security Guaranteed,” *Hong Kong AFP*, March 14, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-073.

²²⁴ “Xinjiang Leader Downplays Separatist Threat,” *Hong Kong AFP*, May 11, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-131.

²²⁵ “Xinjiang ‘Separatists’ Said Not Behind Beijing Bombing,” *Hong Kong AFP*, May 11, 1997. In FBIS-TOT-97-131.

²²⁶ “Uygur Group Claims Responsibility for Attack on Train,” *Hong Kong AFP*, February 15, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-032.

Chinese officials denied both incidents.²²⁷ In another example, in the beginning of October, informants in Almaty claimed to have killed between nine to twenty-two people in Xinjiang, and carried out four bombings between the second and the seventh of October. Chinese authorities denied these incidents.²²⁸

Examining the diverging accounts of unrest in Xinjiang from the beginning of 1990s, and particularly during 1997, it is difficult to ascertain what may have happened. With official and unofficial accounts varying to the extent that they do, and with the region largely inaccessible to independent journalists, the accounts of whom sometimes give a pretense of objectivity, reconstructing a historical narrative of events that corresponds to a high degree of accuracy becomes, in my opinion, a futile exercise. But while we may not be able to generate a universally acceptable series of causes and effects, the differing narratives are useful in that they reveal the sharp divisions within the autonomous region.

From the perspective of Chinese officials, maintaining absolute control over the autonomous region was paramount. As we observed in the first chapter, during its modern history, Xinjiang exhibited centrifugal tendencies. Officially, the Chinese have considered Xinjiang a part of China since the region was first conquered during the Han dynasty.²²⁹ Whether Xinjiang was historically a part of China is a debate that is outside the scope of the present study; the important point is that since 1949, Chinese officials have always considered Xinjiang an integral part of the country, and territorial cohesion, whether it is Xinjiang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia, or the reintegration of Taiwan with the mainland, is paramount. China's history from the nineteenth century until 1949 saw increasing foreign control over, and internal decentralization within, most parts of the country. Indeed, one of the first objectives in the years immediately following the establishment of Party rule was the creation of a strong centralized government apparatus. The authorities considered it to be of paramount importance to assert absolute control over the autonomous region. That the government resorted to the use of excessive

²²⁷ "Xinjiang Releases Statement 5 Mar on Recent Bombings," *Hong Kong AFP*, March 5, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-044.

²²⁸ "Beijing Police on Alert for Xinjiang Separatists," *Hong Kong AFP*, October 3, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-276; and "Separatists Claim 22 Killed in China Attacks," *Hong Kong AFP*, October 9, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-282.

²²⁹ Information Office, "White Paper."

force when their authority over the region was threatened is not surprising. Chinese officials remained categorical about the fact that no tolerance was to be shown to separatist organizations. On September 9, 1997, Vice Chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC), Tomur Dawamat (1993-2003), himself a Uighur, said: "There is not even the slightest room for compromise.... [All cadres must] put their full trust in the people to isolate as many separatists as possible and then attack them without mercy."²³⁰ Nearly three years later, in August 2000, the governor of the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture said that he would unflinchingly resort to the same tough enforcement measures should unrest erupt again in the region.²³¹

What I find particularly noteworthy is the extent to which Party officials went to argue that the unrest had been localized, and was not orchestrated by any single organization. As we shall see, this changed after 2001, when the Chinese state created a narrative of transnational terrorism, in which unrest in Xinjiang was factored into the global discourse on terrorism, à la al-Qaeda, bin Laden, et. al.

Uighurs opposed to Chinese rule in Xinjiang saw the unrest differently. For the Uighurs, the Chinese state had curtailed their cultural, civil, and religious rights. Moreover, Uighur accounts from this time made it abundantly clear that the use of force by the state was asymmetrical, and that the state took part in not just heavy-handed tactics, but unleashed indiscriminate repression not just on those participating in the unrest, but also on residents who had been non-participants. Like the Chinese officials, those involved in the unrest also gave the impression that they wielded great power at the local level. The repeated claims to assassinations and sabotage, all of which cannot be verified, give the impression of a resistance movement that was trying to stake claims to power at the local level. Nowhere did the Uighur groups claim that they had been overcome, or admit that the possibility of them overcoming Chinese rule was low.

On the contrary, amongst Uighur participants there were strong undertones of martyrdom, and an expressed desire to see the struggle through to the end. A refugee who fled to Almaty carried a letter from locals addressed to the Uighur community in Kazakhstan that stated: "Listen to the voices of your oppressed people. We are ready to

²³⁰ "NPC Official Urges No Compromise in Xinjiang," *Hong Kong AFP*, September 9, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-252.

²³¹ Mary Kwang, "Governor Vows to Crush Ethnic Riots," *The Straits Times*, 19 August 2000.

give millions of our lives for freedom even if nobody helps us.” The refugee then narrated an incident whereby, “on February 8, four Uighur combatants seized a stock of arms ... but when they were surrounded by Chinese soldiers, they blew it up and themselves with it.” On hearing this, one listener is said to have sworn: “after the mourning period, we will avenge our brothers.”²³² The narrative here is two-fold: on the one hand, the Uighur groups wanted to give the impression that they were actually successful in their ability to carry out a successful insurgency. At the same time, the plight of the Uighurs is depicted as a struggle of right versus might, of a marginalized people persecuted by the state, willing to make the ultimate sacrifice.

Conclusion

In the period under consideration in this chapter (c. 1996 to c. 2001), China deepened cooperation with its new Central Asian neighbors. The development of a multilateral mechanism was an important step in this regard; though the multilateral forum faced a severe trial (*kao yan*) after the swift military deployment of the United States-led coalition in the greater Central Asian region following attacks on September 11, 2001,²³³ in time, the organization consolidated its role in the region. We shall explore this development in the following chapter.

The attacks on the United States was the pretext under which the United States-led alliance deployed military in the region and sought to establish close, long-lasting alliances; they did not mark the beginning of the United States’ interest in the region. As we discussed in this chapter, the United States had strategic interests, which predated their military deployment. Though the region had substantial energy reserves, Central Asia’s oil and gas sector had provided the context that allowed the United States and its allies to try and curtail Russian influence. The struggle over energy resources made it abundantly clear, lest there be any doubt, that Central Asia had emerged as an arena for international rivalry in the post-Cold War era.

Since the formation of the People’s Republic in 1949, China had to contend with a strong American presence in East Asia, and also just beyond its Southeast Asian

²³² Refugee Says Uyghurs Mobilize After Ethnic Riots,” *Hong Kong AFP*, February 15, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-032.

²³³ Wang, “Zhongguo duobian waijiao,” 521.

frontiers. Now, the United States was projecting a strong influence in the Central Asian region. As we noted, this presence was to be maintained by bilateral alliances and engagement by American oil companies. Lest we think that that Western oil companies were merely engaged in a profit-making exercise, recall the testimonies and policy statements made at high levels of government during this time. China's interests were not mentioned as frequently as Russia's in these testimonies, because China did not project itself as a major contender for the region's energy resources in the 1990s. To my knowledge, China's acquisition of oilfields in Kazakhstan did not appear on the American radar at this point; in addition, there is little to suggest that policy-makers in the United States were gravely concerned about China's role in Central Asia.²³⁴ China had reacted with considerable restraint, choosing to stay away from the disputes that were unfolding over the region's energy resources. Instead, the Chinese government sought to deepen its multilateral alliance with the Central Asian states, gradually expanding the agenda to bring it in line with the concerns that all five states shared. Of course, multilateral cooperation did not preclude bilateral cooperation. This was most obvious in the energy sector; when it became clear that China would not be able to increase its own output, energy from Kazakhstan became a viable option.

But perhaps the most elusive challenge faced by China was ensuring security within Xinjiang. A peaceful and secure Xinjiang, fully integrated into China proper is the pivot around which China's development of the western regions, and opening up to Central and South Asia hinges. If stability within Xinjiang was forsaken, then Xinjiang's role as a bridgehead for Chinese interests in the region would be jeopardized. Unfortunately, for China, stability within Xinjiang has been a hard fought venture, and in the years following the independence of Central Asia, hard to maintain for long periods of time. The breakup of the Soviet Union, and the demise of Soviet suzerainty in Central Asia acted as a catalyst for interest groups in Xinjiang, who now saw the independence of the autonomous region as a possibility. In this venture, they were aided by the war economy stemming from the Afghan conflict, the insurgencies in Tajikistan and

²³⁴ An exception was Stephen Blank's testimony in July 2000, though as we saw, Blank's concern had been the creation of an anti-US bloc that was led by China and Russia, and less, the deepening of Chinese influence in Central Asia.

Uzbekistan, and Islamist organizations in Pakistan, who were only too happy to champion such seemingly lost causes as the independence of Xinjiang from China.

For the PRC leadership, at issue was also the territorial integrity of the country; besides separatist movements within Xinjiang, China has had to contend with similar movements in Tibet, and the threat of the independence of Taiwan. Should China's grasp over Xinjiang falter, there is a danger that independence movements elsewhere in the country would be bolstered.

Consequently China responded, as most states would, by cracking down on separatist elements within Xinjiang. The force that China was able to bring to the conflict, along with its largely successful attempt at pressurizing neighboring countries to curtail organizations that were supporting Xinjiang separatists, meant that instances of unrest did not lead to enduring insurgencies similar to those taking place elsewhere in the greater Central Asian region. While China was largely successful in ensuring stability in the region, it was a stability that was predicated upon the certainty that the state would use any amount of force necessary to keep Xinjiang within China.

One could cautiously suggest that from the Chinese perspective the shift in emphasis to regional security after 1998 had paid off. Instability in 1997 marked the last time that large-scale violence occurred in Xinjiang, and we can take this to mean that the bilateral and multilateral emphasis on security cooperation was paying dividends. But while China, Russia, and the Central Asian member-states of the Shanghai Five did seek to enhance regional security through multilateral cooperation, it was not a substitute for either bilateral cooperation in certain sectors, nor was it the magic bullet that would ensure peace and stability in the region. The challenges posed by the independence of Central Asia were far greater, and with time, they would become more acute.

New Challenges and New Opportunities in Sino-Central Asian Relations, 2001-2005

Introduction

Following independence, the Central Asian region presented challenges to China's security, which if left unchecked, would have adversely effected Xinjiang. The most critical aspect of the new security challenge had been ensuring that individuals from within Xinjiang's indigenous population did not undermine Beijing's authority in the autonomous region. It is to China's credit that it was successful in both its bilateral diplomacy, (with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan), and multilateral initiatives, (through the Shanghai Five mechanism), to stem the separatist threat. Although in the summer of 2001, IMU-led insurgents wracked Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan for the third year in a row,¹ Xinjiang had not seen a popular uprising since 1997.

But China could not afford to let its guard down. Although the Central Asian leadership went to great lengths to crack down on instability, the Taliban regime was still in power in Afghanistan, which was regarded by Chinese scholars and officials alike as being a major contributor to regional instability.² While the Taliban had pledged they would not support separatists within Xinjiang, and nor would they allow Xinjiang to be used as a base against China,³ this did not stop some individuals within Xinjiang from building links with organizations in Afghanistan. It also did not preclude the possibility that separatists in Xinjiang would not try to emulate the anti-state violence occurring in much of Central Asia. The fact that violent unrest in Central Asia, that took place for three consecutive years beginning in 1998, did not trigger any notable unrest in Xinjiang demonstrates the effectiveness of both China's diplomacy and its internal security apparatus.

¹ Rashid, *Jihad*, esp. 137-186.

² For examples, see Information Office, "'East Turkistan' Forces"; "Unveiling the Terrorist Nature of 'East Tujue' Elements," *People's Daily*, November 11, 2001. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200111/16/print20011116_84659.html (accessed January 5, 2006); Ma, "Afuhan de 'shengzhan,'" 129-140; Wang, "Sulian jieti hou," 77-82; and Yang and Wang, "Zhongya anquan," 58-61.

³ "More on China FM Spokesman on Possible US Retaliation for Terror Attacks," *Hong Kong AFP* September 18, 2001. In FBIS-NES-2001-0918. This announcement was made by Zhu Bangzao during a press conference at the Chinese MFA on September 18, 2001. Zhu also announced that the Chinese government had no formal links with the Taliban.

The United States-led retaliation following the attacks of September 11, 2001, temporarily culled the recurring cycle of insurgency in Central Asia. Within a month after the attacks on New York and Washington, a relentless military offensive was underway in Afghanistan. Shortly afterwards, the United States' military secured bases in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The short-term result was that the Taliban was ousted from power, and Usama bin Laden's so-called al-Qaeda network was temporarily put out of commission. Regional organizations such as the IMU also suffered a severe setback. Insofar as the United States-led offensive succeeded in targeting transnational organizations that had challenged the authority of the regional nation-states, the consensus amongst the Shanghai Five signatories, including China, was that the offensive had paid off dividends.

Nonetheless, there were two problems with the "War on Terror" as it played out in the following months. The first problem was that the US-led offensive did not conclusively eliminate threats to regional and global security. Though a pro-US regime was instated in Kabul in December 2001, the United States-led campaign only temporarily stunned the Taliban. As early as the summer of 2002, Ahmed Rashid was predicting a "second round" in the near future.⁴ This has been the case with unrest in Uzbekistan (in 2004), and with the increasing frequency of insurgent attacks in Afghanistan, both of which suggest that regional insurgent organizations have reorganized. The "War on Terror," while successful in ousting the Taliban regime, was considerably less successful in securing long-term regional stability.

For China, the second problem was that the greater Central Asian region became an important theatre for the anti-terrorist campaign. This is not to suggest that the United States and its allies "discovered" Central Asia after the attacks of September 11. Prior to September 11, 2001, many within the United States foreign policy establishment had been aware of the strategic importance of Central Asia, and had lobbied furiously to ensure that Central Asia came under the United States' sphere of influence. The United States had mostly, though not exclusively, sought a presence in the region through engagement in the region's energy sector. But after September 11, 2001, the level of US engagement deepened greatly: consider that the United States engaged in an extensive

⁴ Interview in June 2002, Lahore, Pakistan.

military campaign in the region, established a military presence in Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Pakistan, and had instated a new regime in power in Kabul. All of these developments changed the dynamics of the Central Asian region in which China had been extending its diplomatic initiative and economic influence. For China, these developments were alarming, more so because they took place in a short amount of time. How China responded to and sought to overcome these challenges is addressed in this chapter. After 2001, not only was China's policy towards Central Asia influenced by its concerns in Xinjiang, but as this chapter will demonstrate, China's regional policy was also influenced by its perception of global strategic challenges.

This chapter is divided into five parts. In part one, I discuss the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The organization came into existence following five years of multilateral diplomacy between China, Russia, and Central Asia. During this time, the multilateral initiative had successfully implemented confidence building measures and border demarcations, highlighted common security concerns, and created a mechanism whereby leaders and officials from the neighboring states routinely met as equals. Although much of the actual cooperation resulted from bilateral initiatives, the multilateral forum promoted an environment of peace and stability in the frontier regions that was instrumental to these initiatives. Following the avowed success of the Shanghai Five mechanism, in 2001, the member-states decided to take cooperation to the next stage by creating a formal institution. This decision was based on the understanding that there was further potential for future cooperation.

The immediate focus of the SCO was addressing issues of regional security. Towards this end, the member-states passed a convention on combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism. This multilateral consensus was summarized in an important document that set out to explain how the member-states understood the above threats to security. For the SCO member-states, not only were "terrorism, separatism, and extremism" interlinked, but there was no allowance to understand these as political acts, or as resulting from ethnic or religious marginalization. In other words, the absolute primacy of the nation-state was upheld, which enabled member-states to depict any resistance to state authority as an act of terrorism, separatism, and extremism. Thus, not only did they disregard any possibility of dialogue to address root causes of instability,

but the member-states also preempted any discussion on their responsibility in contributing to people's grievances. While it is uncertain if any one country took the lead in conceptualizing challenges to state security as such, all member-states stressed the absolute authority of the state, and in doing so, took a similar position towards security challenges.

The role of the SCO in addressing challenges of regional security was severely overshadowed following the September 11 attacks. Seemingly overnight, security in the greater Central Asian region went from being a concern shared by regional states to one that the United States-led alliance sought to redress. Although the Chinese promised full cooperation in the global anti-terror campaign that was being led by the United States, they were also alarmed by US unilateralism. Consequently, in the subsequent months, China stressed caution, arguing that the UNSC must play a leading role in the anti-terror effort. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was still in the early stages of its inception, and had little to contribute to the "War on Terror." Instead, NATO, with its "attack on one is an attack on all" dictum took the lead in the military initiative. Of all the SCO member-states, China was probably the most marginalized in the months following the attacks of September 11, 2001. The Central Asian republics had offered support to the US-led war effort – as had Russia – leading to the possibility that China alone would have little or no say in how the military campaign unfolded beyond its western frontiers.

China did not have a mechanism through which to contribute, and consequently influence, the new global alliance. Not having a say in the anti-terror campaign was not an option, as these campaigns addressed regional security issues that had the potential to effect China's security. Consequently, China's approach was twofold; on the one hand, China pragmatically accepted the United States' presence in the region, with scholars drawing some consolation from the fact that the US-led offensive had dealt a blow to the transnational organizations in Central Asia. On the other hand, China highlighted the issue that it was most concerned with in the context of regional security – that of Uighur separatists – to suggest that unrest in Xinjiang was linked to the transnational terrorist organizations based in Afghanistan. Towards this end, between October 2001 and January 2002, we see the appearance of a state-led discourse in which the cast of villains unveiled by the US following September 11 was adopted by the Chinese to explain unrest

in Xinjiang. Unrest in Ili, which in 1997 had been described as localized and effectively dealt with, was now depicted as being connected to Afghanistan-based transnational movements and orchestrated by East Turkestan independence forces. In addition, the Chinese government struck out at Uighur organizations abroad that had been lobbying the Western governments and the United Nations. By portraying itself as a victim of terrorism, China had positioned itself to contribute to the global discourse on terrorism.

This does not mean that China became a lackey of the US in the anti-terror alliance. On the contrary, as I discuss in part three, from the beginning of 2002, there was a growing estrangement between China and the United States. Sino-US relations had been tense through the first half of 2001, even though there was veneer of cordiality after the attacks of September 11. Beginning in 2002, there was both growing criticism and dismissal in some US foreign policy think tanks about China's role in the new global initiative. The criticism stemmed from the fact that some analysts believed that China had relations with the Taliban and the so-called "Axis of Evil" countries, and was seeking to undermine US influence in both the Asia-Pacific and Central Asia. The fringe elements in these think tanks believed that it was better to engage China now when US power was at its zenith. Some with less hawkish views considered that China had been completely marginalized by the "War on Terror," with Chinese allies such as Pakistan, Russia and the Central Asian states, as well as adversaries such as Japan, having joined the US-led coalition. The perception was that US power had eclipsed any possibility of China extending a meaningful sphere of influence in Central Asia.

In this section, I also discuss the Chinese response to US posturing after September 11. Chinese scholars were correctly of the opinion that the United States' entry into regions such as Central Asia posed a challenge to the PRC. But the greatest criticism by Chinese scholars was against US unilateral policies, which were espoused clearly in a document on national security released by the United States government in September 2002, which justified preemptive strikes to protect US national interest. The same document, and similar analyses produced in US think tanks, also advocated for a change in China's internal political culture. While this was seemingly different than calling for a military engagement with China, the thrust of both the arguments was the same: to make China subservient to the United States.

Though its economy was robust, China now found itself in a position of weakness. In part four, I address how China sought to overcome these challenges by strengthening the SCO mechanisms. In the summer of 2002, member countries met at St. Petersburg to formalize a Charter for the organization. Interestingly, the Charter was geared towards long-term cooperation; there is little in the document concerning regional security, suggesting that the SCO was being envisioned as a forum for long-term cooperation. Two SCO institutions were planned at this time, a Secretariat in Beijing, and an antiterrorism center initially planned in Bishkek, but which was eventually established in Tashkent.

From 2002 onwards, there was heightened security cooperation between China and Central Asia. Beginning in 2002, China engaged in military exercises with the neighboring states, the purpose of which was not to prepare for an attack by a neighboring state, but to practice counter-terrorist exercises. China was also successful in its antiterrorist diplomacy elsewhere in the region; in December 2003, the Pakistani military succeeded in killing Hassan Mahsum (1964-2003), the supposed head of the ETIM. Nonetheless, within Central Asia, security challenges continued to loom large. In the spring and summer of 2004, Uzbekistan witnessed renewed upheaval that was blamed on Islamist organizations. The Karimov regime refused to consider that the unrest could have been instigated by dissatisfaction with the government. Security concern came into sharper focus with heads of SCO member-states making even stronger criticism of the Afghan regimes' inability to crack down on the narcotics trade.

In the final part of this chapter, I discuss two issues that exemplify the prospects and challenges for China's cooperation with the Central Asian republics: these were cooperation in the energy sector and the ongoing threat of narcotics from Afghanistan. In December 2005, oil started flowing via the newly constructed pipeline from Kazakhstan to Xinjiang. In this section, I continue the story from where we left off in Chapter Three, and explore how the US-led military initiatives in Central Asia and the Middle East, along with China's increasing energy consumption necessitated that China diversify its energy procurement. I also argue that while the multibillion-dollar investment in the region's energy sector was indicative of a high degree of investor confidence, this move should be kept within the context of China's diversifying of energy, which intensified in

2003. I also discuss how China's emergence as an important player on the world's energy market was received with trepidation by the United States.

While cooperation in the energy sector was indicative of the rewards that cooperation with the Central Asian republics was likely to yield in the future – with the caveat that Sino-Central Asian energy cooperation will likely result in a clash of interests between China and United States – the narcotics trade stemming from Afghanistan will mandate that China and its Central Asian allies not let their guard down. In this section, I survey the trends in narcotics cultivation in the region. I suggest that the primary threat faced by China was not of Afghan opiates entering China, though that is certainly an important concern, but that through its continuation the drug trade will continue to sustain networks in the greater Central Asian region whose interests will be at odds with those of the regional states.

I. The SCO and the Conceptualization of Regional and Global Security

Five years after the first multilateral meeting of the presidents of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, the five heads of state, along with the president of Uzbekistan, met in Shanghai on June 15, 2001. The purpose of the summit was the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. According to the official version of events, multilateral cooperation between the five countries since 1996 had been a resounding success:

It [Shanghai Five mechanism] successfully moved forward the process of solving issues left history [*sic*] concerning boundary matters in relations of China with four member-states, facilitated peace and tranquility in the border regions; strongly fights and constrains “three evils” – terrorism, separatism and extremism, safeguarded security and stability of states of the region; actively promoted trade and economic relations amongst the member states, carried out useful search in unfolding regional economic cooperation; continuously strengthens coordination among member-states on international arena, became an important regional force in promoting of peace and development throughout the world.⁵

⁵ “History of Development.”

The scope for further cooperation was immense; the account continued: “Heads of the “Shanghai five” member-states and the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan unanimously decided to lift the mechanism of “Shanghai five” to a higher level, in order to make it a strong base and important support [*sic*] for developing under new conditions cooperation among [*sic*] states.” The official introduction also noted that the creation of the SCO took place, “three months prior to the tragedy of September 11, 2001. Thus, SCO has become the pioneer organization, which has precisely proposed fighting against terrorism on the international level.”⁶ Note that the official account singled out the fight against terrorism as a principal contribution of the new organization.

The actual declaration following the meeting emphasized the need for enhanced multilateral cooperation to combat regional instability. Unlike the 1996 and 1997 declarations, which laid out specific mechanisms for developing confidence building in the border areas, and unlike the three subsequent declarations (1998 through 2000), that commented, albeit sometimes implicitly, on issues of global significance, such as the need for a multipolar world order and increased role of the United Nations, the 2001 declaration on the creation of the SCO refrained from making direct reference to global events. Even with regard to regional security, the declaration made no reference to the conflict that was taking place in Afghanistan, or the violence that had wreaked havoc in Uzbekistan’s Ferghana valley on a yearly basis since 1998.

Instead, the 2001 declaration set out the goals of the SCO as strengthening “mutual confidence, friendship and good-neighborly relations,” encouraging, “effective cooperation ... in the political, trade-economic, scientific-technical, cultural, educational, energy, transportation, ecological and other areas.” The declaration also noted that the organization, “adheres to the principles of openness,” and was not directed against any other country.⁷ Transparency was emphasized, and the organization was careful not to appear as a bloc. The non-antagonistic nature of the organization was an important consideration for the Central Asian republics, for whom cooperation with the Western countries was important, especially in their burgeoning energy sector. The organization was said to “assign priority” to regional security, and “exerts all the necessary efforts to

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ “Declaration on the Creation.”

ensure it.” The signatories noted that they would continue with plans to create a regional anti-terrorism center in Bishkek, and agreed to cooperate in “preventing illegal arms and narcotics trafficking, illegal migration and other types of criminal activity.”⁸ As I discuss in this chapter, the trafficking in illegal narcotics not only continued to be an important concern, but one whose adverse effects probably increased in the years following 2001.

In addition to the official declaration, the heads of state released three other documents after the meeting. The first was a statement welcoming Uzbekistan into the organization.⁹ The second was a bulletin that summarized the topics under consideration at the meeting.¹⁰ Finally, a document titled, “Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism,” was also released. This document was important as it laid out the mechanism for dealing with issues relating to terrorism. These included: the extradition of individuals from an SCO member-country, mechanisms for the exchange of information, measures to prevent weapons falling into the hands of citizens, and cooperation and assistance in training security personnel. Mechanisms for exchanging information on individuals and organizations threatening stability were also put in place.¹¹ Finally, the agreement did not preclude the possibility that the member countries could join other international treaties with the same stated goals.¹²

An important contribution of this document was that it sought to define terrorism (*kongbu zhuyi*), separatism/splitism (*fenlie zhuyi*), and extremism (*jiduan zhuyi*). These are the same terms that were used by the Chinese government to describe instability in Xinjiang. Terrorism was defined as:

[An] act intended to cause death or serious bodily injury to a civilian, or any other person not taking an active part in the hostilities in a situation of armed conflict or to cause major damage to any material facility, as well as to organize, plan, aid, and abet such act, when the purpose of such act, by its nature or content, is to intimidate a population, violate public security or to compel public authorities or an

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “Joint Statement by the Heads of State.”

¹⁰ “Meeting of the Heads of State.”

¹¹ “Shanghai Convention.”

¹² Ibid., Article 16.

international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, and prosecuted in accordance with the laws of the Parties.¹³

“Separatism” was an act whose purpose was to “violate territorial integrity of a State including by annexation of any part of its territory or to disintegrate a State, committed in a violent manner.” Planning and preparing for such acts was also considered separatism. Finally, “extremism” was an act “aimed at seizing or keeping power through the use of violence or changing violently the constitutional regime of a State, as well as a violent encroachment upon public security, including organization, for the above purposes, of illegal armed formations and participations in them.”¹⁴ All three terms were discursive, and interconnected, which explains why they are frequently used in conjunction with each other. In conceptualizing threats to regional security, SCO member-states almost always conflated these terms, which does not imply semantic sloppiness, but that member-states saw all types of separatist activity as forms of terrorism that undermined the role of the state.¹⁵

The definition adopted by the SCO member-states made no concessions for terrorism to be justified by political ends. In fact, the document actively excludes such considerations: “The Parties shall take such measures as can prove necessary ... in the field of domestic legislation, in order to ensure that in no circumstances acts [of terrorism, separatism, and extremism] should be subject to acquittal based upon exclusively political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any similar considerations and that they should entail punishment proportionate to their gravity.”¹⁶ We may take this to understand that any act of violence deemed threatening to the state or

¹³ “Shanghai Convention.” Article 1.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ UNODC, “Definitions of Terrorism.” Amongst the international community, terrorism remains a vaguely defined term; since the first attempt to define terrorism by the League of Nations 1937, the international community has failed to reach a consensus on what it entails. Through its history, the United Nations has agreed on twelve conventions and protocols, though none led a definition that the international community agrees on. A fundamental problem is that different countries and interest groups have often simultaneously looked at the same event as both an act of terrorism, and as an act of liberation. Consider for example the Hamas and Hizballah in the Middle East, the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and the Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) in Europe, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) and Kashmiri insurgent organizations in South Asia, all of which are contemporary movements that routinely resort to violence and whose role remains highly controversial.

¹⁶ “Shanghai Convention.” Article 3.

its citizens, and motivated by the above-stated political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic or religious concerns was an act of terrorism. Put another way, the exclusion of the above stimuli reinstates the absolute primacy of the nation-state, as it existed in its present form, as an indivisible and unalterable entity. In its giving of absolute primacy to the state, the SCO member-states excluded any possibility of dialogue that would address the root cause of unrest in their respective countries.

The problem with this approach lay in the absolute authority of the state that excluded any possibility for addressing ethnic or religious grievances from outside state-delineated boundaries. Though the SCO member-states agreed that instability in the region was aggravated by the conflict in Afghanistan, there was no acknowledgement that internal unrest could also be a reaction to state policy. Within China, scholars took this reasoning a step further by suggesting that extremism (*jiduan zhuyi*), and Islamic extremism (*yisilan jiduan zhuyi*), were a result of the unrest of not only the conflict in Afghanistan, but also the civil war in Tajikistan, and the insurgency in Uzbekistan.¹⁷ The implication, of course, was that there were no indigenous reasons for unrest in Xinjiang. From this perspective, terrorism, separatism, and extremism were regional, transnational, and criminal problems for which there were no gradualist, non-violent mechanisms for redress. The only solution was counter-terrorism by using the most effective weapon in the states' arsenal, violence. Heavy-handed repression had been the response of the Nabiev/Rahmanov regimes in Tajikistan; the Uzbek government had likewise responded with violence when threatened by the IMU.¹⁸ The Chinese government had responded similarly when confronted by unrest in Ili. That there was no discussion of how internal unrest could have been a reaction to a state policy or governance, was a reflection of how these states conceptualized terrorism, separatism, and extremism. For the SCO member-

¹⁷ Chen, "Sange 'jiduan zhuyi,'" 58-60; and Zhang, "Zhongya de yisilan," 70-76. Likewise, during a meeting with a scholar at the CASS in the summer of 2005, I was told that restive elements in Xinjiang had also been aided by Chechens.

¹⁸ Note that in both Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the state failed to suppress the insurgents. During the Tajik civil war, the warring sides began negotiation following the state's inability to overwhelm the opposition, and likewise, the Karimov regime failed to suppress the IMU by itself. While Uzbekistan's President Karimov failed to suppress the IMU between 1998 and 2001, the state continued to rely exclusively on force. Widespread persecution of people suspected to be Islamists ought to be seen in this light, that is, as a form of the state's use of violence to eliminate opposition.

states, terrorism, separatism, and extremism, were a euphemism for challenge to the primordial authority of the state.

The attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, brought security concerns in Central Asia to the world's attention. China responded by condemning the attacks as acts of terrorism, extending condolences, and by pledging to cooperate in the anti-terrorist struggle. The following day, China voted in favor of UNSC Resolution 1368 that condemned the attacks, called on the international community to bring the perpetrators to justice, and to step up the fight against terrorism.¹⁹

But unlike NATO states that according to their Charter considered an attack on one as an attack on all, China's position was marked by a subtle but notable distancing from the United States. On September 12, the *People's Daily* carried a statement by Major General Zhang Qinsheng of the National Defense University, in which he stressed caution, warning that no country should "react in a rash manner," as the reasons for the attack had not yet been ascertained. He also said: "[A]ny government should, in its actions, comply with the mainstream of the development of mankind," a comment that was not elaborated further.²⁰ We may assume that this was a suggestion that the US should respond in accordance with international law, a position taken by the Chinese government in the following days.

The following day, September 13, the Hong Kong edition of the *China Daily* carried an article analyzing the recent events. The article quoted foreign policy "experts" in the PRC who suggested that the attacks were a consequence of US foreign policy. Jin Canrong of the CASS expressed regret at the loss of lives in the US; yet, according to Jin, it was valid to ask why "such a tragedy" had taken place "nowhere else but the United States." Jin suggested that US policies in the Middle East "may have pushed some Islamic extremists to desperation." Gong Li, of the School of the Communist Party of China, was quoted as saying: "The attacks apparently had something to do with Bush's foreign policies." The article also quoted Gong as questioning the effectiveness of the proposed National Missile Defense (NMD) program in protecting the United States. With

¹⁹ UNSC, "Resolution 1368."

²⁰ "Senior Chinese Military Expert Cautions Restraint in Reaction to US Attacks," *People's Daily*, September 12, 2001. http://english.people.com.cn/english/200109/12/print20010912_80077.html (accessed November 23, 2005).

the main threat being terrorism and not inter-continental missiles, “The attacks ... are proof that advanced technology cannot ensure the absolute security of the United States.”²¹ These perspectives underscored an important point concerning China’s response: while Chinese officials expressed a willingness to cooperate with the US-led anti-terrorist movement, some within China saw the attacks as being a consequence of US foreign policy.²²

The first commentary in the *People’s Daily* to address the attacks appeared on September 14. The commentary was written by Fang Siyong, and had been published two days earlier in the *South China News*. After noting that the recent attacks were “attracting the attention of the world’s people and has aroused their deep feeling,” the commentary proceeded to explain the attacks in the context of the post-Cold War world. Alluding to Samuel Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations” theory of a “cultural conflict,” the commentary suggests that the recent events were triggered by US policies: “On the strength of its economic and military superiority, the United States is rigidly pushing through Western cultures and values worldwide [*sic*]. Such cultural invasion built on the basis of power politics has gradually aggravated the contradictions between different cultures, while the most effective counter-attacking means adopted by weak cultural groups is terrorist attack [*sic*].”²³

Since terrorism was a scourge of the entire international community, the commentary reasoned that the United States would need to address this challenge through multilateral cooperation. “[T]he United States inevitably finds it necessary to take the initiative to seek cooperation between nations. The emergence of this new factor will spur the United States and its traditionally alien countries to increase understandings and reduce frictions,” the commentary predicted. The author asserted that since the Cold War, the US had been “looking for imaginary enemies ... the United States should now do some practical things.” The author believed that relations with China and Russia, United

²¹ “US Should Rethink Foreign Policy: Experts,” *China Daily* (Hong Kong Edition), September 13, 2001. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2001-09/13/content_82946.htm (accessed November 27, 2005).

²² Such comments were not lost on US analysts, and at least one CRS Report for Congress misunderstood the comment about TMD taking it to mean that commentary in “official PRC media” saw the events of September 11 linked to faulty US policies, “including that on missile defense.” Kan, “U.S.-China.”

²³ “Terrorist Attack on US: Turning-Point in Post-Cold War Pattern,” *People’s Daily*, September 14, 2001. http://english.people.com.cn/english/200109/14/print20010914_80248.html (accessed November 24, 2005).

States' "specious" opponents since the Cold War, would now improve. Though the commentary does not address how relations between the countries would improve, it took this opportunity to make an impassioned case that the proposed NMD program would be ineffective against acts of terrorism.²⁴ This commentary indicated that some within China hoped that the unforeseen events of September 11 would herald a change in US foreign policy by increased multilateral diplomacy, enhancing the primacy of the UN, and by bringing an end to US policies such as TMD. These were changes that China and Russia had hoped to see with regard to US diplomacy in the decade preceding September 11.

China continued to express similar aspirations through the official media in the following days. Though the Chinese leadership announced that it was willing to work with the global community to combat international terrorism,²⁵ MFA spokespersons and diplomats insisted that any retaliation must be in line with the United Nations Charter, in which the Security Council must play a leading role. A Chinese diplomat in the United States stressed that anti-terrorist activity should be based on "solid evidence and concrete targets, and should reduce the collateral damage, especially the loss of innocent lives, to the minimum possible."²⁶

Thus, while the PRC offered cooperation with the United States, this was not tantamount to using the recent events to inch closer to the United States; neither country had any intention of using the recent events to alter their stance on issues of bilateral disagreement. On September 18, an MFA spokesperson suggested this much, noting that because of its cooperation with the United States, China was not demanding the United States to reduce arms sales to Taiwan. "The issue of the fight against terrorism is another

²⁴ With reference to TMD, the commentary argued that with counter-terrorism the call of the day, the United States would find it impossible "to devote all its energy to developing NMD." Another reason why the NMD program would now be scrapped was because of its unpopularity; the program had attracted criticism from many parts of the world, and now that the US needed allies to counter terrorist activities, the commentary argued that it would be impossible for the US to continue "its overbearing attitude towards other countries." Ibid.

²⁵ See for example statements to this end by the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Wang Guangya in "China to Work with World to Combat Terrorism: Vice-Minister," *People's Daily*, September 13, 2001. http://english.people.com.cn/english/200109/13/print20010913_b0169.html (accessed November 23, 2005).

²⁶ "PRC Diplomat Says China to Cooperate in Fighting Terrorism; Urges Solid Evidence," *Xinhua*, September 19, 2001. In FBIS-CHI-2001-0919. See similar remarks by He Yafei, a Chinese diplomat in the US, the following day. "PRC Envoy: China to Cooperate with US, Intl Community Against Terrorism," *Xinhua*, September 20, 2001. In FBIS-NES-2001-0920.

question. It doesn't mean that we are making any bargains here," the spokesperson said.²⁷ On September 20, a foreign ministry spokesperson denied that China's support for counter-terrorism was based on the United States' supporting China's own efforts to fight separatists within the PRC.²⁸ Thus, following the September 11 attacks, China extended cooperation to the United States and maintained a notable distance without wanting to appear isolated from developments at the international level. This can be seen by the fact that during the week following September 11, President Jiang Zemin was reported to have had two telephone conversations with President George W. Bush, and at least one conversation with British Prime Minister Tony Blair (1997-). During this time, the Chinese government made it clear that they were willing to "discuss any proposal at the UN Security Council against terrorism."²⁹ China wanted to ensure that it would play a part in the evolving international campaign; consequently, China actively engaged the United States at the highest levels of government. According to the Chinese media, counter-terrorism featured prominently during the visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan (2000-2003), to the United States from September 19 to 21;³⁰ the following week, the United States and China held "expert level talks on combating terrorism."³¹

In an attempt to create a platform for itself in the global counter-terrorist campaign, the PRC began depicting itself as a victim of terrorism. From this point on, there was repeated emphasis in the official press that terrorism was an international problem, and China, too, was a victim of terrorism. On September 18, a foreign ministry spokesperson had suggested that China had reason to ask the US for support and understanding in China's own struggle against terrorism and separatism.³² This could be understood as a request for allowing China to engage in internal anti-separatist campaigns

²⁷ "PRC FM Spokesman Urges US to Support China's Terrorism, Separatist Efforts," *Hong Kong AFP*, September 18, 2001. In FBIS-CHI-2001-0918.

²⁸ "FM Spokesman Criticizes *Washington Post* for "Untruthful" Report on PRC Terrorism Stance," *Zhongguo xinwen she*, September 20, 2001. In FBIS-CHI-2001-0920.

²⁹ "More on China FM Spokesman on Possible US Retaliation for Terror Attacks," *Hong Kong AFP*, September 18, 2001. In FBIS-NES-2001-0918.

³⁰ "China Reaffirms Support for Fight Against Terrorism: Foreign Minister," *People's Daily*, September 21, 2001. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200109/21/eng20010921_80726.html (accessed November 26, 2005).

³¹ "US and China Hold Anti-Terrorism Talks in Washington," *People's Daily*, September 26, 2001. http://english.people.com.cn/english/200109/26/print20010926_81085.html (accessed November 26, 2005).

³² "PRC FM Spokesman Urges US to Support China's, Separatist Efforts," *Hong Kong AFP*, September 18, 2001. In FBIS-CHI-2001-0918.

without provoking international criticism over human rights abuses within the country. The following day, He Yafei, a Chinese diplomat in Washington, suggested that both China and the United States were victims of international terrorism and had vested interests in combating terrorism.³³ This was the very beginning of the Chinese discourse of victimization; as we shall discuss in the subsequent section, this discourse would soon become highly sophisticated.

Another reason why China did not want to be marginalized from the anti-terrorist campaign was because it was extremely concerned about the economic repercussions of the attack. As one Chinese scholar suggested, besides the impact on security, the attacks had a tremendous effect on the world's markets.³⁴ Even before the attacks, the United States government was reporting its eleventh consecutive month of falling industrial productivity, leading to a total decline of 4.8 percent over the previous one year. It was feared that recession in the United States would adversely effect China; political and economic uncertainty in the United States could likewise adversely effect foreign investment in China.³⁵ These events also had the potential to jeopardize China's oil security. An unsigned commentary in the *People's Daily* on September 21, observed that following the attacks of September 11, the price of oil had jumped to thirty-one dollars per barrel (even though OPEC had managed to drive the price down to twenty-eight dollars per barrel). This was particularly troubling for China, which was importing a third of its oil, and by 2020, was estimated would be importing at least half of its oil. "What impacts and unpredictable price fluctuations could be produced and exerted in the world and on China in the years to come?" the commentary wondered.³⁶

The commentary noted that not only was a confrontation between Afghanistan and the United States imminent, but Afghanistan was located between the Middle East, from where 46.2 percent of China's oil imports came, and Central Asia, from where

³³ "PRC Diplomat Says China to Cooperate in Fighting Terrorism; Urges Solid Evidence," *Xinhua*, September 19, 2001. In FBIS-CHI-2001-0919.

³⁴ Wang, "Yantai xin qiju," 1-3.

³⁵ "Terrorist Hits to Scar China's Economy," *China Daily/Business Weekly*, September 18, 2001. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2001-09/18/content_84042.htm (accessed November 27, 2005); and, "China Role in Int'l Arena," *China Daily* (Hong Kong Edition), September 18, 2001. http://www.china-daily.com.cn/en/doc/2001-09/18/content_83955.htm (accessed November 27, 2005).

³⁶ "US 'Attacks September 11' Focusing China's Oil Security," *People's Daily*, September 26, 2001. http://english.people.com.cn/english/200109/21/print20010921_80742.html (accessed November 23, 2005).

China hoped to import oil in the future. Citing Zhu Xingshan, the deputy director of the Economic Center of Energy Research Institute, the commentary predicted: “[T]errorist attacks [of] September 11 have objectively provided a pretext for the US to enter Central Asia in a way to complicate an environment originally simple. This will be of far reaching significance to the strategy for oil supply in China.”³⁷ In Chapter Three I had suggested that the Chinese government’s concerns over oil security increased after the September 11 attacks, noting that the heightened concern was not only because of China’s increasing import of oil, but because of aggressive US posturing in oil producing regions. This early commentary was indicative of the direction that China’s energy security concerns would take in the subsequent years, which we shall explore further in this chapter.

For China, the above concerns were especially important as they heralded widespread changes that would be in effect for a long time to come. The US had made it abundantly clear that the “War on Terror” would not be limited to retribution against the al-Qaeda networks in Afghanistan, but would have far-reaching repercussions. In an address on September 20, President Bush laid out the US blueprint for American military action. Blame for the attacks was placed on Usama bin Laden and al-Qaeda, “a collection of loosely affiliated terrorist organizations.” Al-Qaeda was said to have links with many organizations in different countries, including the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and the IMU. Thousands of terrorists from more than sixty countries were said to have trained in Afghanistan after which they returned to their home country, or went to hide in another country “to plot evil and destruction.”³⁸

As a hint of what was to follow, President Bush’s main point was this: “Our war on terror begins with al-Qaeda but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated.” Towards this end, President Bush stated that every nation that harbored terrorists would be pursued, giving an ultimatum to all countries of the world: “Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day on

³⁷ Ibid. The other noteworthy aspect of this editorial is that while it approaches political and economic security through the question of oil security, there is a clear acknowledgement of uncertainty spreading from recent events. Once again quoting Zhu Xingshan, the commentary concludes: “[W]e should see to it that good preparations be made against all possibilities since things stay not all that clear in today’s world.”

³⁸ Bush, “Address.”

forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorists will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.”³⁹ President Bush’s September 20 speech was indicative of the direction that US foreign and military policy would take till “every terrorist group of global reach” had been eliminated. It was also an admission that the new alliance would be led by the United States; there was no mention of the United Nations or any other multilateral organization except a passing reference to NATO.⁴⁰ It was also clear the scope of the war was going to be far-reaching with global ramifications. This much was clearly stated by US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld (2001-), in an article published in the *New York Times* on September 27, 2001. “Forget about “exit strategies”; we’re looking at a sustained engagement that carries no deadlines,” Rumsfeld wrote.⁴¹

Secretary Rumsfeld’s “sustained engagement” meant forging new military alliances. Not only were most of the countries on the periphery of Afghanistan not in a position to defy the US, but an alliance with the United States was beneficial for many countries, especially insofar as such an alliance could help them curtail internal opposition. President Karimov’s regime in Uzbekistan was one such regime that enjoyed a temporary respite from the IMU because of the US offensive against Afghanistan where many of the IMU’s forces were based. Particularly important for the present study was the announcement made during Rumsfeld’s visit to Central Asia that Uzbekistan, the newest member of the SCO, was offering the United States use of the Karshi-Khanabad airbase that was located two hundred kilometers north of the Afghan border.⁴² Though officially the base was leased free of charge, in exchange the US provided military aid, training, and equipment, as well as annual aid packages of up to \$150 million.⁴³ It was also believed that the United States would assist the Karimov regime in cracking down on

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid. Interestingly, NATO was invoked in the context of member countries offering unconditional support to the United States. NATO is not mentioned as a forum where objectives for the coming retaliation could be discussed in a multilateral context. Consider: “The United States is grateful that many nations and many international organizations have already responded.... Perhaps the NATO Charter reflects best the attitude of the world: An attack on one is an attack on all.”

⁴¹ Donald Rumsfeld, “A New Kind of War,” *New York Times*, September 27, 2001.

⁴² Daan van der Schriek, “US Military Forces Build Up Strength in Kyrgyzstan,” *Eurasia Insight*, January 23, 2002. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav012302.shtml> (assessed November 27, 2005). In the second half of December, the US military also began occupation of the Manas military base in Kyrgyzstan, located outside Bishkek and a mere three hundred kilometers from China

⁴³ CFR, “U.S. Military Bases.”

the IMU. One analyst also suggested that the US presence in Uzbekistan would ease pressure on President Karimov regime's violations of human rights within the country.⁴⁴ Finally, on October 8, Afghanistan was subject to the full fury of the United States and its allies as a relentless bombing campaign began.

How China was going to define its role in this rapidly evolving international antiterrorist alliance was not clear from the outset. One option was not to participate in the new global initiative, though given the highly international nature of the campaign, sitting on the sidelines was not an option. But unconditionally joining a US-led alliance was not in China's favor either, for this was tantamount to supporting US unilateralism. Till now, China's only card was insisting on the primacy of the UN.⁴⁵ During statements made by President Bush and President Jiang following the APEC meeting in Shanghai from October 20 to 21, 2001, Jiang again reiterated China's stance: "opposition to terrorism of all forms," but an opposition whereby "the role of the United Nations [is] brought into full play."⁴⁶

Short of insisting on the primacy of the UN, China had no mechanism to deal with the new challenges. Previously, China and Russia had expressed deep reservations over NATO military campaigns in the former Yugoslavia that took place irrespective of the UNSC.⁴⁷ In recent years, the SCO has been the principal multilateral forum dedicated to addressing issues relating to terrorism. In its official account, the SCO was described as

⁴⁴ Kenley Butler, "Uzbekistan's Alliance with the United States: Benefits and Risks," *Center for Nonproliferation Studies*, October 11, 2001. <http://cns.miiis.edu/research/wtc01/uzbek1.htm> (accessed November 27, 2005).

⁴⁵ UNSC, "Resolution 1385." Till this point, the United Nations had passed two resolutions, Resolution 1368, which we have discussed, and Resolution 1385, passed on September 28. Resolution 1385 laid down comprehensive guidelines for restricting the operation of terrorist organizations by calling on states to freeze their funding, not allow their countries to be a base for terrorist activities, and to crack down on criminal activity that supported terrorism, such as trade in narcotics and small arms.

⁴⁶ "U.S., China Stand Against Terrorism."

⁴⁷ Following the attacks of September 11, there was apprehension over the role of NATO. On September 12, Chinese vice-foreign minister Wang Guangya (1999-2003), expressed concern over the possibility of NATO military action outside of Europe; recall that the day following the September 11 attacks, NATO countries had categorically announced that they would support any US response to the September 11 attacks. This was undesirable for the Chinese government. "NATO is a regional military organization within Europe, so if action is taken beyond Europe, it will have implications," Wang argued, acknowledging that any act of retaliation would have consequences for other regions. Wang had not ruled out the possibility of Chinese military assistance, provided it took place under the framework of the United Nations. "I would prefer these things to be done through some multilateral framework, such as the United Nations Security Council," Wang noted in reference to US retaliation. "China Urges NATO to Consult Other Regions Before Taking Action," *China Daily*, September 13, 2001. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2001-09/13/content_83063.htm (accessed November 27, 2005).

“the pioneer organization, which ... proposed fighting against terrorism on the international level.”⁴⁸ Although this may have been the case, it is uncertain what SCO mechanism allowed it to function as an effective anti-terrorism organization. On September 14, 2001, premiers from SCO member-states had held their first meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in which there was little substantial discussion on fighting terrorism. Rather, the premiers had discussed ways to increase cooperation in “trade, transportation, energy, agriculture, environmental protect, finance, water resources and forest fire protection.”⁴⁹ The meeting culminated in the signing of a memorandum to enhance multilateral trade, and the establishment of a mechanism for holding regular meetings between the premiers of the six countries. But the only mention of fighting terrorism was a declaration of strong indignation (*jiqui fenkai*),⁵⁰ “expressing sympathy with the American people suffering from terror attacks.”⁵¹ On the topic of combating terrorism, the official declaration noted: “We are prepared for close coordination with all states and international organizations to take effective measures in the uncompromising struggle to uproot the global danger coming from terrorism.”⁵²

It is interesting that the tools of analysis used by the SCO in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks to describe international terrorism, were similar to the terminology used to describe regional insecurity, that is “terrorism, splittism and extremism.” On September 21, a Chinese MFA spokesperson said that the SCO “sternly” condemned the attacks on the US, and suggested that the mechanism put in place by the SCO would play an important part in combating these three forces. Noting that these three forces had colluded in the Middle East, the spokesperson said that China “set great store” in the

⁴⁸ “History of Development.”

⁴⁹ “Premiers of SCO Member States Hold First Meeting,” *People’s Daily*, September 15, 2001. http://english.people.com.cn/english/200109/15/print20010915_80280.html (accessed November 26, 2005).

⁵⁰ Wang, “Zhongguo duobian waijiao” 522.

⁵¹ “Premiers of SCO Member States Hold First Meeting,” *People’s Daily*, September 15, 2001. http://english.people.com.cn/english/200109/15/print20010915_80280.html (accessed November 26, 2005).

⁵² “Shanghai Six Condemn US Attacks, Agree on Economic Cooperation,” *China Daily*, September 14, 2001. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2001-09/14/content_83316.htm (accessed November 27, 2005).

safety of the region.⁵³ This suggested that at one level China was merging its conceptualization of unrest in Central Asia with the global threat of terrorism. This was in keeping with an overall attempt by the Chinese government to link its own challenges within Xinjiang to the global anti-terrorism efforts now focused on Central Asia. What emerges is the conflation of the discourse on regional instability in the greater Central Asian region, that is, the unrest faced by SCO member-states, with the discourse on the international “War on Terrorism.” In a very short amount of time, SCO member-countries’ problems with “terrorism, splittism, and extremism” had become synonymous with the transnational terrorist networks of Afghanistan. Consequently, al-Qaeda, of which hitherto there had been no mention, began to feature prominently in China’s internal and regional security discourse. This was an important step in the development of China’s platform vis-à-vis the new global effort, discussed in the next section.

II. Developing a Chinese Discourse of Victimization, Strengthening the SCO

On October 10, 2001, Chinese Foreign Minister Tang made an important announcement when he noted that China was under threat from “separatist-minded East Turkestan terrorists.”⁵⁴ By doing so, the Chinese leadership took a notable step towards depicting China as a victim of international terrorism. Over the following months, officials produced more pieces of the puzzle. On November 16, the *People’s Daily* quoted foreign ministry spokesperson Zhu Bangzao, (speaking on November 13), as saying that East Turkestan (*dong tu jue*) forces had been supported and trained by bin Laden “all along.” The same article noted that CASS professor Sun Zhuangzhi estimated that two hundred “Xinjiang terrorists” had received training in Afghanistan. According to the same article, Professor Zhang Guofeng of Renmin University was said to have estimated the number of people receiving training in Afghanistan at more than a thousand. While a sense of normalcy had returned to the autonomous region since 1997 – with the situation described as “tranquil” with the “sense” of terrorism having disappeared – the article

⁵³ “China Claims to Strike Against “Three Forces” and Pays Close Attention to Mid-Asia’s Safety,” *People’s Daily*, September 21, 2001. http://english.people.com.cn/english/200109/21/print20010921_80743.html (accessed November 26, 2005).

⁵⁴ “China Also Harmed by Separatist-Minded Eastern Turkistan Terrorists,” *People’s Daily*, October 10, 2001. http://english.people.com.cn/english/200110/10/print20011010_81889.html (accessed November 26, 2005).

quoted an unidentified policeman in Urumqi as stating that “[T]he September 11 incident is far away from the inland, but is near us [in Xinjiang].” Note the explicit connection between September 11 and security in Xinjiang, the suggestion being that there were lurking dangers which people were not aware of. The article also stated that there were two centers of the East Turkestan movement, one in Germany and Italy, from where these organizations attacked the Chinese government by “the aid of the viewpoint on the so-called human rights situation,” and the other, in the Central Asian countries. The article identified two “currently influential” East Turkestan organizations: the East Turkestan Liberation Front Organization, and the Uygur International Union.⁵⁵

What is particularly interesting is that the article revisited the 1997 unrest in Ili by presenting new and graphic details from the time. While some details were similar to those that had appeared earlier, many were new. The *People’s Daily* article depicted the unrest in Ili as deranged acts of violence in which innocent people were beaten, clubbed, stoned, and trampled to death. We are told that up to a thousand people took part in these acts of violence. When perpetrators went to other parts of the autonomous region, they told the locals: “Don’t ask my address and my name, I was sent by Allah.”⁵⁶ In the official discourse, there was no logic to the violence; the perpetrators were depicted as being both irrational and barbaric, the quintessential opposite to the modernity, rationality, and secularism of the state. Recall, that in the contrasting Uighur discourse it was the state that was alienating, intolerant, and brutally repressive.

What is noteworthy was that the state discourse was invoking events from five years earlier to illustrate how the events of 1997 fit into the present-day discourse on regional instability. That Uighur opposition could at some level have been motivated by feelings of ethnic marginalization did not feature into the Chinese analysis. The emphasis on al-Qaeda is particularly noteworthy. While prior to September 11 Chinese scholars and officials had expressed concern at the rise of the Taliban, and the growth of the three evil forces and transnational crime in the greater Central Asian region, there had been no mention of al-Qaeda or bin Laden. After the attacks on the United States in 2001, there is scarcely mention of unrest in Xinjiang that does not link instability in the autonomous

⁵⁵ “Unveiling the Terrorist Nature of ‘East Tujue’ Elements,” op. cit.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

region to the al-Qaeda network (*jidi zuzhi*), or bin Laden (*Ben Ladan* or *Ben Ladeng*).⁵⁷ What Chinese officials and scholars accomplished, in effect, was nothing short of adopting the US narrative on transnational terrorism.

The Chinese MFA continued to provide evidence linking separatists in Xinjiang to al-Qaeda and the Taliban. On November 22, during a briefing at the MFA reported by the Hong Kong edition of the *China Daily*, spokesperson Zhang Qiyue stated that agitators for East Turkestan were “closely connected with international terrorist forces.” Noting that hundreds of Chinese Muslims had trained in Afghanistan, Zhang claimed, “Facts have proven that East Turkestan terrorist forces have become part of the international terrorist organization.”⁵⁸ This shift in China’s strategic thinking with regard to unrest by Turkic people from Xinjiang is important for two reasons. First, recall that the last episode of popular unrest had occurred in Ili in February 1997. As we witnessed, after peace had been restored, leaders in the XUAR went to great lengths to argue that the unrest had been a localized one that had been quickly and efficiently dealt with. Officials never suggested that those involved were part of a transnational organization, al-Qaeda or any other. There was no discussion of militant East Turkestan organizations whose reach extended beyond the frontiers of the PRC. This was despite the fact that individuals active in the unrest in Xinjiang had links with émigré organizations in at least Kazakhstan, and possibly other Central Asian republics too. As we observed in Chapter Three, UNRF spokespersons in Almaty, Kazakhstan, had openly criticized Chinese suppression of the unrest. Assuming that it is accurate, “Document 7” also clearly indicated that the Chinese government was aware that Uighur discontent within Xinjiang found support outside the PRC. But at the time, China had sought to play down these connections and instead depicted the uprising as a local problem. In the annual summits between the Shanghai Five states, terrorism, separatism, and extremism were expressed issues of concern. But until now, these had been regional concerns, which were to be addressed through joint cooperation. Terrorism, separatism, and extremism, were internal challenges for the SCO member-countries, and there was never mention of addressing

⁵⁷ Ma, “Afuhan de “shengzhan”” esp. 137-140. This is an example of a scholarly account of the conflation of al Qaeda, bin Laden, the Taliban, and the East Turkestan forces.

⁵⁸ “Muslim Separatist Ties to Int’l Terrorism,” *China Daily* (Hong Kong Edition), November 23, 2001. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2001-11/23/content_95022.htm (accessed November 27, 2005).

them through the mechanism of the UN, as China was now urging the United States to do with its security concerns.

But after the events of September 11, unrest in the greater Central Asian region became a global security concern, which involved a broad coalition of countries and their interests. With restive elements in their own countries said to be linked to international terrorist organizations, China and other SCO member-states could now legitimately suppress internal unrest as they, too, were now engaged in the internationally sanctioned “War on Terror.” It was important for China to give the impression of being actively involved in the struggle against terrorism, even if it meant revisiting the unrest of 1997 and recasting the entire script. This was necessary if China did not want to be sidelined. But China’s participation, which simultaneously stressed the primacy of the UNSC and depicted itself as being a long-standing victim of terrorism, did not disguise the fact that the United States was unilaterally determining the orbit (*guidao*) taken by the anti-terror alliance (*fan kong lianmeng*) that was engaged in combat on China’s borders.⁵⁹

Short of the UN, which had little say in how the events unfolded, the only other mechanism China could resort to was the SCO. But the SCO was in its inception; although the decision to establish an anti-terrorism center had been made in 1999, the center would not be established until May 2004. In the past, China had been successful in pressurizing Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to crack down on émigré Uighur organizations. But after the attacks of September 11, terrorism went from being a regional problem to one that was being addressed at the global level, in which the SCO countries needed to play a part. A joint statement by foreign ministers from SCO member-countries on January 7, 2002, stressed: “The SCO was one of the first international organizations to react to the events of September 11.”⁶⁰ Notwithstanding the condemnation of the attacks by SCO premiers on September 14, and their offer to cooperate in the struggle against terrorism, it is unclear what collective mechanism, if any, existed amongst the SCO member-countries that could allow them to contribute to the anti-terrorist campaigns; of course, this did not include bilateral cooperation with the United States. Thus, the reinterpretation of unrest in Xinjiang was essential for China not to lose complete control

⁵⁹ Wang, “Zhongguo duobian waijiao” 522; and Feng, “Meiyou zhongjie,” 6.

⁶⁰ “Joint Statement by the Ministers.”

over events on its periphery, that had the potential to influence developments within the country. The stakes were too high for China not to play an active role.

Alongside creating a role for itself in the global discourse on terrorism, China also stepped up efforts to create a more viable SCO mechanism to address security concerns. Some within the Chinese foreign policy establishment had been realistic about the limitations of the SCO; for this reason, in October 2001, Foreign Minister Tang urged SCO member-states to speed up the formation of a Charter so that they could further the fight against terrorism.⁶¹ This could also be seen as a suggestion for the SCO to define an agenda that could correspond to the new international developments. A similar statement was made by President Jiang Zemin in a speech to the foreign ministers of SCO member-states that met in Beijing on January 7, 2002, where he noted that a top priority of the organization was developing a plan to fight terrorism.⁶² The lack of a clearly defined agenda meant that the US would continue to set the global trend, and, realistically, China had little choice but to play by these new rules.

As China was trying to develop a strategy to address new developments, analysts within the United States were closely following China's response. On December 17, 2001, a Congressional Research Service (CRS) report by Dewardic L. McNeal titled "China's Relations with Central Asian States and Problems with Terrorism" was released. The CRS report suggested that in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks, the SCO had not been a "regional player," going on to suggest that the SCO member-states had been co-opted by the Washington-led alliance, leading these states to push their "domestic interests and agenda over those of the SCO."⁶³ Another analyst, surveying opinion in US think tanks, made a similar argument, noting that, "[Chinese] intelligence and logistical support to US efforts are perceived as minimal, and although PRC acceptance of a large US presence in Central Asia was unexpectedly forthcoming, many have expressed doubts that this acceptance would be open-ended."⁶⁴ This strain in US analysis on Chinese foreign policy was based on two debatable assumptions: first, that

⁶¹ "FMs Focus on Fighting Terrorism," *China Daily*, October 18, 2001. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2001-10/18/content_88957.htm (accessed November 27, 2005).

⁶² "Countering Terrorism Top Priority," *China Daily*, January 8, 2002. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2002-01/08/content_100961.htm (accessed November 27, 2005).

⁶³ Dewardic, "China's Relations," 18.

⁶⁴ Brose, "US Perceptions of China," 66.

membership in the SCO required absolute loyalty to itself and not to other organizations, and, second, that China's reach in Central Asia was limited. The first of these assumptions was incorrect. As we have noted, the June 2001, "Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism," allowed member-states to enter into security alliances with other countries on an individual basis.

The second assumption was partly correct. Temporarily, the United States did play a predominant role in the region. Analysts within China were aware of the United States' strategic interests in the region. Long-term US military presence in Central Asia was undesirable to many within the PRC.⁶⁵ In an article published in 2002, Zhao Huasheng noted that the United States had long-term (*changqi*) interests in Central Asia,⁶⁶ a fact that officials in the United States had made no effort to disguise.⁶⁷

The most poignant manifestation of long-term US interests in the region was the deployment of the US military in Central Asia. During the ongoing war against terrorist organizations in Afghanistan and Central Asia, the Chinese government insisted that it was not threatened by US presence in Central Asia. In fact, as many scholars in the PRC insisted in conversations with me during the fall of 2003, US presence in the region was beneficial insofar as it helped China curtail instability in Xinjiang.⁶⁸ This may have been pragmatic positioning by the Chinese with the intention of biding time, waiting until an opportunity arose when demands could be made for US withdrawal from the region: as

⁶⁵ After the US was asked to withdraw from Central Asia in 2005, a *Pravda* editorial claimed that Russia and China stated that they did not object to US military presence because they had believed that US presence would be temporary, and any effort to obliterate the Taliban and al-Qaeda was to the benefit of China and Russia. "US Spooked by Russia and China," *Pravda*, July 22, 2005. http://english.pravda.ru/world/20/91/368/15842_USA.html (accessed December 1, 2005).

⁶⁶ Zhao, "Zhongya xingshi," 54.

⁶⁷ There are no two ways of interpreting remarks made by Secretary of State, Colin Powell (2001-2004) on February 6, 2002, when he said: "In Central Asia, the Great Game will not break out again. America will have a continuing interest and presence in Central Asia, of a kind that we could have dreamed of before." Similar remarks were made earlier in the year by Deputy Secretary of Defense, Paul Wolfowitz (2001-2005), when in an interview given to the *New York Times*, he had noted that the nature of US deployment in Central Asia was "more political than actually military." This was based on the assumption that though the military challenge in Afghanistan may have waned, the United States wanted to maintain a presence in the region to forestall further threats. Wolfowitz noted: "I think in anticipation of if we ever saw things deteriorate again or to prevent them from deteriorating again, to send a message to everybody including important countries like Uzbekistan that we have a capacity to come back in, and that most of all we remain interested." Powell, "Testimony at Budget Hearing"; and Wolfowitz, "Deputy Secretary."

⁶⁸ This was the view put forward by most scholars at the CASS, Peking University, and the China Institute of International Studies. In fact only one scholar who specifically requested not be identified by name or institution stated that the Chinese government was distrustful of US intentions and unhappy with US presence in Central Asia.

we shall discuss subsequently, this occurred in the summer of 2005. But at the end of 2001 and into 2002, China was not in a position to oppose US presence in Central Asia. At this time, China's role in the anti-terrorist struggle needed to be placed within the context of multilateral diplomacy with its new neighbors, which was still in its preliminary stages.⁶⁹

Military cooperation between the Central Asian republics and the United States did not signal a failure of the SCO if we consider that the Chinese were biding their time patiently until circumstances allowed them to challenge US presence in the region. At the time, US analysts failed to appreciate this fact, with some within American foreign policy think tanks erroneously assuming that Chinese influence in Central Asia had diminished decisively as the United States took the lead in battling transnational organizations in the greater Central Asia region.⁷⁰ The SCO and its predecessor, the Shanghai Five mechanism, were not blocs, which are binding alliances against specified adversaries. Rather, as forums for multilateral cooperation, the SCO allowed for a degree of flexibility that enabled them to conform to the present circumstances. This was based on the fact that not only did the six countries have sometimes differing agendas, but also different forms of governance.⁷¹ As we discussed, SCO member-states were free to join other multilateral organizations. I have seen no evidence suggesting that China was seeking an exclusive sphere of influence in Central Asia. For China to treat the SCO as a zero-sum alliance would have been akin to coercing member-states into what would have been at best, a short-lived alliance. To me, China's response indicates that instead they viewed the situation from a long-term perspective. Here is why:

One could argue that the Chinese decision to accept US presence in the region was highly pragmatic. This was the argument of Zhao Huasheng who pointed out that not

⁶⁹ In Russia, President Putin was coming under pressure for having "lost" Central Asia. These criticisms stemmed from the fact that the US was now occupying military bases in Central Asia, which was seen by hawkish figures within Russia's defense and political establishment as weakness on Russia's part. President Putin, like his Chinese counterpart, was guided by pragmatic considerations, whereby, in his own words, "Decisions are taken on the bases of what we need in reality, not on the moon." "Putin Faces Domestic Criticism Over Russia's Central Asian Policy," *Eurasia Insight*, February 12, 2002.

http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav021202_pr.shtml (accessed November 27, 2005).

⁷⁰ See for example, John Tcacik, "Antiterror War is a Geopolitical Disaster for China," *China Brief* 1, issue 12 (December 20, 2001). http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=17&issue_id=640&article_id=4599 (Accessed December 1, 2005).

⁷¹ Vorob'eva, "Interb'yu spetsial'nogo predstavatelya."

only would China and Russia derive benefit from the United States' strikes against the Taliban, but the two countries did not have the ability (*nengli*) to stop (*zuzhi*) the United States in Central Asia. Consequently, there was little point in souring relations with the United States over this issue.⁷² Of course, this did not mean that US presence was desirable; another Chinese scholar described the post-September 11 order in Central Asia as a trial (*kaoyan*) for the SCO, though it is probably China that the author was referring to.⁷³ To confront the US over its deployment in Central Asia when international opinion was largely supportive of the US-led campaign in Afghanistan, would have yielded little mileage for the PRC. But China was not, to quote one Jamestown Foundation analyst, "left on the margins of the anti-terror war at its western frontier."⁷⁴ Instead, China was gradually creating a role for itself in the new international context, which analysts in the US failed to pick up on. China's strategy was predicated, in part, on the creation of a discourse on terrorism in which China could legitimately locate itself, and, in part, based on strengthening the mechanism of the SCO and thus increasing its influence in Central Asia. For the Chinese, the principal objective may have been not to get involved in a confrontation with the United States over its role in Central Asia, or to hastily get involved in some ill-thought out adventure of its own from which it would not be able to extricate itself. Rather, China's objective was to enhance its own influence in the region at a measured pace. Looking at China's policy in the region from this point on, I am inclined to believe that the PRC approached the issue carefully with the assumption that they would benefit from a gradual approach.

The January 7, 2002, meeting of foreign ministers from SCO member-states nudged the SCO a little further as an functioning organization. Unlike the September 14, 2001, meeting of the premiers, this meeting was taking place almost four months after the attacks on September 11, and thus member-states had had an opportunity to consider their collective, along with their individual role within the US-led war efforts. Not surprisingly, the declaration that followed the meeting argued for the primacy of the UN, arguing that the "leading role in the international struggle belongs to the UN and its Security Council." Likewise, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was to

⁷² Zhao, "Zhongya xingshi," 55.

⁷³ Wang, "Zhongguo duobian waijiao," 521.

⁷⁴ John Teacik, "Antiterror War is a Geopolitical Disaster for China," op. cit.

operate in accordance with the UNSC mandate. All anti-terrorist operations were to be in line with recognized rules of international law, and “their scope may not be extended arbitrarily.”⁷⁵ The latter was perhaps a subtle criticism at the possible extension of the conflict to Iraq.

In the joint statement, the foreign ministers noted that while the international community turned its attention to Afghanistan only after September 11, located on the periphery of Afghanistan, SCO member-countries had long since been aware of the region’s terrorist and “narco threats.” The foreign ministers argued that the new Afghan government must be representative of the different ethnic factions in the country, and warned that drawing Afghanistan into “the sphere of somebody’s influence may lead to a new crisis,” presumably referring to the possibility of the United States’ influence lingering after the stated military objectives of defeating the terrorist networks had been met. Perhaps the most revealing statement in this document was where the signatories noted that the toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan did not mean the end of international terrorism, as regional threats still lingered. They observed: “We are determined to carry on efforts to neutralize the existing terrorist threat to the greatest extent possible, including in the territories of our countries, and call upon the international community to render us appropriate support.”⁷⁶ Though the signatories used the term “including in the territories of our own countries,” they were significantly overstating their reach. At this time, the SCO member-states were able to combat terrorism only within their own countries. It is also unclear what “support” SCO member-states might have needed from the “international community,” besides the international community sanctioning counter-terrorist activities by the SCO member-states.

The foreign ministers also called for the creation of regional, sub-regional, and national “structures” such as the then proposed SCO “anti-terrorist structure in Bishkek.” From what I understand, though the “international struggle against terrorism” was to be led by the UN, these sub-international “structures” were to operate independent of UN leadership. The SCO member-states were making a fine argument that was conceptually problematic: the US-led war effort against Afghanistan, and (at the time) potentially Iraq,

⁷⁵ “Joint Statement by the Ministers.”

⁷⁶ Ibid.

ought to be led by the UN. But in no discussion on combating terrorism within any SCO member-state was there mention of giving the leadership role to the UN or abiding by international law. This is problematic, because, as we have seen, within China the so-called “East Turkistan terrorist organizations” (*dongtu kongbu zuzhi*), were becoming conflated with international terrorist organizations.

On January 21, the Information Office of the State Council released a detailed document titled “East Turkistan Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity.” This was a landmark document, as for the first time the Chinese government provided detailed information in an attempt to link unrest in Xinjiang since 1990 with international networks in Afghanistan. A striking aspect of this document is that all save two acts of upheaval in Xinjiang were attributed to one “East Turkistan” organization.⁷⁷ Whether Chinese officials used the term “East Turkistan” as a blanket term to refer to all Uighur resistance networks, or whether they actually believed that a single network was behind all acts of unrest identified in this document, is unclear. If the former was the case, then this was a deliberate over-simplification on the part of the Chinese government, possibly to make unrest in Xinjiang correspond more closely with the international campaign. My understanding is that such was the case; given the spatial and regional diversity of Xinjiang, I am inclined to believe that unrest in the region could not be orchestrated by a single organization, no matter how extensive its reach.

The document released by the Information Office begins with a historical survey, the purpose of which is to conclusively argue that Xinjiang has been an inseparable part of China since the Han dynasty, noting: “From [the Han dynasty] on, the central government has never ceased jurisdiction over Xinjiang. But in the beginning of the 20th century, a handful of fanatical Xinjiang separatists and extremist religious elements fabricated the myth of ‘East Turkistan.’”⁷⁸

According to this document, ‘East Turkistan’ forces used the Turkic languages and belief in Islam to create a base of support and resorted to “terrorist violence” as the only way to achieve their aims, thus leaving “many blood-soaked chapters in the

⁷⁷ Information Office, “‘East Turkistan’ Forces.” The only other organizations mentioned are “The East Turkistan Islamic Party of Allah,” which was said to be responsible for unrest in the Ili region in February 1997, and the “Uygur Liberation Organization.” Nothing is said of the latter group besides an insinuation that they operate “beyond the boundaries” and were responsible for murder, extortion and arson in Bishkek.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

historical annals.” Transnational networks feature prominently in the state’s understanding of how these terrorist organizations operated. The document details the visits made by insurgents from Xinjiang to Afghanistan. The only foreign contact that this document describes is with Afghanistan after 1998, that is, after the Taliban had consolidated their control over most of the country.⁷⁹ No mention is made of foreign contacts prior to 1998, an omission that is conspicuous in its absence since first, this document discusses episodes of violence since 1990 (and not since 1998), and, second, because in 1996 and 1997, émigré Uighur groups in Kazakhstan, such as the UNRF, were openly supporting Uighur resistance against China. No mention is made of these groups; it is likely that this omission was made in consideration of Kazakhstan’s cooperation with China in clamping down on Uighur organizations in the country.

Beginning in 1998, individuals, mostly from Khotan, in southern Xinjiang, were said to have traveled to Afghanistan to receive training. Some of these supposedly came back and established secret cells in the Khotan region: in 1998 and 1999, authorities were said to have confiscated at least 4,500 anti-tank grenades, ninety-eight guns, and nineteen thousand bullets. Usama bin Laden was said to provide unstinting support to the East Turkistan Islamic Movement, supporting these individuals to carry out “holy war” in Xinjiang and establish a theocratic “Islamic state.” In 1999, bin Laden was said to have met the leader of the ETIM, Hassan Mahsum, telling him to coordinate “every move” with the Taliban (Mahsum, the said ringleader of the ETIM, topped China’s most wanted list). The ETIM was also said to be working closely with the IMU who provided them with weapons, communication, and transportation facilities. In February 2001, ETIM leaders supposedly met with bin Laden again in Kandahar, Afghanistan, from where ETIM members were either sent back to China, while others stayed back in Afghanistan and yet others joined “Chechen terrorists” or took part in “terrorist activities in Central Asia.” In all, the Chinese government is said to have arrested over a hundred terrorists who had sneaked back into Xinjiang after being trained in Afghanistan and “other

⁷⁹ Note that this was different from statements made at the MFA on November 16, 2001, by Zhu Bangzhou, where he had revealed that a certain Xiaoklaiti Mahmti who was arrested on February 11, 1999, had been the instigator of the Ili incident. Xiaoklaiti Mahmti was said to have “received military training at a certain place, after which he sneaked back to Xinjiang.” “Unveiling the Terrorist Nature of the ‘East Tujue’ Elements,” *op. cit.*

countries.” Moreover, “other nations” were also said to have extradited a “dozen or so East Turkistan terrorists.”⁸⁰

These claims are impossible to verify. For the most part, the document is thin on details. An important unanswered question is what the communication and transportation networks between the East Turkestan organizations and al-Qaeda were, that is, how did individuals move from Xinjiang to Afghanistan given that they probably did not travel directly between Xinjiang and Afghanistan?⁸¹ The likely answer is that volunteers were probably transiting either through Pakistan or the Central Asian republics. That such corridors existed, and Uighur volunteers actually traveled to Afghanistan is without a doubt. In one of his accounts, Ahmed Rashid recalls meeting Uighurs in Pakistani madrasas that were run by the Jami‘at al-‘ulama’-i Islami.⁸² In addition, Uighurs were present in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, mostly deployed along with the IMU units in Mazar-i-Sharif in the northern part of the country. Deploying the Uighurs alongside the IMU allowed the Taliban to deny that the Uighurs were part of their armed forces.⁸³ In addition, an unknown number of Uighurs are being held captive at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, who were captured by the United States military during their campaign in Afghanistan.

Therefore, Uighur participation in transnational Central Asian organizations cannot be doubted. What was unclear was the extent to which this phenomenon existed, and the extent to which these transnational organizations represented Uighur political aspirations. Insofar as Uighurs were transiting third countries to reach Afghanistan, enrolled in a foreign madrasa, or fought on the frontlines, it would be unlikely that they could evade being noticed, and it would not take much on the part of Chinese intelligence-gatherers to know of the movement of Uighurs outside the country. What I am less certain about is the extent to which the Chinese authorities could conclusively

⁸⁰ Information Office, “‘East Turkistan’ Forces.” Although the “other nations” are not specified, they would almost certainly include Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Pakistan. In July 2000, I met a border security official in Pakistan who had been responsible for extraditing a dozen Uighurs to Tashkorgan in Xinjiang who had been studying at a madrasa in Islamabad.

⁸¹ I argue this because first, Sino-Afghan border was a highly militarized border, and, second, it is unlikely that the Northern Alliance which has continuously held Badakshan province in Afghanistan would have looked kindly on people from Xinjiang transiting their territory to go fight alongside their foe, the Taliban.

⁸² Rashid, *Jihad*, 140-41.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 175-76.

argue that all unrest in Xinjiang was linked to the “East Turkistan” forces. If this were the case, which I am uncertain it was, then it would imply an unusually high degree of sophistication on the part of Chinese intelligence networks. I am skeptical about the accuracy of Chinese intelligence. As we witnessed, in November 2001, the two principal East Turkestan organizations identified by Chinese scholars and officials were the East Turkestan Liberation Front Organization and the Uygur International Union. The document released by the Information Office in January 2002 defines the ETIM as the principal organization, and, as we shall see subsequently, the following year (2003), the Chinese government would announce the existence of yet another three hitherto unknown organizations. In Chapter Three, we noted that John Wang had listed yet a different set of organizations. If we consider that since September 11 Chinese authorities had been constructing a discourse linking unrest in Xinjiang to international terrorist organizations, then what mattered more was not precise organizational details based on sound intelligence, but establishing a link with al-Qaeda, which all of these organizations were said to have.

Another enduring challenge for the Chinese government was the Uighur lobby outside China. The Chinese government attempted to silence these lobbies that operated, often openly, outside the country. Classifying all diaspora resistance to Chinese rule in Xinjiang as a form of terrorism was how the state sought to curtail their legitimacy. The January 2002 document suggested that as “international cooperation in curbing terrorism is becoming increasingly stronger ... the “East Turkistan” forces that bear evident marks of terrorism have found themselves in an extremely embarrassing situation.” Claiming that diaspora organizations were distressed by the destruction of the bin Laden terrorist forces and Taliban training camps, the Uighur lobby had attempted to distance itself from bin Laden’s networks. The document lashed out at these organizations, accusing them of using the banners of “human rights,” “religious freedom,” and “the interests of ethnic minorities,” to claim that the Chinese government had cracked down on ethnic minorities, and in doing so, had dodged the international crackdown on terrorism.⁸⁴

Depicting all Uighur organizations in Europe and North America as terrorists was an over-simplification. While it is not the purpose of this study to explore the history and

⁸⁴ Information Office, “‘East Turkistan’ Forces.”

composition of these organizations, many Uighur organizations abroad continue to exist openly, including the East Turkestan Government in exile led by “Prime Minister” Anwar Yusuf Turani based in Washington, DC.⁸⁵ Uighur diaspora organizations openly lobby the United States Congress, the United Nations, and the European Union; many of them have neither links with transnational organizations in the greater Central Asian region, nor have they resorted to violence.

I believe that the Chinese government categorized these organizations as terrorist for three reasons. First, and most importantly, as we saw, there was little distinction between “terrorism, separatism, and extremism.” In the Chinese discourse, any separatist organization becomes, by default, a terrorist organization. I am inclined to believe that the Chinese officials are sincere when they classify émigré Uighur organizations as terrorist. Second, by categorizing them as such, the PRC could theoretically be in a better position to leverage host countries to crack down on such groups, even though it is difficult to say with certainty how much success they had towards this end. And lastly, the Chinese government is probably afraid that easing pressure on émigré organizations (for example, by not classifying them as terrorist organizations), could give foreign governments greater pretext to interfere in what the Chinese government considers to be an internal matter. As long as China was categorical in its condemnation of Uighur political organizations,⁸⁶ it became easier to deflect foreign criticism for its policies in Xinjiang.

The January 22 document made available by the Information Office set the agenda for China’s immediate participation in the on-going war against transnational terrorist organizations. As we have discussed, concern over Uighur training in Afghanistan’s camps during the Taliban regime was a prominent feature of China’s security concern, and the following day, during a visit by Afghanistan’s President Hamid Karzai, the Chinese won a concession by the then interim leader that his country “would make all-out efforts to cooperate with China and support the Chinese government’s

⁸⁵ For more information, see the East Turkestan Government in Exile’s website on the World Wide Web: <http://etnfc.org/index.html> (accessed December 3, 2005).

⁸⁶ For a condemnation of the East Turkestan Government in Exile by the Chinese government, see “China Protests Establishment of Uighur Government-in-Exile in Washington,” *The Epoch Times*, September 22, 2004. <http://english.epochtimes.com/news/4-9-22/23393.html> (accessed December 3, 2005).

crackdown on the 'East Turkestan' terrorist activities."⁸⁷ During President Karzai's visit to China, President Jiang promised the visiting leader reconstruction aid of up to \$150 million over the next four to five years. This sum was up from the \$4.6 million in currency and goods that China had pledged three days earlier on January 21 during a conference on reconstruction efforts held in Tokyo.⁸⁸ To what extent, if at all, China's bolstered pledge was conditional on promised security cooperation by the Afghan government is impossible to say. But with the American offensive seemingly successful in destroying the Taliban, and with a declaration by the interim Afghan leader promising to crack down on "East Turkestan" forces, China's internal security situation appeared to have changed for the better in a short span of a little over four months.

III. The Growing Estrangement Between the United States and China

Till now, we have seen that there were two aspects to the Chinese positioning in the antiterrorist movement: first, an identification of itself as a victim of transnational terrorism, and second, the strengthening of a security mechanism, the SCO, which would allow China to multilaterally engage its Central Asian neighbors towards the enhancement of regional security. A parallel development was a growing estrangement between China and the United States. Immediately following the attacks of September 11, 2001, China expressed concern at US unilateralist policies. In 2002, when it became clear that the United States was actively thinking of expanding the war on terror to the Middle East, Chinese criticism of US policies grew pronounced. So far, we have explored some Chinese concerns; before exploring aspects of China's critique of US policies, let us explore how some within the United States' foreign policy establishment assessed China's role. As the following discussion demonstrates, deep mistrust, bordering on hostility, lay behind bilateral diplomatic cordiality, as both sides accused each other of promoting their own interests through the "War on Terror."

If emphasis on the primacy of the UNSC indicated Chinese unease with the direction of US policy, a lobby within the US foreign policy establishment felt equally

⁸⁷ "Afghan Interim Leader Promised to Support Chinese Crackdown on the 'East Turkestan' Terrorist Activities," Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Republic of Turkey (date not available), <http://www.chinaembassy.org.tr/eng/zt/zgfk/t162010.htm> (accessed December 3, 2005).

⁸⁸ Kan, "U.S.-China Counter-Terrorism."

uneasy with China's response to the September 11 attacks.⁸⁹ At least some within the United States' foreign policy think tanks took China's continued emphasis on the primacy of the UN as an affront. In a backgrounder prepared for President Bush prior to the APEC summit by the self-described "conservative" think tank, the Heritage Foundation, analysts took a hard line to China's response to the September 11 attacks. Commenting on the fact that Beijing had demanded a central role for the UN in the days following the attack, "incongruously [linked] "terrorism" with Taiwan's "splittism,"⁹⁰ and had insisted on "reliable evidence" before retaliation against Afghanistan, the authors of this brief believed that China could "sadly" get in the way of the "War on Terror." The authors noted that "China is not an enthusiastic partner of the war on terror," and (erroneously) argued, "From the beginning, China has been lobbying U.N. Security Council to put the brakes on American action." Commenting on the fact that journalists in China had suggested that the attacks on September 11 may have been linked to US policy abroad, the authors concluded: "Clearly, the Chinese media – which reflect the country's leadership – are not sympathetic to the American cause against international terror."⁹¹

The Heritage Foundation was not the only think tank that took a hawkish view of China's new diplomatic overtures. The September 27, 2001, issue of the *China Brief*, a fortnightly newsletter of the Jamestown Foundation, edited by University of Pennsylvania academic Arthur Waldron, carried an article by Richard D. Fisher, Jr., in which he accused China of cultivating close relations with Iran, Iraq, and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan to advance China's "own consistent goal of undermining U.S. power." Fisher then made the claim: "[S]hould Osama bin Laden or his allies obtain a

⁸⁹ Wortzel, "The Effects and Consequences." There was little enthusiasm for China's contribution towards the US-led war effort; during a Congressional Testimony in March 2003, China's contributions were termed "half-hearted."

⁹⁰ John J. Tkacik, Jr., Dana Robert Dillon, Balbina Y. Hwang, and Sara J. Fitzgerald, "Preparing for the APEC Summit," October 4, 2001. <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/BG1487.cfm> (accessed December 1, 2005). The reference to Taiwan in relation to Chinese support is taken dangerously out of context by the authors. On September 18, 2001, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhu Bangzao had said: "We urge the United States to act prudently on the Taiwan issue and observe its commitments, that is our consistent policy." Zhu then added: "The issue of the fight against terrorism is another question. It doesn't mean we are making any bargains here." See "PRC FM Spokesman Urges US to Support China's, Separatist Efforts," *Hong Kong AFP*, September 18, 2001. In FBIS-CHI-2001-0918.

⁹¹ John J. Tkacik, Jr., Dana Robert Dillon, Balbina Y. Hwang, and Sara J. Fitzgerald, "Preparing for the APEC Summit," op. cit.

nuclear weapon in the future, it is likely that many of its components will come via Pakistan or Iran, and could very well carry the stamp “Made in China.”” Equally damning was his claim that “China, incredibly, may be attracted to using terrorist methods as well. Bin Laden himself has a fan club in some quarters of China's People's Liberation Army (PLA). In their 1999 book “Unrestricted Warfare,” two PLA political commissars offer praise for the tactics of bin Laden.”⁹² Conveniently, Fisher neglected to mention that bin Laden and the Mujahidin militias out of which the al-Qaeda networks emerged, had been funded, trained, and supported by the CIA and their local proxies, the ISI, for almost the entire duration of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and had been described by President Ronald Reagan as the “moral equivalents of our founding father,”⁹³ a term that he had used for the Contras in Nicaragua earlier. Though Sino-American relations gave the semblance of being cordial in the weeks following the September 11 attacks, deep distrust remained on both sides.

Although the Chinese government supported the struggle against international terrorism, insisting on the primacy of the United Nations was how China attempted to ensure that the US-led military action did not go unchecked. A cursory glance at the *People's Daily* in the weeks following the US campaign against the Taliban regime indicates that the state controlled media was covering civilian casualties as much as the actual military campaign. Just prior to the APEC meeting in October, Chinese Foreign Minister Tang and his Russian counterpart, Igor Ivanov (1998-2004), had stated that Afghanistan's “national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity” must be stated, a clear indication that neither China nor Russia desired Afghanistan to be occupied and controlled by a US-led coalition.⁹⁴

During the subsequent months, when it became likely that the United States would expand the scope of the war to include military action against Iraq, Chinese officials expressed grave reservations. Noting that China supported the war against terrorism, on November 30, 2001, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhang Qiyue argued

⁹² Richard D. Fisher, “China Not Yet an Ally,” *China Brief* 1, issue 6, September 27, 2001. http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=17&issue_id=634&article_id=4572 (accessed December 1, 2005).

⁹³ Eqbal Ahmad, “Terrorism: Theirs and Ours,” Presentation at University of Colorado, Boulder, October 12, 1998. <http://www.sangam.org/ANALYSIS/Ahmad.htm> (accessed April 15, 2006).

⁹⁴ “FMs Focus on Fighting Terrorism,” *China Daily*, October 18, 2001. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2001-10/18/content_88957.htm (accessed November 27, 2005).

that the fight should follow the principles of the UN Charter, international law and be based on concrete evidence. “We [China] are against the wanton expansion of the strikes,” Zhang stated.⁹⁵ From this point on, the positions of China and the United States diverged. Following President Bush’s State of the Union address of January 29, 2002, in which he referred to Iran, Iraq, and North Korea as the “Axis of Evil,” and insinuated that the “War on Terror” could be extended to these countries, the Chinese MFA rebuked the United States, noting that “the Chinese side is not in favor of using such terms in international relations.”⁹⁶ Not only did China not want to jump on the US-driven war wagon, but through its blunt criticism of the “Axis of Evil” worldview that informed the Bush administration’s security concerns, China positioned itself separately from the United States-led war.

In mid-2002, the global reach of the United States was at its zenith. The US was leading a broad coalition of countries, fighting in Afghanistan had subsided for the time being, and the United States emerged from the challenges of the previous year as the undisputed global power. As we noted, in the days following the attack, key individuals within the Bush administration had stated that the war was going to be a long and protracted one. An influential lobby within the United States argued for the necessity of pre-emptive warfare in order to protect their interests. It was this lobby, galvanized by victory in Afghanistan, and driven by the “Bush Doctrine” that called for extending the war against terrorism to new theatres. Foremost on the list was Iraq. Unlike military action in Afghanistan where support for the United States had been widespread, the decision to go to war in Iraq created a schism in the international community. China saw US unilateralist policies as threatening to a world order that ought to have been determined by multilateral diplomacy. Though an in-depth examination of the Chinese government’s response to the war in Iraq diverts from the scope of this study, the war in Iraq brought the US and China to a loggerhead. Thus, it is useful to examine salient aspects of US foreign policy and the critique of these issues from within China. This

⁹⁵ “Principles Crucial in War on Terrorism,” *China Daily*, November 30, 2001. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2001-11/30/content_96019.htm (accessed November 27, 2005).

⁹⁶ “FM Spokesman: China Disagrees with Bush Statements on ‘Axis of Evil,’” *People’s Daily*, January 31, 2002. http://english.people.com.cn/200201/31/print20020131_89710.html (accessed December 3, 2005).

would have important considerations for Chinese policy towards Central Asia, where the United States sought a long-term sphere of influence after September 11.

Foreign policy literature produced in China subsequent to September 11 reflected caution with the rapid dissemination of the United States' influence in Central and Southern Asia. One of the interesting aspects of this literature is that irrespective of their position on the United States' policy, scholars were realistic about the asymmetric power relations in the global order, with the United States having emerged as the dominant power. Feng Shaolai argued that the events following September 11 marked a major change in post-Cold War relations, most notably by the emergence of the United States as the undisputed superpower. But Feng also argued that in the period following September 11, relations between China, Russia, and the United States improved, especially the United States' relations with Russia, and China's relations with Russia.⁹⁷ Another scholar, Wang Xinsheng notes that not only did the attacks on the United States shake (*zhendong*) the world, but that these attacks unveiled the form that military alliances would take in the new century by identifying security as the primary concern of countries worldwide. Unlike Feng, Wang argued that while relations between China, Russia, and the United States had improved, relations between the countries, particularly with the United States, were not in equilibrium (*pingheng*).⁹⁸

According to Wang's analysis, the United States had adopted an aggressive (*duoduo biran*) posture that had the potential to be destabilizing. While relations between China and the United States had improved, the post-September 11 move into Central Asia by the United States created a new strategic environment for Sino-US relations that pressured China to give form (*xingcheng*) to its security concerns.⁹⁹ This is a reasonable assessment of China's position vis-à-vis the more prominent role of the United States on China's periphery: on the one hand, bilateral relations between the two countries improved after falling to what may even have been an all time low in mid-2001. But at the same time, the Chinese were cautious of US posturing in Central and South Asia, regions that the Bush administration had hitherto not seen as critical to US foreign policy. Yet another grave concern was the rise of conservatism (*baoshou zhuyi*), and unilateralist

⁹⁷ Feng, "Meiyou zhongjie," 1-6.

⁹⁸ Wang, "Yantai xin qiju," 1-3.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 2-3.

policies associated with the presidency of George W. Bush, that led Wang to suggest that contemporary US policies showed shades of imperialism (*diguo zhuyi secail*).¹⁰⁰

A year of the United States on the offensive was seen by many in the US to have reduced China's diplomatic clout. Specific to this study, this was said to be case with China's role in Central Asia. With the exception of Turkmenistan with which China had limited strategic and economic relations to begin with, the Central Asian republics had thrown in their lot with the United States. Russia had also been supportive of the US-led effort and President Putin had sanctioned overflights of US warplanes in the offensive against Afghanistan. We have already seen how China adopted a pragmatic position with regard to US presence in Central Asia; similarly, scholars in the PRC also suggested that China was not threatened by a closer US-Russia relationship.¹⁰¹

There was also pressure to get tougher with China from within the conservative foreign policy lobby in the United States. Earlier we had seen that analysts at the Heritage Foundation and the Jamestown Foundation had insinuated that China's role in the "War on Terror" was that of a spoiler. This line of argument continued into the summer of 2002. In an article published in the *Weekly Standard* on July 15, 2002, Garry Schmitt, Senior Fellow for the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), argued that events since September 11 had created a new dynamic in the Asia-Pacific that allowed the United States to challenge China for regional leadership. China was now seen to be weaker than it had been prior to September 11, 2001. According to Schmitt, China's efforts prior to the September 11 attack to create "an anti-U.S. bloc" was now "[blown] apart," with Russia, Pakistan, India, the Central Asian republics supporting the US-led war effort. This had been accompanied by unprecedented steps taken by Japan as they authorized their military to operate outside surrounding waters. Furthermore, all "axis of evil" countries were "on friendly terms" with China, leading Schmitt to suggest that, "Chinese strategic thinkers had to wonder whether America's war on terrorism wasn't just an excuse to tighten the security noose around Beijing's neck."¹⁰²

Garry Schmitt took issue with US policy towards China, which he described as "leaving well enough alone," and "avoid giving China any reasons to reverse its present

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 3

¹⁰¹ Feng, "Meiyou zhongjie," 1-6.

¹⁰² Gary Schmitt, "Our Ambivalent China Policy," *The Weekly Standard*, July 15, 2002.

modernization.” Describing US policy towards China as one that “can only lead towards paralysis,” the author concluded that China’s leaders would not only catch on to “what is guiding Washington,” and thus, not only would China’s role within the region grow, but that a conflict with China was inevitable. Describing China’s role in East Asia as one that sought to “undermine America’s security guarantees,” Schmitt argued that the Chinese military had rapidly modernized to change the military balance in East Asia.¹⁰³ But Schmitt’s main point was this:

The truth is that the United States can put off competition with China only so long. At the end of the day, China’s ambitions make a contest inevitable. For that reason, the United States should be taking advantage of China’s current preoccupation with its internal affairs to strengthen our hand in the region. Washington should so conduct relations as to leave no room for the Chinese to doubt that the United States is able and willing to turn aside any challenge that they pose.¹⁰⁴

Three days later, Michael E. Marti, of the Center for the Study of the Chinese Military at the National Defense University, published an article in the Jamestown Foundation’s *China Brief*. Marti went further than Schmitt, arguing that “China had never accepted the contemporary geopolitical system in the region, which is characterized by American bilateral military alliances, forward-based troop deployments, and Western, mainly American, preeminence in global economic decision making.”¹⁰⁵ China was depicted as a menace to its neighbors and a threat to regional security. Marti’s suggestion was to get tough with China.

[I]n light of China's blatant ambitions and growing economic and military power, the U.S. must redefine its policy of engagement. Indeed, the Bush administration has already demonstrated that it is committed to a tougher stance with China. To

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Michael E. Marti, “U.S. China Strategy: Redefining Engagement,” *China Brief* 2, issue 15 (July 2002). http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=18&issue_id=655&article_id=4657 (accessed December 10, 2005).

this end, however, further steps are necessary. China must be made aware that there are consequences for its failure to cooperate on issues important to the U.S. and its allies, such as proliferation, South Asia, the Korean situation, the environment, human rights, and international crime. It should also be made clear that any attempt to “outgun” the U.S. in the region will be matched and topped. Ultimately, Beijing must know that in waging an arms race with Washington, it risks almost certain economic collapse, which would in turn mean regime collapse.¹⁰⁶

According to the author, a confrontation between China and the United States was inevitable. Consider his conclusion: “China’s national security strategy is on a collision course with U.S. goals and interests in the Pacific region. The United States must ... put its China policy on a new footing ... China is not a strategic partner [but] a competitor for regional dominance.”¹⁰⁷

With regards to Sino-US relations, the authors did not place much stock in dialogue or cooperation through multilateral institutions. According to this line of thinking, a confrontation with China was likely if not imminent, and the United States needed to retain its regional dominance in the Asia-Pacific, even if it meant more aggressive military posturing. While there had always been a lobby within the United States that argued that a conflict with China was inevitable, the presidency of George W. Bush led to the ascendancy of the so-called neo-conservative lobby. The attacks on the United States on September 11, provided this lobby with the opportunity to define and implement an aggressive foreign policy agenda, which in 2001/2002, faced little resistance within the mainstream of the United States. Conservative think tanks, such as the PNAC, the Heritage Foundation, and the Jamestown Foundation provided a forum for foreign policy debates that would help shape the United States’ foreign policy. These were important institutions, particularly the PNAC, whose board of governors reads like a who-is-who of key members within the George W. Bush administration.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

The coming to the fore of the neo-conservative ideals was based on a paradigm shift within the United States' foreign policy establishment; amongst the changes that took place was a growing emphasis that the global order (a euphemism for US primacy?) faced grave challenges which needed to be thwarted before they emerged as full blown threats to the United States. This was a lesson that was drawn from the September 11 attacks, and was comprehensively articulated in an important document titled "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America" released by the US government on September 17, 2002. One Chinese scholar described the National Security document as a fundamental report (*jidiao baogao*) of the Bush doctrine (*Bushi zhuyi*).¹⁰⁸ Though the document's focus was not on Sino-US relations, the implications for China were immense.

According to this document, now that countries that had promised utopia but "delivered misery" had been defeated (the Socialist states), the US now saw the greatest threat emanating from "failed states" that threatened the United States less by "fleets and armies," than by "catastrophic technologies in the hands of the embittered few." The United States was able and willing to take on the challenge of combating these forces, basing its response on "a distinctly American internationalism,"¹⁰⁹ that rested, partly on the principle that the "best defense is a good offense."¹¹⁰ Lest there be any concern that the United States was acting outside of multilateral institutions, the United Nations was given a role in the new order. Using the example of Afghanistan, the document noted the importance of working with the United Nations "to provide the humanitarian, political, economic, and security assistance required to rebuild."¹¹¹

An important contribution of this document was its justification for preemptive strikes. The document declared: "We must prepare to stop rogue states and their terrorist clients before they are able to threaten or use weapons of mass destruction against the

¹⁰⁸ Zhang, *Xin Meilijian*, 23.

¹⁰⁹ "The National Security Strategy," 1.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 7. To be fair, even before going to war in Iraq, the United States and its allies, namely Great Britain, had sought the approval of the United Nations. But the important point is that after it became certain that this support was not coming, the United States and its allies decided to go to war alone. It was only after US occupation of the country that the UN was asked to play a role, and only then under the auspices of the American-led occupation forces. This marks a departure from the conventional principles of multilateral diplomacy, and was in opposition to the principles advocated by China.

United States and our allies and friends.”¹¹² Arguing that, “traditional concepts of deterrence will not work against a terrorist enemy whose avowed tactics are wanton destruction and the targeting of innocents,” the National Security document asserts, “For centuries, international law recognized that nations need not suffer an attack before they can lawfully take action to defend themselves.” The document ominously noted that since “rogue states” do not attack using conventional means, the concept of “imminent threat” must be seen to be as real as an actual threat.¹¹³ Putting all this in perspective, we are told:

The United States has long maintained the option of preemptive actions to counter a sufficient threat to our national security. The greater the threat, the greater the risk of inaction – and the more compelling the case for taking anticipatory action to defend ourselves, even if uncertainty remains as to the time and place of the enemy’s attack. To forestall or prevent such hostile acts ...the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively.¹¹⁴

The notion of preemptive strikes did not directly threaten China at this time; in fact, the document suggested that China and the United States’ interests overlapped on the current anti-terrorist campaigns and in promoting stability in the Korean peninsula. But the document made little secret of the fact that the US administration wanted to see a dramatic transformation within China. The document stated that “democratic development” was crucial to the emergence of a strong, peaceful, and prosperous China. “Yet,” the document laments,

a quarter century after beginning the process of shedding the worst features of the Communist legacy, China’s leaders have not yet made the next series of fundamental choices about the character of their state. In pursuing advanced military capabilities that can threaten its neighbors in the Asia-Pacific region, China is following an outdated path that, in the end, will hamper its own pursuit

¹¹² Ibid., 14.

¹¹³ Ibid., 15

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

of national greatness. In time, China will find that social and political freedom is the only source of that greatness.¹¹⁵

It was believed that by engaging with China, by jointly addressing transnational threats, and by China's accession to the WTO a fundamental transformation within China was inevitable. We are told that, "Addressing these ... will challenge China to become more open with information, promote the development of civil society, and enhance human rights.... To make that nation truly accountable to its citizens needs and aspirations ... much work remains to be done."¹¹⁶ These were bold claims on topics that the two countries had traditionally differed on. They were also particularly poignant since the document dealt with the national security policy of the United States, and it was not explained how changes within China were linked to the United States' national security. In addition, the document made two other claims that were potentially worrying for China: a suggestion that the role of NATO should be expanded to enable it to be an effective fighting force (presumably not limited to Europe),¹¹⁷ and, enhancing energy security, which arguably was a euphemism for enhancing the United States' control over the global supply of oil.¹¹⁸

To fully appreciate the implication of these ideas for China we need to briefly go back to the later years of the Clinton administration to examine two key documents. The first was the "Statement of Principles" of the PNAC, which were released on June 3, 1997, that made a claim for reasserting "American global leadership." Noting that the United States emerged from the Cold War as the preeminent world power, the challenge facing America was this: "Does the United States have the resolve to shape a new century favorable to American principles and interests?" The signatories of this document – which included Dick Cheney, Zalmay Kalilzad, I. Lewis Libby, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz – argued that cuts in foreign affairs and defense spending were "making it increasingly difficult to sustain American influence around the world," as a result of which, "we are jeopardizing the nation's ability to meet present threats and to deal with

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 27.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 27-28.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 25

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 19-20.

potentially greater challenges that lie ahead.” The PNAC “Statement of Principles” lamented that the then present (Clinton) administration had forgotten the “essential elements” of the Reagan administration’s success: a strong military, a foreign policy that “promotes America’s principles abroad,” and a national leadership “that accepts the United States’ global responsibilities.”¹¹⁹

According to the PNAC “Statement of Principles,” the United States had a “vital role” in maintaining peace and security in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. In what seems similar to the notion of the “preemptive strike,” the signatories argued that the history of the last one hundred years had taught them that, “it is important to shape circumstances before crises emerge, and to meet threats before they become dire. The history of this century should have taught us to embrace the cause of American leadership.”¹²⁰ To this end, signatories called for a further modernization of the armed forces. There are echoes of the infamous NSC-68 from 1950, that argued for a massive military buildup against the perceived Soviet threat. In addition, in both NSC-68 and the 2002 National Security document, the objective was the same: undisputed US “leadership,” based on overwhelming military capabilities.

With regard to China, the PNAC signatories called for strengthening ties with democratic allies, challenging regimes hostile to the United States, and to “promote the cause of political and economic freedom abroad.”¹²¹ This last point is particularly important, for it suggests that when the United States was hoping for political reform within China, it was doing more than vocalizing an ideal it hoped would take root in the country. The United States actively sought a drastic change in China’s political culture; the National Security document specifically mentioned that China, by engaging with the WTO and other multilateral organizations, would undergo political transformation. The United States never concealed its desire for political reform in China. This hypothetical scenario would result in the emergence of a China that would be more receptive to the United States’ global leadership. Two years later, the PNAC released another document that addressed political change within China. In the “Statement on Taiwan” dated August 20, 1999, members from the Heritage Foundation and the PNAC called on President

¹¹⁹ “Statement of Principles.”

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

Clinton to “deter any form of Chinese intimidation to the Republic of China on Taiwan and declare unambiguously that it will come to Taiwan’s defense in the event of an attack or blockade against Taiwan.” The statement also noted: “If the people of Taiwan do not want to be united with the mainland until China becomes a democracy, the United States has a moral obligation and strategic imperative to honor that determination.”¹²² Again, we find direct mention of a fundamental transformation of China’s political culture.

Thus, we see two approaches towards China within the US: as S. J. Noumoff noted in 1999, one approach argued for engagement, “as the best way of transforming China in a direction similar to what the US had achieved with the erstwhile Soviet Union,” while the other approach “sees China as an enemy now and in the future, and would prefer to confront it at present when China is weaker than it is likely to become.” But as Noumoff argues, “both visions share the same strategic objective.”¹²³

This begs asking: if Sino-US relations had been cordial on the surface, with a gradual improvement in bilateral relations since the end of the Cold War,¹²⁴ how do we explain the undercurrent in the United States’ foreign policy that saw the status quo in China as being adverse to American national interest? To answer this question, let us begin with the obvious: aside from the saber rattling proposed by some within the corridors of power, the United States was probably not looking for a full blown confrontation with China, but a containment of the country.

Containment could be of two types. The first was based on strengthening military alliances in the region. This could be either through continuing military support for Taiwan, by the establishment of new military alliances with the countries of Central Asia and Pakistan, or the deepening of the strategic alliance with Japan. These were trends that Chinese scholars had identified with recent changes in US foreign policy in Central and East Asia.¹²⁵ The second form of containment was where the United States would like to see a change in the political culture of China; US policy makers stopped short of calling this a “regime change,” and “building democracy,” terms that were used for the Middle

¹²² “Statement on the Defense.”

¹²³ Noumoff, “Is China the Next Threat?” 491.

¹²⁴ A recently updated CRS report notes that “Through much of the George W. Bush Administration, U.S.-China relations were smoother than they had been at any time since the Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989.” Dumbaugh, “China-U.S. Relations.”

¹²⁵ Feng, “Meiyou zhongjie de “zhongjie,”” 9; and Zhang, *Xin Meilijian*, 7

East. But the outline of the United States' national security policy, and scores of policy papers published by US think tanks, makes it abundantly clear that drastic internal changes within China that would lessen the hold of the Party over the state would be welcomed by Washington.

Scholars and policy makers in the PRC were not oblivious to the policy shifts within the United States that became increasingly apparent following September 11, 2001. Scholars have suggested that the United States saw itself as the new Roman empire (*Luoma diguo*), driven by a global messianic mission (*jiushi shiming*) of rescuing humanity.¹²⁶ Consequently, the United States now found itself in a position to take on global policing responsibilities, thereby determining the global balance of power.¹²⁷ The fundamental problem was that this global agenda was being set by the United States alone, notwithstanding the participation of the "coalition of the willing." It was the United States' unilateralism that formed the fundamental critique of the Bush doctrine, and served as an important cornerstone for PRC scholars categorizing the United States as a new empire. Like all empires, the United States was said to be acting unilaterally, which, according to Zhang Ximen had become the international label (*biaoqian*) of the United States in the twenty-first century.¹²⁸ It is worthy of note, that following September 11, the neo-conservative lobby made no apologies for the United States' unilateralist policies. As Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke have convincingly demonstrated, a neo-conservative critique of the Clinton administration's foreign policy was the former administration's supposed emphasis on multilateral decision making, particularly during the conflict in the Balkans. The inability to act soon enough was seen as a failure of the Clinton administration.¹²⁹ According to Halper and Clarke, an important lesson the neo-conservatives drew from the war in the Balkans was that "mulilateralism was doomed to ineffectiveness.... Thus, a basic ideological foundation for the Bush administration's instinctive preference for "with-us-or-against-us, go-it-alone" was laid in the Clinton

¹²⁶ Zhang, *Xin Meilijian*, 3, 23; and Zhang, ""Xin diguo lun."" 33-38.

¹²⁷ Zhang, *Xin Meilijian*, 5-6.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 2. See also Ye, "Danbian zhuyi." 59-72.

¹²⁹ Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*, 88-89.

interventions of the 1990s.” This also resulted in a marginalization of the United Nations in military operations against Afghanistan and Iraq.¹³⁰

In his critique of contemporary US foreign policy, Zhang Ximen identifies preemptive (*xian fa zhi ren*) strikes as an integral part of the Bush doctrine, suggesting that the doctrine was incapable (*wufa*) of separating through the myriad of complicated problems that would emerge from preemptive action. These included the exacerbation of sentiments against the United States and its allies along religious lines, the direction that the anti-terrorist struggle would take, and what the possible targets of the anti-terrorist struggle might be.¹³¹ Zhang makes note of the fact that by 2002, the direction of the anti-terrorist struggle was focusing on regime change in Iraq,¹³² although Iraq had probably been in the crosshairs long before the Bush administration began insisting on a connection between the attacks of September 11 and the Iraqi leadership.¹³³ By focusing on Iraq and by creating a doctrine that exonerated unilateralism, the United States clearly indicated that the direction of the “War on Terror” was going to be motivated principally, if not exclusively, by its own interests. Consequently, while in the months following September 11, China and the United States made efforts to emphasize their similar interests in fighting transnational terrorism, by the end of 2002, the agendas of the two countries had diverged visibly.

The last significant gesture of bilateral cooperation between China and the United States on a security related issue took place during a visit to Beijing by Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage (2001-2004), when on August 26, 2002, he declared that the

¹³⁰ Ibid., 90-91.

¹³¹ Zhang, *Xin Meilijian*, 24.

¹³² Ibid., 26-27.

¹³³ For a comprehensive discussion of the “vague and shifting rationale” (203) behind the decision to go to war against Iraq, which was based on “circumstantial evidence,” (212) see Halper and Clarke, *America Alone*, esp. 201-231. The authors argue that influential neo-conservatives such as Paul Wolfowitz were advocating for military action against Iraq in the days following the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001 (204). Halper and Clarke see this as part of an agenda that not only went back to the PNAC “State of Principles,” but as far back as 1992, when “Cheney, Wolfowitz, and Libby had established the intellectual basis for driving American tanks up the streets of Baghdad” (205). The authors cite Lawrence Kaplan and William Kristol arguing, in a book published in 2003, that “a devastating knockout blow against Saddam Hussein, followed by an American-sponsored effort to rebuild Iraq and put it on a path towards democratic governance would have a seismic impact on the Arab world – for the better.... Once Iraq and Turkey – two of the most important Middle Eastern powers – are both in the pro-Western camp, there is a reasonable chance that smaller powers might decide to jump on the bandwagon” (218). See also Zhang, *Xin Meilijian*, 222-231.

ETIM was being classified by the US and the UN as a foreign terrorist organization.¹³⁴ Since the ETIM committed acts of violence against unarmed civilians, the organization was declared a terrorist organization per UNSC Resolution 1373, that instructed countries to freeze financial assets of terrorist organizations.¹³⁵ Classifying the ETIM as a terrorist organization proved to be a controversial move with some claiming that the United States did so to gain China's acquiescence for the campaign against Iraq.¹³⁶ For their part, Chinese officials claimed that they would tighten regulations on the export of missile technology to countries such as Iran and Pakistan.¹³⁷ The decision also came before President Jiang Zemin's October 2002 visit to the United States, and the above gestures from both sides could be read as an exchange of an olive branch amidst growing unease with each other's respective positions on international terrorism.

The United States strongly denied that the ETIM was classified as a terrorist organization to appease the PRC. In December 2002, Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly (2001-) stated that the US decision was based on evidence that the ETIM had links to al-Qaeda.¹³⁸ According to another source, the ETIM was said to have a "close financial relationship" with al-Qaeda.¹³⁹ While the classification of the ETIM as a terrorist organization was a notable step in bilateral cooperation between the United States and China, I believe it is important not to over-emphasize this decision; irrespective, China would crack down on all resistance in Xinjiang regardless of sanctioning by the international community. The only tangible benefit that this declaration had was the freezing of financial assets of the ETIM. It is uncertain whether this classification gave any international credibility to China's attempts to curtail unrest in Xinjiang.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁴ Kan, "U.S. China Counter-Terrorism Cooperation."

¹³⁵ "Transcript of Deputy Secretary of State."

¹³⁶ The United States feared that China would veto a resolution in the UNSC sanctioning military action against Iraq.

¹³⁷ CFR, "East Turkestan."

¹³⁸ Kan, "U.S. China Counter-Terrorism Cooperation."

¹³⁹ CFR, "East Turkestan."

¹⁴⁰ Despite the decision to classify the ETIM as a terrorist organization, the US has refused to extradite Uighurs held in Guantánamo Bay to the PRC. In an interview given in August 2004, Secretary of State Colin Powell had categorically stated that Uighur detainees would not be sent back to China. In November 2004, the *New York Times* reported that there were twenty-two Uighurs at Guantánamo Bay, at least half of whom were eligible for release. The United States had been looking for a third country willing to accept the Uighurs. Several European countries, including Norway and Switzerland had declined. China has maintained that sending the Uighurs to a third country will harm bilateral relations. Neil A. Lewis,

Thus, in terms of their stance on contemporary international issues, China and the United States found themselves diametrically opposed to each other. Both had an interest in building an enduring partnership with the republics of Central Asia. Both countries had an immediate interest in seeing the region stable and secure through their own initiatives. In addition, both countries also had an interest in the region's energy reserves. But the way in which they approached their relationship with the countries of Central Asia was notably different. For the United States, partnership was based on building bilateral alliances with the republics, which focused on the contemporary security interests. For China, building an enduring relationship meant strengthening and broadening the scope of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization from a medium to a long-term perspective (*zhong changqi jiaodu kan*).¹⁴¹

IV. Deepening and Broadening Multilateral Cooperation

With the "War on Terror" becoming endlessly embroiled in the Iraqi quagmire, and the UN made largely irrelevant to the anti-terrorist campaigns, China's only hope for multilateral cooperation on security issues in Central Asia lay with the SCO. In the summer of 2002, SCO member-states took the important step of creating a Charter for the organization. Just prior to this important summit, the defense ministers had met in Moscow on May 15, 2002. The joint communiqué following the summit noted that the defense ministers "believed it was necessary to create a permanent mechanism and working bodies" within the SCO to address the challenges of security and defense, and called for increased military cooperation. The situation in Afghanistan was dealt with in brevity, noting merely that "[L]atest developments in Afghanistan require priority development of cooperation ... in maintaining regional security and stability." The ministers agreed that the situation in Afghanistan made "it expedient to consider holding joint exercises." The communiqué closed with the ministers calling for a multipolar world, and a peaceful settlement of conflicts in accordance with the UN Charter.¹⁴²

"Freedom for Chinese Detainees Hinges on Finding a New Homeland," *The New York Times*, November 8, 2004; and Powell, "Interview."

¹⁴¹ Zhao, "Zhongya xingshi," 57.

¹⁴² "Joint Communiqué of the Ministers of Defense."

The communiqué does little to suggest that the defense ministers' meeting pushed multilateral cooperation further. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the meeting was that the defense minister of Uzbekistan was not present, the reason for which I am unaware. It is noteworthy that Uzbekistan had become the closest US ally in Central Asia. Uzbekistan's close cooperation with the US resulted in the doubling of aid in 2002 to \$155 million, half of which was earmarked for security assistance. In addition, from March 11 to 14, 2002, President Karimov had visited the United States, during which he met the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of State.¹⁴³ In a development that signaled the deepening of bilateral ties, the two countries signed an agreement on strategic partnership and cooperation. Concerning security cooperation, the agreement noted: "The U.S. affirms that it would regard with grave concern any external threat to the security and territorial integrity of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The two countries expect to develop cooperation in combating transnational threats to society, and to continue their dynamic military and military-technical cooperation."¹⁴⁴ Whether the dramatic improvement in ties between Uzbekistan and the United States influenced Uzbekistan's attitude towards the Shanghai Cooperation Organization is difficult to say. My own understanding is that improving US-Uzbek relations would not have greatly impacted Uzbekistan's participation in the SCO. Having said that, we can postulate with near certainty that in 2002, the United States was a more important ally for Uzbekistan than China or the other SCO member-states. The reason was simple: the then enhanced regional stability resulting from the US-led initiative, which arguably benefited Uzbekistan more than any other country.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Ariel Cohen, "US Officials Give High Mark to Karimov on Washington Visit," *Eurasian Insight*, March 18, 2002. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav031502b.shtml> (accessed December 4, 2005); Kenan Aliyev, "Karimov Maintains Low Profile During US Visit," *Eurasia Insight*, March 13, 2002. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav031302.shtml> (accessed December 4, 2002); and "Uzbekistan's Key Role: Islam Karimov Will be Supported by the US," *Pravda*, March 13, 2002. <http://english.pravda.ru/cis/2002/03/13/26962.html> (accessed December 4, 2002).

¹⁴⁴ "United States-Uzbekistan Declaration."

¹⁴⁵ "Uzbekistan's Key Role: Islam Karimov Will be Supported by the US," *Pravda*, March 13, 2002. <http://english.pravda.ru/cis/2002/03/13/26962.html> (accessed December 4, 2002); and Wang, "Zhongguo duobian waijiao" 524. After the fall of the Taliban, the support base for the IMU was destroyed and the leader of the movement, Juma Namangani believed to have been killed in US action in Afghanistan. In addition, the presence of the United States military in Uzbekistan made it unlikely that the IMU would regroup and threaten President Karimov's hold on power as it had done from 1998 to 2001. Even scholars in the PRC suggested that the presence of the United States would prove to be beneficial for Central Asian states themselves threatened by terrorism.

Arguably, in the summer of 2002, China's influence in Central Asia was less than it had been at any time since 1991. On June 7, the day that member-states signed the organization's Charter in St. Petersburg, an editorial in the *Pravda* criticized the organization for not having "been conspicuous with its activity yet." The editorial continued: "Everyone knows that there is such an organization in the world, but it is hard to guess what it is actually for."¹⁴⁶ The editorial also argued that the SCO reflected a desire by Russia and China to curtail the United States' influence in Central Asia, that China's leading role within the SCO was "indisputable," and that without Beijing's participation, there was no point to the organization. It argued that Beijing was a central player in the Asia-Pacific region, and had now "apparently decided to further strengthen its role in the countries of Central Asia." The foremost reason for Beijing's interest was the deployment of the US military in Central Asia, with the proposed anti-terrorist structure in Bishkek being established to demonstrate to the outside world that regional countries could fight terrorism themselves. This was supposed to be Beijing's position; the Russian Federation had said that it was not threatened by US deployment in Central Asia, and that the countries of Central Asia had actually welcomed the United States.¹⁴⁷

While the editorial was written at a time when there was unprecedented cooperation between Russia, Central Asia, and the United States, in principle, I am in agreement with the above assumptions. Though I have yet to see an official acknowledgment that the SCO mechanism was initiated by the PRC, China was the central country in this organization, without which the SCO would have little value, as all other member countries were members of the CIS. China's centrality was further illustrated by the fact that the issues under consideration were issues of multilateral concern; the SCO was not a forum that sought to address the multitude of bilateral disputes between the Central Asian countries, or those between Central Asia and Russia. China stood more to gain from the SCO than any of the other member-states. This is another way of saying that in mid-2002, other member-states had less stake in the future viability of the SCO.

¹⁴⁶ "Shanghai Cooperation Organization: What is it for?" *Pravda*, June 7, 2002. <http://english.pravda.ru/cis/2002/06/07/29950.html> (accessed December 5, 2005).

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Though the *Pravda* editorial vocalized some legitimate concerns over the viability of the SCO, analysts in the United States were far more skeptical in their understanding of the organization's purpose and its future; many of their assumptions were based on false assumptions. For example, in an article in the *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, Sean L. Yom, a Research Analyst at the Carnegie Council on Ethics and International Affairs, suggested that from its inception, the SCO agenda has been determined by China and Russia, with the two countries "pressurizing" the Central Asian states to accept their agenda. Yom provided no evidence for this assertion; I am unaware of any pressure tactics used by either China or Russia. Yom also claimed that the larger two members of this organization had "tightly guided the SCO's stance on many issues, such as its general anti-US slant." While declarations made through the Shanghai forum and the SCO were critical of unilateralist policies of the United States in Kosovo, and were likewise critical of the United States' position on TMD, this criticism was first muted, and second, a far cry from the entire organization having a "general anti-US slant." Yom saw the organization as a response to US hegemony in a region [Central Asia] that "they [China and Russia] long considered their natural sphere of influence." While one could argue that Russia still considered Central Asia to be a "sphere of influence," it takes particular ingenuity to make similar claims for China's attitude towards Central Asia. On the contrary, when China established diplomatic relations with independent Central Asia in January 1992, it was establishing relations with a region with which it had negligible economic and political ties in the 1980s, and none before that. In yet another grave misunderstanding, Yom argued that Central Asian leaders, particularly Uzbekistan's, concluded that only "Russia and China would commit the military troops and aid needed to defeat ... internal and regional threats."¹⁴⁸ I am baffled as to how Yom reached this conclusion about China's possible troop deployment in autumn 2002.

But while Yom was willing to accept that the SCO could play a role in the region, Stephen Blank of the US Army War College, whose emphasis on the strategic primacy of US policy in Central Asia we have already explored in the previous chapter, declared that the SCO had not only been "AWOL," and a "failure" in the "War on Terrorism," but that the organization also "reflects the erosion of Sino-Russian cooperation." Blank's essay

¹⁴⁸ Yom, "Power Politics."

was carried in the May 22, 2002 issue of the *Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Analyst*, a fortnightly web digest published by the Johns Hopkins' School of Advanced International Studies. In Blank's view, "China and Russia hijacked – or at least diverted – the SCO into becoming an allegedly model forum for their joint resistance to American policies." Further in the essay, the SCO was described as an "anti-American organization." Between 1998 and 2001, the reader is told, "Russia gained China's support ... in policing Central Asia and resisting both American hegemonism [*sic*] and Islamic insurgencies."¹⁴⁹ As we noted in the previous chapter, the United States and Russia had been locked in a battle over access to the region's energy resources, which had been a pretext for creating or maintaining spheres of influence. China had kept itself aloof from the disputes over the Caspian's export routes. I am unfamiliar with any evidence that could explicitly illustrate how Russia hoped to woo the favor of the Chinese to block US hegemony, or needed China's help to "police" Central Asia. Since Blank himself provides no evidence, it is impossible to verify these claims, which at the very least, are debatable.

Such analysis highlights two points. First, within the US foreign policy establishment there was skepticism over China's role in the SCO. China was thought to be colluding with Russia to create an exclusive sphere of influence in Central Asia. As we discussed in the Introduction, the "New Great Game" framework became an easy explanation for Chinese (and Russian) motives: from this perspective, the Shanghai Five mechanism, and the successor SCO, was a disguise for empire in Central Asia. The deployment of the US military in Central Asia reinforced this approach, as now the Chinese and Russians were confronted with the physical presence of their adversary. Consequently, when China and the SCO failed to play a dramatic role in the region, analysts prematurely announced that the SCO was a failure. This is the second noteworthy aspect of Yom and Blank's position; that China acted in a measured cautious manner, suggested to these analysts that the SCO was a failed organization.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ Stephen Blank, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Its Future," *Central Asia – Caucasus Analyst*, May 22, 2002. http://cacianalyst.org/view_article.php?articleid=1150 (accessed December 6, 2005).

¹⁵⁰ This quality of analysis highlights yet another aspect of the US foreign policy establishment: a failure of rigor in such analysis. The above examples indicate the perpetration of assumptions that could have been corrected by a survey of openly available literature. This leads me to believe that such analysis is generated to promote a point of view sympathetic to US interests, and is not a rigorous commentary on current events by engaging with open-source material.

While China's presence in the region was overshadowed by the United States in the summer of 2002, this did not mean that China had no future in Central Asia. Unlike the United States, China bordered the Central Asian republics, and close, long term relations meant engaging with the republics across a wide-range of issues. While security had overshadowed other issues, it was debatable whether it would be the overriding concern in the future. The Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization that was adopted on June 7, 2002, envisioned a broad, long-term engagement between member-states, in which counter-terrorism and regional security was one of many issues.¹⁵¹ Let us examine some aspects of the Charter.

The Charter defined as its goals the consolidation and maintenance of peace, security, stability, and the promotion of "a new democratic, fair and rational political and economic international order." With a deliberate focus on regional security, the organization sought to "jointly counteract terrorism, separatism, and extremism in all their manifestations," and resolved to fight against "illicit narcotics and arms trafficking," and other "criminal activities of a transnational nature." The Charter also called for "efficient cooperation," in fields such as politics, trade, economy, defense, law enforcement, environmental protection, culture, science and technology, education, energy, transport, [and] credit and finance."¹⁵² Multilateral diplomacy was based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.¹⁵³

The Charter listed different areas of multilateral cooperation,¹⁵⁴ and the bodies that were to operate within the organization. These were: the council of the heads of state, the council of the heads of government (premiers), the council of ministers of foreign affairs, meetings of heads of ministries and/or agencies, the council of national coordinators, the regional-counter terrorist structure, and the secretariat.¹⁵⁵ A council of ministers of defense was conspicuous in its absence, even though a meeting of defense ministers had just transpired in May 2002, and the year 2000 Dushanbe summit had made

¹⁵¹ Vorob'eva, "Interb'yu spetsial'nogo predstavatelya." According to V. Ya. Vorob'eva, Special Representative of the Russian President to the SCO, the organization had economic plans for the next twenty to twenty-five years.

¹⁵² "Charter," Article 1.

¹⁵³ Ibid., Article 2. Though the Charter does not identify these principles as the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, they are the same as the *heping gongchu wuxiang*.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., Article 3.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., Article 4.

provisions for the meetings of defense ministers. This suggested that while regional security was important, it might not have been the overwhelming impetus behind the SCO in the future. Similarly, while there was reference to the planned anti-terrorist structure in Bishkek, which was to be a standing SCO body,¹⁵⁶ little detail was given of when the center might open, how it would operate, or what its function would be. By comparison, the section dealing with the also yet unopened SCO Secretariat provided extensive detail of its function, and how it would be staffed.¹⁵⁷

According to the Charter, the SCO could also negotiate treaties, acquire property, appear in court as a litigant, open accounts, and make monetary transaction.¹⁵⁸ Decision-making was based on mutual consensus.¹⁵⁹

This cursory survey indicates two things: first, the SCO defined its agenda very broadly, and did so in an understated manner. There were no battle cries, no chest thumping, no self-righteousness, and no grandiose claims to eliminate terrorism and bring about world peace. Some saw this as a weakness on the part of the organization, with a *Times of London* article describing the Charter as “stillborn.”¹⁶⁰ On the contrary, that the Charter established a broad agenda was indicative of the direction that the organization was likely to move in; in this case, this would be the creation of a framework that would step by step (*zhubu*) address issues of mutual interest, thereby creating a sound political and legal foundation (*jichu*) for the member-states.¹⁶¹ The SCO member-states did not conceive a poorly thought out plan of action whereby they could edge their way into the frontlines of the “War on Terrorism,” and win accolades from Western analysts and journalists. Rather, the SCO sought to create a mechanism for future cooperation by which the member-states could address issues of mutual concern. But in the summer of 2002, when the US-led coalition had supposedly dealt with Afghanistan and was gearing for combat in Iraq, this gradual approach was seen as a sign of weakness.

The second important point is that there was nothing in the Charter that could be construed as being akin to a bloc. The SCO, according to its Charter, was not a military

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., Article 10.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., Article 11.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid. Article 15.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. Article 16.

¹⁶⁰ Oliver August, “Stillborn Charter is Signed in Russia,” *Times of London*, June 8, 2002.

¹⁶¹ Feng, “Meiyong zhongjie,” 5.

alliance, and there was no clause for military cooperation between member-states should one be under attack from either a member-country, or a third country. The security challenges were “terrorism, separatism, and extremism,” and dangers stemming from the trafficking of narcotics and small arms. Not only was no country identified as a threat, there was no mention of a foreign country. There nothing that could be construed as being anti-US, no criticism of unilateralism, no advocacy of a multilateral world-order, no denouncement of TMD, or of human rights being used for political leverage. In other words there was absolutely nothing in the SCO Charter that one could point to as being directed against another country or its policies. According to Feng Shaolei, the SCO was not so much a bloc, as a close alliance (*bingfei jituan huo fengbi xing lianmeng*).¹⁶²

In addition to the Charter, the heads of the SCO member-states also released a declaration dealing with some of the more immediate concerns of the SCO member-states, such as the stemming of transnational terrorist and criminal activity, and a strongly articulated desire to see the United Nations Security Council take the lead in combating international terrorism.¹⁶³

In a statement made after the summit, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that there were no areas of multilateral interest that the member-states could not address through the SCO.¹⁶⁴ President Putin stressed that the organization was neither a bloc nor a closed community. He foresaw the possibility of cooperation with any country in the world; at this time, India and Pakistan had expressed an interest in joining the SCO.¹⁶⁵ According to President Putin, at the present moment, the primary aim was to begin operating, after which they would consider expanding.¹⁶⁶ This remark was a telling indication of where President Putin, and possibly the other leaders saw the SCO in the

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ “Declaration by the Heads of the Member-States,” (2002). In addition, the President of Uzbekistan proposed making Central Asia a nuclear weapons free zone, and the member countries expressed support for the status of Mongolia as a nuclear weapons free zone. The SCO member-states also called upon India and Pakistan to resolve their differences in a peaceful manner, and expressed desire to see an Afghanistan “free of terror, war, drugs and poverty.” The SCO heads of state expressed concern over instability in the Middle East, which had an adverse affect on global stability. The declaration took special note of the “Iraqi question” and called for the full implementation of UN Security Council resolutions. In the first mention of the brewing conflict on the Korean peninsula, the SCO considered “useful” the dialogue between the DPRK, the United States, and other countries.

¹⁶⁴ Putin, “President of the Russian Federation.”

¹⁶⁵ “Shanghai Cooperation Organization: What is it for?” op. cit.

¹⁶⁶ Putin and Nazarbayev, “Press Conference of the President.”

summer of 2002: an organization that showed great promise,¹⁶⁷ but one that had yet to define a role for itself. It is noteworthy, that in the summer of 2005, the special representative of the Russian President to the SCO, V. Yu. Vorob'eva, still considered the organization to be in its infancy.¹⁶⁸

In September 2002, an important announcement was made that China and Kyrgyzstan would conduct joint military exercises. This was a notable step in strategic cooperation between China and its neighbors, which would also be the first of many military exercises between China, Russia, and the Central Asian republics. The exercise was planned to involve "tens of thousands" of troops from both sides and would take place within a hundred kilometers along the border of the two countries. According to officials, the exercise – aimed at combating terrorism, separatism, and extremism – sought to test anti-terrorism coordination.¹⁶⁹ The live-ammunition exercise was held on October 10 and 11, 2002, and was based on a scenario of a transnational terrorist organization attempting to stage "a violent act of terror."¹⁷⁰

The bilateral exercise was an attempt to take concrete steps towards addressing transnational security concerns. Similar exercises followed in quick succession: in August 2003, all SCO member-states took part in an exercise held in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The purpose of this exercise was also to practice combating terrorism.¹⁷¹ Notwithstanding the fact that Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan hosted US troops following September 11, and that Kazakhstan, too, was considered an important ally by the US State Department and had seen an increase in defense aid after September 11, 2001,¹⁷² joint exercises were an important step in the development of an agenda independent of the US.

¹⁶⁷ Wang, "Zhongguo duobian waijiao," 522.

¹⁶⁸ Vorob'eva, "Interb'yu spetsial'nogo predstavatelya."

¹⁶⁹ "China, Kyrgyzstan Plan Large-Scale Anti-Terrorism Exercise," *AFP*, September 16, 2002. In FBIS-CHI-2002-0916.

¹⁷⁰ "China, Kyrgyzstan Hold Joint Anti-Terrorism Exercise 10-11 Oct," *Xinhua*, October 11, 2002. In FBIS-CHI-2002-1010.

¹⁷¹ "SCO To Hold Military Exercise on Fight Against Terrorism Late Aug," *ITAR-TASS*, May 27, 2003. In FBIS-SOV-2003-0527.

¹⁷² Though Kazakhstan had not hosted US military personnel during the campaign against the Taliban, President Nazarbaev had approved eight hundred overflights by US planes during the military campaign. "Kazakh Bribery Case Threatens to Throw Harsh Spotlight on Oil Industry," *Alexander's Gas and Oil Connection*, 8 no. 11 (June 3, 2003). <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/company/cnc32393.htm> (accessed December 25, 2005).

By the end of 2002, SCO member-states stepped up efforts to establish the Regional Anti-terrorist Structure (RATS) in Bishkek, that was said to be in “the final stage of launching.”¹⁷³ On April 1, 2003, a Bishkek news agency announced that the RATS was completed,¹⁷⁴ though this announcement was preliminary since in a meeting of SCO foreign ministers held in Tashkent on September 5, 2003, the surprising declaration was made that the RATS would be established in Tashkent, as opposed to Bishkek. The official explanation was that the establishment of the center in Tashkent would “help optimize the stationing and cooperation of anti-terrorist forces in Central Asia.”¹⁷⁵ But this need not divert from a more important fact that the SCO member-states were first, defining a security agenda independent of, but not necessarily contrary to, the United States-led alliance, and, second, SCO member-states continued to be threatened by transnational organizations. The need for the RATS suggested that despite the US-led efforts, threats to regional stability from transnational organizations were not eliminated.

That the SCO member-states were close to finalizing the establishment of the SCO Secretariat and the RATS indicated that the organization was finally entering a phase, where, as per the declaration by the heads of state after the May 2003 meeting in Moscow, “[the] SCO is [completing] its organizational establishment and beginning to function as an independent factor of international affairs.”¹⁷⁶ This echoed a statement made by Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Losyukov three days earlier, where he had said that the SCO expected to begin functioning as a full-fledged international organization by early 2004,¹⁷⁷ in other words implying that the SCO was not yet a fully operational body. Alongside the establishment of the RATS, establishment of the Secretariat in Beijing was a high priority. Zhang Deguang was named the first SCO Executive Secretary, and the two standing bodies were to begin operation no later than January 1, 2004.¹⁷⁸ In the declaration made by the heads of states following the May

¹⁷³ “Shanghai Group Starts Work on Anti-terrorism Structure in Kyrgyzstani Capital,” *ITAR-TASS*, December 24, 2002. In FBIS-SOV-2002-1224.

¹⁷⁴ “Formation of Regional Anti-Terrorist Agency in Central Asia Completed,” *Kabar News Agency*, April 1, 2003. In FBIS-SOV-2003-0402.

¹⁷⁵ “Joint Communiqué Issued at Conclusion.”

¹⁷⁶ “Declaration of the Heads of the States.”

¹⁷⁷ “Russia Expects Shanghai Cooperation Organization to Work in Full Form from 2004,” *Interfax*, May 26, 2003. In FBIS-SOV-2003-0526.

¹⁷⁸ “Declaration of the Heads of the States.”

2003 meeting, there was a strong emphasis on the need to establish the RATS. This suggested that the SCO was stepping up security cooperation.

The declaration following the meeting was also noteworthy, as it provided a vision of the perceived security threat in the region. Noting that, “what is changing is not just the political structure, but the entire international security system,” the member-states “[recognize] the transnational nature of today’s terrorism.” SCO member-states saw themselves as being “in the forefront of the fight against [terrorism’s] practical manifestation,” where stopping “[terrorism’s] financing channels,” was a priority. Closely linked to transnational terrorism was the “problem of illegal trafficking in narcotics, psychotropic substances and precursors,” which became “more and more alarming,” since drug trafficking was “one of the financial bulwarks of international terrorism.” The trafficking in narcotics was directly linked to Afghanistan, from where the trafficking of drugs was “acquiring global dimensions,” and was “particularly acute.”¹⁷⁹

Although in their bilateral and multilateral declarations, SCO member-states had expressed concern about the situation in Afghanistan since 1998, the 2003 summit was the first time that a strong declaration was made that the problem of narcotics had not gone away during the administration of President Karzai. That the SCO member-states saw themselves as being at the forefront of the fight against international terrorism is also important, not because of the degree of truth (or lack thereof) in this statement, but because the member-states probably did not want to entirely cede the leadership of the anti-terrorist struggle to the United States. In a thinly veiled criticism of US unilateralist policies, the declaration observed: “no country can ward off present-day terrorism, the drugs threat or other trans-border challenges at a time of the growing globalization of political, economic and social processes.”¹⁸⁰

These multilateral initiatives led to dividends for China. After the creation of a discourse in which Uighur resistance to the state was linked to transnational Central Asian networks, China sought greater international cooperation to minimize the threat from Uighur separatists. On May 28, 2002, Pakistan announced that they had captured

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

Ismail Kadir in Pakistani-administered Kashmir. According to Beijing, Kadir had spearheaded separatist movements in Xinjiang. That Kadir was nabbed in the part of Kashmir under Pakistani administration is telling, for this region had traditionally been a launching point for insurgents heading into Indian administered Kashmir. With Kadir captured, only the supposed head of the ETIM, Hassan Mahsum, remained at large. In addition, according to the Xinjiang Party Secretary Wang Lequan, a hundred Uighurs had been captured as they attempted to return to China from Afghanistan with another three hundred captured in Afghanistan.¹⁸¹ There is evidence that there was growing unease in China over the fact that people whom China considered terrorists were roaming freely across the borders. In a dramatic break with protocol, on September 11, 2003, Secretary Wang made the announcement to foreign journalists in Urumchi that Uighur militants were being trained in Pakistan.¹⁸²

In a bid to bolster its counter-terrorist activities, at the end of 2003, China's Ministry of Public Security (MPS) released a list of four terrorist organizations and eleven terrorists. Interestingly, all four organizations – the ETIM, East Turkestan Liberation Organization (ETLO), the World Uyghur Youth Congress (WUYC), and the East Turkestan Information Center (ETIC) – were Uighur organizations. Not surprisingly then, all eleven most-wanted terrorists were Turkic: Hassan Mahsum, Muhanmetemin Hazret, Dolqun Isa, Abudujelil Kalakash, Abudukadir Yapuquan, Abudumijit Muhammatkelin, Abudula Kariaji, Abdulimit Turxun, Hudaberdi Haxerbik, Yasen Muhammad, and Atahan Abuduhani.¹⁸³ The article gave little information about the organizations that these individuals represented, except to mention that the organizations had close connections with al-Qaeda. Later the same month, the Pakistani military confirmed that it had killed Hassan Mahsum, along with seven others during a raid on a suspected al-Qaeda hideout in South Waziristan, along the Pakistan-Afghanistan

¹⁸¹ "Separatist Leader Handed Over to China," *Dawn*, May 28, 2002. <http://www.dawn.com/2002/05/28/top10.htm> (accessed April 8, 2006).

¹⁸² "China Points Finger at Pak Militants," <http://www.hvk.org/articles/0903/187.html> (accessed January 5, 2006).

¹⁸³ "China Seeks Int'l Support in Counter-terrorism," *People's Daily*, December 16, 2003. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200312/16/print20031216_130505.html (accessed December 16, 2003).

border.¹⁸⁴ In 2002, Hasan Mahsum had denied having any organizational links with al-Qaeda or having received funding from bin Laden.¹⁸⁵

Though they kept silent on the killing of Hassan Mahsum, émigré Uighur groups retaliated against the classification of Uighur organizations as terrorist. Enver Can of the Munich-based East Turkestan National Congress (ETNC), argued that of the four groups identified by the Chinese MPS, the WUYC, and the ETIC, were NGOs based in Germany, whose function was to provide information on the plight of the Uighurs, whereas ETIM and ETLO probably did not exist. According to Can, the purpose of releasing information by the MPA was to silence Uighur opposition to Chinese rule by “any means.”¹⁸⁶ According to my understanding, it is possible that the Chinese were conflating the nationalist aspirations of Uighurs into a more tangible terrorist network, such as al-Qaeda. But as Fawaz A. Gerges has argued, al-Qaeda is as much an ideological label as it is an organizational structure. Additionally, Gerges makes an important contribution to our understanding of transnational organizations when he argues that most of the volunteers who traveled to Afghanistan in the 1980s did so for the purpose of one day bringing military skills acquired in Afghanistan back to their home countries to combat national regimes, which he identifies as the near enemy (*al-adou al-qareeb*). Put in other words, the large majority of volunteers were less concerned with creating a transnational Islamic state, and more concerned with the struggle in their own countries.¹⁸⁷ This had also been true both for combatants in the Tajik civil war and in the IMU-led resistance to Uzbekistan. Ahmed Rashid’s Uighur informant, whom we discussed in Chapter Three, made similar claims to take the struggle back to his hometown of Khotan. Another such claim was made by a Uighur during a military tribunal at Guantánamo Bay, who admitted that though he had gone to Afghanistan and learned how to use a gun, he had done so for the purpose of fighting the Chinese in the future. He disputed the fact that he was either a member of al-Qaeda or ETIM.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ “Mly Confirms Killing Chinese ‘Terrorist,’” *Dawn*, December 24, 2003. <http://www.dawn.com/2003/12/24/top7.htm> (accessed December 30, 2003).

¹⁸⁵ Mure Dickie, “China Reports Death of Xinjiang Militant,” *Financial Times*, December 24, 2003.

¹⁸⁶ “China Issues ‘Terrorist’ List,” *BBC News*, December 15, 2003. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3319575.stm> (accessed December 15, 2003).

¹⁸⁷ Gerges, *The Far Enemy*, 12, 30, 43–46.

¹⁸⁸ Neil A. Lewis, “Freedom for Chinese Detainees Hinges on Finding a New Homeland,” *New York Times*, November 8, 2004.

This is an important point. If we accept the fact that there is a degree of truth in these statements, then the Chinese claims to the presence of highly organized, hierarchical and rigid Uighur organizations, need to be rethought. But there is little indication that scholars within China are doing so; in my meetings with Chinese scholars, there was a denunciation of all Uighur resistance to the state as being orchestrated by al-Qaeda and bin Laden. As this study has shown, there is conclusive evidence that hundreds of Uighurs did travel to Afghanistan to engage in some form of combat activities. In addition, a number of Uighurs also illegally came to Pakistan to attend madrasas. That both these activities undermined the authority of the PRC is also beyond a doubt. But Chinese scholarly and official accounts tend to see Uighur participation as being structured within rigid transnational organizations. I am not convinced that this was always the case.

The capture of Ismail Kadir in Pakistan and the killing of Hassan Mahsum along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border marked important steps in China's anti-terrorist struggle. Though China still exercised vigilance in Xinjiang, Uighur resistance grew peripheral to security concerns in the greater Central Asian region. Instead, in 2004 and 2005, Uzbekistan emerged as the principal theatre where state power was challenged.

On May 29, 2004, Tashkent's Chorsu Bazar was rocked by explosions; details of the events were sketchy and contested. It appeared that the explosions were caused, in part, by two suicide bombers. In addition, a gun battle ensued between the attackers and the security forces. Casualty figures were not immediately available, but one local journalist writing under a pseudonym suggested that these were significant.¹⁸⁹ Acts of violence continued in Tashkent for four days. There were also reports of violence in Bukhara and Andijan. On March 31, 2004, the official death toll stood at fifty, though there was a possibility that the actual figure was higher.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ Esmer Islamov, "Fighting Rages for Third Straight Day in Uzbekistan," *Eurasia Insight*, March 30, 2004. http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav033004_pr.shtml (accessed January 6, 2006).

¹⁹⁰ Esmer Islamov, "Uzbek Authorities Launch Round-up of Islamic Suspects in Uzbekistan," *Eurasia Insight*, March 31, 2004. http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav033104_pr.shtml (accessed January 6, 2006).

The government rounded up the usual suspects, the supposed Islamists. Blame fell on the Hizb-ut-Tahrir and the IMU. Neither took responsibility for the bombings.¹⁹¹ On April 9, 2004, Uzbek Prosecutor-General Rashid Kadyrov announced that al-Qaeda had played a role in the attacks. The militants were said to have received training from “Arabs” who themselves had been trained in “al-Qaeda camps.” President Karimov saw the attacks as proof that “international terrorism [was] regrouping,” following the damage that was inflicted on the terrorist organizations “during the military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.” The United States endorsed the view that the violence in Uzbekistan was the work of transnational terrorists.¹⁹² While we cannot rule out this possibility, there is a likelihood that the attacks were motivated by the Karimov regime’s repressive policies, particularly its lack of tolerance for any criticism, religious or secular. On April 12, a hitherto unknown organization, the Islamic Jihad Group is said to have taken responsibility for the attacks, citing the Karimov regime’s dictatorial tactics.¹⁹³ According to another source, the group took responsibility for the attacks not on April 12, but on April 3, by announcements on three websites. According to this source, the perpetrators cited imprisonment and suppression of individuals suspected of being Islamists by the Karimov regime as being the reason for the attack. But the source also notes that these claims were not backed by any “reliable source, organization, or person.”¹⁹⁴

A few months later, on July 30, 2004, three suicide bombings took place outside the US and Israeli embassies in Tashkent; within the week, the Karimov regime had rounded up eighty-five suspects, that included seventeen women, all of whom had supposedly trained to be suicide bombers. The Karimov regime blamed the Hizb ut-

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ariel Cohen, “Bush Administration Backs Uzbek Response to March Militants Attack,” *Eurasia Insight*, April 14, 2004. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav041404a.shtml> (accessed January 6, 2006).

¹⁹³ Ibid.

¹⁹⁴ The websites where the Islamic Jihad Group of Uzbekistan claimed responsibility were: Stop Dictator Karimov (<http://www.stopdictatorkarimov.com>), the Moscow based CentrAsia (<http://www.centrasia.com>), and finally, the Kavkaz Center website (<http://www.kavkazcenter.com>). This information is drawn from “Unknown “Islamic Jihad Group” Assumes Responsibility for Uzbekistan Attacks,” *Muslim Uzbekistan*, April 12, 2004. http://archive.muslimuzbekistan.com/eng/ennews/2004/04/ennews12042004_1.html (accessed January 6, 2006).

Tahrir, an accusation that was strongly denied by the London-based group.¹⁹⁵ Blame was again placed on the Hizb ut-Tahrir after the May 2005 suppression of demonstrators in Andijan province, where the government forces fired on demonstrators protesting against the imprisonment of people suspected to be Islamists. In a May 14 press conference, President Karimov suggested that the number of people killed was thirty,¹⁹⁶ although independent observers and eyewitnesses feared that the number could be much higher.

Is there a reason to believe that Hizb ut-Tahrir – an organization that has vehemently denied undertaking any act of violence – has taken up armed struggle in Central Asia? Has there been the emergence of new transnational organizations in Central Asia, such as Uzbekistan's Islamic Jihad Group? Are Taliban remnants, al-Qaeda sleeper cells, and the so-called Afghan Arabs running amuck and making a complete mockery of the multitude of wars on terror? One could argue that such has been the case. Afghanistan saw only a brief respite after the ouster of the Taliban regime. Today, it is certain that training camps are operational in Pakistan,¹⁹⁷ and possibly, in Afghanistan and elsewhere in Central Asia, too; the IMU is said to be active along the Afghan-Tajik border, and probably has a presence in Tajikistan as well. Meanwhile, the narcotics cultivation continues to flourish more each year.¹⁹⁸

What I find interesting about the present-day instability is that at a particular level the response of the Central Asian states, as well as China, Russia and the United States has been more similar than they would probably admit. Although China has been critical of US unilateral tendencies, and the United States has cautioned China that the anti-terror campaign should not be used to persecute minorities,¹⁹⁹ virtually all nation-states engaged in the "War on Terror" have bought into the US-generated discourse of a far-reaching transnational organization, al-Qaeda, that has provided the organizational and ideological imperatives to challenge state power through unleashing a global reign of terror. A just

¹⁹⁵ "Karimov believes Hizb-ut-Tahrir Behind Most Recent Tashkent Bombing," *Eurasia Insight*, August 2, 2004. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav080204.shtml> (accessed January 6, 2006).

¹⁹⁶ Gulnoza Saidazimova, "Uzbek President Blames Islamist Group for Unrest," *Eurasia Insight*, May 14, 2005. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/civilsociety/articles/pp051405.shtml> (accessed January 6, 2006).

¹⁹⁷ "Pakistan Strikes Militant Training Camp," *New York Times*, March 1, 2006.

¹⁹⁸ "Is the IMU Still a Threat to Regional Security," *Eurasia Insight*, January 24, 2004. http://eurasianet.net/departments/insight/articles/pp012404_pr.shtml (accessed January 31, 2004).

¹⁹⁹ "U.S., China Stand on Terrorism."

criticism levied against the US government after the September 11 attacks – that the government did not bother to ask why these acts of terrorism occurred in the first place – can and should be levied against China, Russia, and the Central Asian states too. This is not to condone such acts of violence in any way whatsoever, but to suggest that what gets labeled as terrorism is often a reaction to domestic or foreign policies, a fact that nation-states more often than not omit from the official discourse, since doing so would necessitate a rethinking of their individual policies and forms of governance, and also lead to a reevaluation of how power is exercised against those who oppose the state.

In this study, we explored some historical reasons for the marginalization of the Uighurs (Chapter One), and also saw that there were similar, though not identical, reasons for the marginalization of Tajik factions who then took up arms against the state during the protracted Tajik civil war (Chapter Two). But these reasons do not factor into the narratives generated by scholars and policy makers. During an interview with a scholar at the CASS, I was told that President Karimov was correct in cracking down in Uzbekistan, lest the country “became another Afghanistan.” As our discussion of the Mujahidin resistance to Soviet Occupation (1980s), the Tajik civil war (1992-1997), the IMU’s opposition to the Karimov regime (c. 1998-), and Uighur resistance to Chinese rule (c. 1991-) has demonstrated, at the state level there is often a conflation of nationalist/ethnic/regional grievances with a literalist interpretation, and militant manifestation of Sunni Islam. But besides the fact that fringe elements within the anti-state movements were motivated by puritanical and zealous interpretation, and possibility of implementation of Sunni Islamic doctrines, a large number of individuals in these movements were motivated by feelings of marginalization, discrimination, and despair that may have acted as a catalyst for their religious motivation.

Put in other words, the problem with most nation-states’ understanding of instability is that it stresses the absolute primacy of the state as it exists and disregards every other motivational factor except religious zeal or irrationality, as implied by discourses of rampant and senseless killing and destruction. Not surprisingly then, in a report on the first year of operation of the RATS that was released during the July 5, 2005, summit in Astana, transnational organizations such as al-Qaeda and the Hizb ut-

Tahrir were identified as the culprits behind regional instability.²⁰⁰ Similar to the declaration made during the establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001,²⁰¹ in 2005, the SCO member-states once again reaffirmed that there could be no ethnic, religious, or political justification whatsoever for any act of terrorism, separatism, or extremism.²⁰² What no head of state was willing to admit is that many of these movements challenged state power for reasons that had nothing to do with religion or without having links to self-proclaimed martyrs engaged in acts of violence. Such an admission would necessitate a change in state policy, and would consequently adversely effect the authority of those in power.

V. Prospects and Challenges for Cooperation in the SCO

While strategic cooperation was the cornerstone of Sino-Central Asian cooperation, following 2001, there was also increasing economic interdependence between China and the independent republics. The most promising aspect of Sino-Central Asian trade is the import of energy from Central Asia, which is going to play an important role in China's modernization. Before launching into a discussion on how China's energy cooperation with Central Asia evolved, let us review some trade figures for the years under consideration in this chapter.

Kazakhstan has remained China's primary trading partner during this time. In 2001, China's total trade with Kazakhstan was \$1.2 billion (\$320 million exports; \$960 million imports). Kyrgyzstan was a distant second, with bilateral trade valued at \$118 million (\$76 million exports; \$42 million imports), while trade with Uzbekistan was smaller still, totaling \$58.3 million (\$50.6 million exports; \$7.6 million imports). Bilateral trade with Tajikistan and Turkmenistan was much smaller during this time, with combined trade with these two countries under \$50 million.²⁰³ Bilateral trade figures for the following year, 2002, are as follows: Kazakhstan \$1.9 billion (\$600 million exports; \$1.3 billion imports), Kyrgyzstan \$200 million (\$146 million exports; \$55 million imports), and Uzbekistan \$131 million (\$104 million exports; \$27 million imports).

²⁰⁰ "Dokad soveta regionalnoy."

²⁰¹ "Shanghai Convention."

²⁰² "Kontseptsiya sotrudnichestva gosudarstv."

²⁰³ Zhonghua ... guoji tongji ju, *Zhongguo tongji nianjian 2001*, 619.

Combined trade with Tajikistan and Turkmenistan was under \$100 million.²⁰⁴ Figures from the next year, 2003, show a notable increase. Bilateral trade with Kazakhstan had grown to \$3.29 billion (\$1.5 billion exports; \$1.7 billion imports), Kyrgyzstan \$314 million (\$245 million exports; \$69 million imports), and Uzbekistan \$347 million (\$146 million exports; \$200 million imports). Combined trade with Tajikistan and Turkmenistan remained low, valued at approximately \$120 million.²⁰⁵ While these figures are illustrative of growing economic interdependence between China and Central Asia, note that a large portion of Sino-Central Asian trade consisted of imports from Kazakhstan, which were made up largely of oil that was being transported via rail. After 2001, China sought to increase this energy cooperation further.

In the previous chapter, we saw that when China acquired rights to the Uzen oilfield in Kazakhstan, it did so by outbidding Amoco, Texaco, and Unocol. Nonetheless, Chinese involvement in Central Asia's energy sector was limited, and the United States did not see itself competing with Chinese energy interests. The Chinese had kept a low profile in the region's energy sector; amongst other factors, the low cost of oil at the end of the century made the multibillion-dollar investment in the pipeline unfeasible. There had also been uncertainty as to how much oil the pipeline would be able to transport. At the time, there had been less costly ways for China to fulfill its energy needs. While there had been concern over China's increasing oil imports, I had suggested that following American reposturing after the September 11 attacks, concerns within China over energy security intensified. In the first part of this section, I discuss how China enhanced cooperation with the Central Asian republics as a result of strategic considerations following September 11, 2001, and its evolving energy needs. Sino-Kazakh energy cooperation marked an important step in the maturing of relations between China and Central Asia.

The US-led campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq played an important role in bringing China's security concerns into focus. Within China, many believed that the military campaigns were linked to the United States' energy strategy. According to Wu Lei this was true for military intervention in both Afghanistan and Iraq; furthermore,

²⁰⁴ Zhonghua ... guoji tongji ju, *Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2002, 661.

²⁰⁵ Zhonghua ... guoji tongji ju, *Zhongguo tongji nianjian* 2003, 710.

through intervention in the Middle East, the United States was also hoping to increase its control over Sa'udi oil.²⁰⁶ The argument here was that oil was a finite commodity, and the United States was consolidating its political stranglehold over energy-rich regions of the world.²⁰⁷ China's need to secure a reliable supply of energy was paramount, which according to Zhang Wenmu, was both a political and military challenge.²⁰⁸

Thus, the war in Iraq seriously effected China's energy strategy. Though China had imported only a small amount of oil from Iraq through the UN Food for Oil program, China was adversely effected by the rising cost of oil, which by the end of February 2003, had risen to over thirty-five dollars per barrel. It was a foregone conclusion that when war would break out in Iraq, the price of oil would escalate further.²⁰⁹ Since China was importing half of its oil from the Middle East, it was believed that China would not have the ability to cope with the disruption in oil supply.²¹⁰ As a result, by mid-2002, there was renewed interest in constructing an oil pipeline from Kazakhstan to Xinjiang. In my understanding, 2003 was a turning point for China, as it was during this year that China stepped up acquisition of energy, both in Central Asia, and further afield in countries such as Iran and Syria.

Though China had acquired access to oilfields in Kazakhstan in 1997, work on the project was slow to begin. As we discussed, this may have been due to the low price of oil through the end of the 1990s that made multibillion-dollar investments a dubious economic venture. But by 2002, the threat to energy security had become critical enough that building the pipeline from Kazakhstan to Xinjiang was an important issue during

²⁰⁶ Wu, "Fan kong zhanlue," 17-22.

²⁰⁷ Yet another recent development that has repercussions for China's energy security is increasing energy consumption in India. Despite the fact that both countries have recently increased their foreign investments, both have seemingly taken steps to avoid competition. Ziad Haider, "Oil Fuels Beijing's New Power Game," *YaleGlobal*, March 11, 2005. <http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=5411> (accessed April 7, 2006).

²⁰⁸ Zhang, "Zhongguo nengyuan anquan." 11-16.

²⁰⁹ "SASS Middle East Experts Discuss Economic Consequences for China of US-Iraq War," *Ta Kung Pao*, February 27, 2003. In FBIS-NES-2003-022. In addition to the effect that it would have on China's oil security, the possibility of a prolonged conflict in Iraq boded poorly for trade between China and the Middle East. Trade between China and the region had grown to seven billion dollars by 2002, with China exporting a large number of manufactured goods to the Middle East. Additionally, a large number of Chinese laborers sought employment in the Middle East, and there were fears for their safety.

²¹⁰ Tian, "2002 nian Zhongguo." 24-30.

Kazakh Vice-President Karim Masimov's visit to Beijing at the end of July.²¹¹ The issue was again on the agenda during the visit of President Nazarbaev to Beijing in December 2002. But despite the need to diversify its energy supply, an important hurdle was that China was requesting fifty million tons of oil per year, which was more than the total production in Kazakhstan at this time (in 2002, the country had produced forty-seven million tons, of which it had exported thirty-five million).²¹² Low levels of oil production in Kazakhstan did not provide an ideal investment opportunity for the Chinese, according to the 1997 agreement, China had agreed to finance the pipeline at a then estimated cost of three billion dollars.²¹³ One interesting point in these early negotiations concerns the volume of oil that the Chinese were requesting from Kazakhstan. In 2002, China had imported a total of eighty million tons of oil,²¹⁴ half of which came from the Middle East. Though Kazakhstan was unable to provide fifty million tons of oil as requested by China, by requesting this quantity, China sought to restructure its oil imports. This is indicative of two developments: first, a growing unease over importing oil from the Middle East, and second, a high degree of confidence in the sourcing of oil from Kazakhstan. We can safely conjecture that in 2002, Kazakhstan was a safer source from where to procure oil, perhaps also because the oil would be transported directly via a pipeline into Xinjiang, as opposed to transiting through a circuitous sea route. Both the political uncertainty in the Middle East, and the non-securable sea route from the region meant that as 2002 drew to a close, China was willing to make the investment in Kazakhstan's energy sector. The key was now whether Kazakhstan would be able to fulfill China's demand for oil in the coming years.

On June 3, 2003, China and Kazakhstan took an important step towards heightened energy cooperation when the CNPC and Kazakhstan's KazMunayGas signed agreements "on joint research into investments into the construction" of the oil

²¹¹ "Kazakhstan, China Discuss Cooperation on Central Asian Gas Pipeline," *ITAR-TASS*, June 24, 2002. In FBIS-SOV-2002-0624.

²¹² "HK Paper Reports Sino-Kazakhstan Oil Pipeline Likely to Replace Sino-Russian Oil Pipeline," *Ta Kung Pao*, September 20, 2003. In FBIS-CHI-2003-0920.

²¹³ "Kazakhstan not yet Ready to Implement Pipeline Projects to China," *Interfax*, February 27, 2003. In FBIS-CHI-2003-0227.

²¹⁴ "Kazakhstan, China Sign Agreement on Oil, Gas Cooperation," *Interfax*, June 3, 2003. In FBIS-SOV-2003-0603.

pipeline.²¹⁵ Equally important was an agreement signed between President Hu Jintao (2002-) and President Nazarbaev earlier the same day, where the two had agreed that bilateral energy cooperation had “strategic significance.”²¹⁶ The building of a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan through Kazakhstan to China was also discussed. Notably, President Hu’s visit to Astana, Kazakhstan, was during his first foreign trip as head of state. The following day, on June 4, it was announced that China’s Shengli oil company had signed an eighty million dollar deal with the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR) to develop an oilfield south of Baku that was said to have oil reserves of seven million barrels.²¹⁷ Two days later, on June 6, the CNPC announced that it had acquired the Kazakhstan government’s 25.12 percent share in the Kazakh oil company, Aktobemunaygas for \$150 million (China had already procured sixty percent of the oil company in 1997). In 2002, CNPC-Aktobemunaygas had produced 4.3 million tons of oil and production was expected to reach 5.2 million tons in 2003.²¹⁸ Later in the month, CNPC acquired thirty-five percent of the North Buzachi oilfield from the Sa’udi oil company Nimir Petroleum, eventually taking full control by purchasing the remaining shares from ChevronTexaco. In December of 2003, Sinopec bought fifty percent of three large blocks near the Tengiz oilfield in Kazakhstan.²¹⁹ In the summer of 2003, it was clear that China had intensified its investments in the Central Asian energy sector.

The first segment of the Sino-Kazakh pipeline, between Atyrau and Kenkiyak in northwestern Kazakhstan, was completed in the first half of 2003, at which time the annual delivery capacity of the pipeline was said to be six million tons (which was expected to increase to nine million tons by 2004). The second stage of construction had begun in May 2003, which extended the pipeline up to Alashankou on the Kazakhstan-Chinese border. This increased the delivery capacity of the pipeline to between ten and

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ “Text of Hu Jintao-Nazarbayev.”

²¹⁷ Ted Weihman, “China Making Diplomatic Push in Central Asia,” *Eurasia Insight*, June 9, 2003. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav060903.shtml> (accessed December 23, 2005).

²¹⁸ “Kazakhstan’s President Suggests Speeding Up China Pipeline Construction,” *Interfax*, June 3, 2003. In FBIS-SOV-2003-0603; and Ted Weihman, “China Making Diplomatic Push in Central Asia,” *Eurasia Insight*, June 9, 2003. <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav060903.shtml> (accessed December 23, 2005).

²¹⁹ Ibragim Alibekov, “China Steps Up Presence in Kazakhstan Oilfields,” *Eurasia Insight*, January 21, 2004. http://eurasianet.net/departments/business/articles/eav012104_pr.shtml (January 28, 2004).

twenty million tons, with an eventual aim of increasing annual delivery capacity to fifty million tons.²²⁰

The project took on renewed urgency in September 2003, when it became highly likely that Russia would renege on an agreement by which it would have supplied Siberian oil to Daqing in northeast China. The agreement between the Russian oil company Yukos and the CNPC had been that Russia would supply China annually with a substantial thirty million tons of oil.²²¹ By June 2002, the project had been all but finalized. According to one report, China agreed to fund up to \$1.3 billion of the \$2.4 billion project.²²² But the project never got off the ground. Besides aggressive maneuvering by Japan, which jeopardized the proposed Siberia-China pipeline,²²³ Yukos was marred with scandal with its formal head Mikhail Khordorskovsky jailed on charges of tax evasion and fraud.²²⁴ The proposed pipeline had been a major project, which if implemented, would have provided a substantial percentage of China's growing energy needs. But as Wang Yeqi had argued, Russia provided a difficult investment environment for foreign oil companies. Since 1991, over a hundred foreign companies had expressed interest in production sharing in the country; of these, only three projects actually got

²²⁰ "Kazakhstan's President Suggests Speeding Up China Pipeline Construction," *Interfax*, June 3, 2003. In FBIS-SOV-2003-0603; and "HK Paper Reports Sino-Kazakhstan Oil Pipeline Likely to Replace Sino-Russian Oil Pipeline," *Ta Kung Pao*, September 20, 2003. In FBIS-CHI-2003-0920.

²²¹ John Helmer, "Dances with Bears: Oil to China is a Race Against Time," *Asia Times*, October 25, 2002. http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/DJ25Ag01.html (accessed April 7, 2006).

²²² Sergei Blagov, "Russia, China eye pan-Asian Oil Bridge," *Asia Times*, June 26, 2002.

<http://www.atimes.com/c-asia/DF26Ag02.html> (accessed January 21, 2004).

²²³ "HK Paper Reports Sino-Kazakhstan Oil Pipeline Likely to Replace Sino-Russian Oil Pipeline," *Ta Kung Pao*, September 20, 2003. In FBIS-CHI-2003-0920. One reason for Russia's wavering was because of Japan's interest in Siberia's energy reserves. Not only was Japan willing to extend financial assistance to Russia if Russia built a pipeline to Japan first, but it was also willing to foot the bill for exploration and development of new oil fields. In addition, earlier, Japan had also expressed willingness to foot the entire cost of five billion dollars that would be incurred in building the four thousand kilometer pipeline. China has always maintained that oil reserves in Siberia are not enough to supply both Japan and China.

²²⁴ According to some observers, the arrest of Mikhail Khordorsky took place because of his opposition to President Putin. The Council of Europe found that "the circumstances surrounding the arrest and prosecution of the leading Yukos executives strongly suggest that they are a clear case of non-conformity with the rule of law and that these executives were – in violation of the principle of equality before the law – arbitrarily singled out by the authorities," and also that "the allegedly abusive practices used by Yukos to minimise taxes were also used by other oil and natural resource companies operating in the Russian Federation, which have not been subjected to a similar tax reassessment, or its forced execution, and whose leading executives have not been criminally prosecuted." Council of Europe, "Resolution 1418." The charges against Yukos executives were followed by an attempt at the renationalization of Russia's oil industry, as the state-owned oil company Rosneft bought out key units of Yukos. "Putin Backs State Grab for Yukos," *BBC News*, December 23, 2004. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4120339.stm> (accessed April 13, 2006).

implemented. In addition, there was excessive bureaucracy, taxation, and numerous legal issues, creating obstacles for foreign investors. According to Wang, the China-Russia oil pipeline had been studied for nine years.²²⁵

With the import of oil from Russia appearing unlikely, importing oil from Kazakhstan became China's best bet for securing a reliable source of oil. By early 2004, it was all but certain that Russia would not be exporting oil to China, even though the Chinese had not received official confirmation to this end.²²⁶ Given the large quantities of oil that the Chinese government sought to import from Kazakhstan, it was clear that China wanted to rely on Kazakhstan for a large portion, if not the majority, of its future oil imports, and also suggested a high degree of investor confidence.

At the same time, it is also important to note the emergence of another important trend within the country, which was the increasing development of natural gas as a source of energy. As we noted previously, China's consumption of natural gas as a percentage of its total energy consumption was low. But there were good reasons to increase natural gas consumption. China possessed substantial quantities of natural gas, particularly in the west; from the mid-1990s onwards, there had been a steady investment in this sector, which intensified after 2000. In June 2002, an ambitious project to connect the Ordos Basin and Tarim's gas fields with the Shanghai municipality, Jiangsu and Zhejiang in the Yangtze River Delta, as well as Henan and Anhui, via a four thousand kilometer pipeline, was initiated.²²⁷ The project was led by PetroChina and the total cost was projected at \$8.5 billion; Shell, Exxon-Mobil, and Gazprom each had a fifteen percent share in the project. Smaller shares were also given to China Light and Power, Hong Kong and China Gas, and Sroytransgas. Of the total investment, \$3.2 billion was slated for developing two oilfields, one in the Ordos Basin, and the other in the Tarim, with the remaining \$5.2 billion earmarked for pipeline construction.²²⁸ According to Philip Andrews-Speed there

²²⁵ Wang, "Waiguo shiyou gongsi," 34-36.

²²⁶ Francis Markus, "China Fears Over Siberia Pipeline, *BBC News*, February 24, 2004. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/3516129.stm> (accessed February 25, 2004).

²²⁷ "West-east Gas Pipeline Sees to Annually supply 20 bln Cubic Meters for 30 Years," *People's Daily*, February 4, 2004. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200402/04/print20040204_133893.html (accessed February 2, 2004).

²²⁸ Andrews-Speed, *Energy Policy*, 126-27. Another source puts the cost of the pipeline much higher, at \$24.1 billion. See "West-East Pipeline Begins Supplying Gas to Shanghai," *People's Daily*, January 2,

were “official announcements” that the two regions could have proven reserves of up to two trillion cubic meters, though he does not indicate his sources.²²⁹ The first phase of the project was completed on January 1, 2004, when the pipeline began supplying 500,000 cubic meters of gas from Jingbian in Shaanxi province to Shanghai.²³⁰

There was also a security dimension behind the development of China’s natural gas reserves: as Shan Weiguo has argued, consumption of imported oil was not risk free. This was largely because of the dominant position of the United States within the international oil industry. Not only did the United States control much of the oil markets, but it also controlled most of the resources and technology. Furthermore, most of the oil producing countries were politically unstable. In order to decrease over-reliance on oil, Shan proposed that the PRC should develop natural gas as an alternative to oil.²³¹ Yet another reason for developing the country’s natural gas reserves was the rising cost of oil, and China’s inability to control the international price of oil.

In another step to enhance energy security, in 2004, China began establishing a seventy to seventy-five day strategic petroleum reserve in four locations south of Shanghai at a cost of \$725 million.²³² The heightened urgency was probably due to a very sharp rise in China’s oil imports in 2003, which had risen 31.3 percent over 2002. This had been the result of China’s rapidly growing economy, (which had grown by 9.1 percent in the previous year), and a forty percent increase in motor-vehicle production over the previous year.²³³ Although it is difficult to gauge the extent to which China’s entry into WTO put additional demands on China’s energy consumption, as we discussed, analysts within China had warned that joining the WTO would increase energy consumption. According to a *People’s Daily* article on January 9, 2004, “relevant ministries” were lobbying the State Council to invest ten billion dollars to ensure that by 2005, fifty percent of China’s oil imports would be carried in Chinese oil tankers, which

2004. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200401/02/print20040102_131713.html (accessed January 8, 2004).

²²⁹ Andrews-Speed, *Energy Policy*, 122.

²³⁰ “West-East Pipeline Begins Supplying Gas to Shanghai,” *People’s Daily*, January 2, 2004. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200401/02/print20040102_131713.html (accessed January 8, 2004).

²³¹ Shan, “Shi lun shiyou.” 5-11.

²³² Michael Mackey, “China Setting Up Strategic Oil Reserve,” *Asia Times*, February 7, 2004.

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/FB07Ad02.html> (accessed April 7, 2006).

²³³ “China’s Oil Imports Exceeds 100 million tons in 2003,” *People’s Daily*, February 8, 2004. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200402/08/print20040208_134232.html (accessed February 8, 2004).

were to be built in the country (till 2003, only ten percent of China's oil imports were transported by its own oil tankers). As an official in the Ministry of Communication argued: "[A]ll [agree] that the issue is beyond mere economic concern, it is one of national security."²³⁴ It is worth bearing in mind that in 2004, China replaced Japan as the second largest consumer of oil after the United States.²³⁵

With the construction of the Kazakhstan-China pipeline, and the stepping up of measures to guarantee energy security, in 2004, China continued its attempts to diversify its energy sourcing and upgrade its energy infrastructure. The most noteworthy development of the year took place in November 2004, when Iran and China signed a memorandum of understanding worth seventy billion dollars for long-term energy cooperation. This was the largest energy agreement ever negotiated by a Chinese oil company.²³⁶ Specifically, according to the terms of the agreement, Iran would sell ten million tons of natural gas to China annually, (Iran was already the second largest supplier of oil to China), and, Chinese companies would explore and develop the Yadavaran oil field.²³⁷

While actual Sino-Iranian energy cooperation is peripheral to this study, what is important is that the United States attempted to dissuade Sinopec from investing in Iran, to which a senior official in Sinopec simply stated that "Sinopec pays no attention to the US request."²³⁸ According to a *People's Daily* article, there was a conscientious attempt by Sa'udi Arabia and Iran to stop American companies from monopolizing oil exploration and production through the creation of a multi-polar oil structure.²³⁹ China was seen to play an important role in this process; by investing in the Middle East and Central Asia, Chinese companies were entering markets that had hitherto been dominated either by Western or by national oil companies. Although at this stage their investments

²³⁴ "China to Increase Oil-Supply Security," *People's Daily*, January 9, 2004.

http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200401/09/print20040109_132208.html (accessed January 15, 2004).

²³⁵ "IEA: China will be the 2nd biggest oil consumer in 2004," *People's Daily*, January 13, 2004.

http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200401/13/print20040113_132491.html (accessed January 19, 2004).

²³⁶ F. William Engdahl, "China Lays Down Gauntlet in Energy War," *Asia Times*, December 2005

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/GL21Ad01.html> (accessed December 20, 2005).

²³⁷ "China, Iran Sign Three Oil Cooperation Accords," *Asia Times*, November 2, 2004.

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/FK02Ad05.html> (accessed April 8, 2006).

²³⁸ "US Dissuades Sinopec From Bidding in Iranian Oil-field – China/theUS/Iran, an Energy Game," *People's Daily*, February 6, 2004. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200402/06/print20040206_134117.html (February 12, 2004).

²³⁹ *Ibid.*

were not substantial enough to threaten US interests, Chinese investments did have the potential to notably revamp long established bilateral energy relations.²⁴⁰ The United States was not oblivious to the rapid development of energy projects by Chinese companies abroad, including those in Central Asia. At least one brazen analysis by former senior China analyst of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Thomas Woodrow, saw China seeking to increase its influence in Central Asia and the Middle East through Pakistan and Iran respectively. Supposedly, the “New Great Game” was all about oil. Consider:

We don’t want their [Central Asian] land, just their oil. We also don’t care if the respective leaders rename all months of the year, or fowl of the earth and fish of the sea, after their extended families, or even declare themselves to be gods. After all, it will be the nation that wins the New Great Game that will be the true Rome. As long as one of these leaders doesn’t fashion himself a new Tamerlane and sets out as a pyramid builder, the United States will help protect the oil routes and look the other way. In the modern world, oil is thicker than blood.²⁴¹

Giving voice to China’s worst fears, Woodrow comes close to suggesting that conflict over oil will be the driving factor in a no-holds-bar struggle over energy, which was aimed, in part at the containment of Chinese investments in the Middle East and Central Asia’s energy sector. Consider his ominous conclusion: “September-11 presented itself as a marvelous opportunity to project U.S. military and political power. It is thus more accurate to see events in Afghanistan and Iraq as the first skirmishes of the New Great Game, which promises to the eventual victor bragging rights for the 21st century. Let the game begin.”²⁴²

After 2001, the United States sought a greater role in Kazakhstan’s energy sector, and sometimes attempted to do so through dubious means. In the summer of 2005, some

²⁴⁰ Simon Romero, “China Emerging as U.S. Rival for Canada’s Oil,” *New York Times*, December 23, 2004. Another example closer to the United States was the Chinese attempt to invest up to \$2 billion in half a dozen projects in Canada, which has been the largest source of imported oil for the United States.

²⁴¹ Thomas Woodrow, “The New Great Game,” *China Brief* 3, no. 11 (February 11, 2003). http://www.jamestown.org/print_friendly.php?volume_id=19&issue_id=668&article_id=4706 (accessed December 11, 2005).

²⁴² Ibid.

of the largest US oil companies, Mobil, Amoco, Texaco, and Phillips Petroleum were accused of bribing two “top Kazakh officials” – according to one source, President Nazarbaev and former Prime Minister Nurlan Balgimbayev – to the tune of seventy-eight million dollars. These bribes were apparently for securing choice oilfields for the US companies. ExxonMobil has denied these charges. What is also noteworthy is the increase in bilateral aid to Kazakhstan after September 11, 2001, which increased from \$75.5 million to \$90 million (including \$41.6 million for “security and law enforcement”).²⁴³ While it is likely that the details of kickbacks will never be known, what is noteworthy is the vast amount of money circulating in the region earmarked for winning allies and gaining concessions. As we discussed in Chapter Three, US oil companies often sought to enhance American influence in the region; sometimes the opposite was also true, as the United States threw its diplomatic efforts in securing concessions for its oil companies.

Part of the new US strategy was based on denying China, to the greatest extent possible, access to the region’s energy reserves. In recent years, the Kashagan oilfield in the Caspian region has been touted as having energy reserves that exceed those in the North Sea.²⁴⁴ If the recent history of energy exploration in the Caspian region has taught us anything, it is that initial industry estimates are sometimes hyperbolic and need to be treated with skepticism. More to the point, what is interesting is that in December 2004, China’s attempt to buy a sixteen percent share in the Kashagan Consortium was blocked by another consortium member: ExxonMobil. Although I can scarcely agree with their analysis, US analysts such as the above Thomas Woodrow, or Stephen Blank are correct insofar as they depict US policy in the region as enacting a zero-sum game. Put in other words, I am left with little doubt that the Bush administration does see itself as playing out a “New Great Game,” which is based on securing its national interests.

In the summer of 2005, the game got played a little too close to home when the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC) placed an \$18.5 billion bid to buy Unocal, outbidding Chevron that had placed a bid for \$16.6 billion. The majority of

²⁴³ “Kazakh Bribery Case Threatens to Throw Harsh Spotlight on Oil Industry,” *Alexander’s Gas and Oil Connection*, 8 no. 11 (June 3, 2003). <http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/company/cnc32393.htm> (accessed December 25, 2005).

²⁴⁴ F. William Engdahl, “China Lays Down Gauntlet in Energy War,” *op. cit.*

Unocal's assets were in Asia, specifically in Thailand, Indonesia, and in the Caspian region and were said to total 1.75 billion barrels of oil; purchase of Unocal would boost CNOOC's reserves by eighty percent. The deal raised alarm in Washington, with the United States Congress eventually voting 398 to 15 in favor of blocking the deal.²⁴⁵ While some energy specialists in the United States argued that Chinese ownership of the company would not threaten US national security,²⁴⁶ others believed that the bid was threatening because China would gain the technology to become "a major player in international energy," a scenario that needed to be blocked on "national security grounds."²⁴⁷ Though the deal did not go through, on August 24, 2005, China reached a four billion dollar deal to buy the Canadian oil company PetroKazakhstan, which produces 150,000 barrels of oil a day, leading a *Washington Times* editorial to note: "In the competition for energy assets and regional influence ... Washington and Beijing appear to be rivals."²⁴⁸

Finally, in what was a landmark event, on December 15, 2005, the CNPC inaugurated the 962-kilometer long pipeline from Kazakhstan to northwestern China that will soon increase China's oil imports from Kazakhstan from 25,000 barrels per day, to a million barrels per day, constituting nearly fifteen percent of China's annual oil imports. Next, Chinese oil companies seek to consolidate their investments in the region to further increase imports to China. According to one US-based analyst, the Sino-Kazakh pipeline poses a setback to BTC oil pipeline, as China is now in a position to access oil from Tengiz and the Kashagan, oilfields that had been earmarked for supplying the BTC pipeline.²⁴⁹ But while some within the United States have viewed recent Chinese acquisitions in the region with concern, China's official press was surprisingly low-key about the recent pipeline, with a *People's Daily* survey of Chinese diplomacy in the year 2005 mentioning the opening of the pipeline only in passing.²⁵⁰ This is because the

²⁴⁵ "US Mulls Blocking China's Unocol Bid," *Taipei Times*, July 4, 2005, 11.

²⁴⁶ Paul Blustein, "Many Oil Experts Unconcerned Over China Unocal Bid," *Washington Post*, July 1, 2005.

²⁴⁷ "US Mulls Blocking China's Unocol Bid," op. cit.

²⁴⁸ "China in Central Asia," *The Washington Times*, August 24, 2005.

²⁴⁹ F. William Engdahl, "China Lays Down Gauntlet in Energy War," op. cit.

²⁵⁰ The article in question stated: "The completion and opening of the China-Kazakhstan pipelines means the shaping up of a new situation of energy cooperation between China and Central Asia," See "China's Good-neighborly Diplomacy Sees Great Fruits," *People's Daily*, December 29, 2005. http://english.people.com.cn/200512/28/print20051228_231359.html (accessed December 29, 2005).

inauguration of the pipeline is one of many important developments that have recently taken place within China's energy sector. These include: discoveries of new offshore oil reserves in the Bohai Gulf,²⁵¹ discovery of another oil and gas reef in the Taklamakan desert,²⁵² the planning of a second pipeline from Xinjiang to Guangdong, which could also pump gas imported from Kazakhstan and Russia,²⁵³ and in partnership with India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, acquisition of Petro-Canada's oil assets in Syria.²⁵⁴ Cooperation with India is particularly important, as it is indicative of a new strategic cooperation between the former adversaries.²⁵⁵ Recently, there has also been cooperation between Venezuela and China, in an attempt to decrease Venezuela's dependency on the United States' markets.²⁵⁶ In addition, there has been an effort to increase consumption of natural gas,²⁵⁷ as well as renewable energy, (from seven percent presently, to fifteen percent of total energy use by 2020), and an effort to prevent the percentage of oil of total energy consumption from increasing further.²⁵⁸ In another important development, *Xinhua* recently announced that construction of the Three Gorges Dam, which began in 1998, is nearing completion.²⁵⁹ These recent developments suggest that China's energy strategy has been multifaceted. While Central Asian energy plays an important role within the broadening of China's energy consumption, acquisition of energy from the

²⁵¹ "New Oil Reserve Discovered in Bohain Bay," *People's Daily*, December 1, 2005.

http://english.people.com.cn/200512/01/print20051201_224822.html (accessed December 1, 2005). The new oilfield is said to hold as much as 200 million cubic meters of oil, thus making the Bohai Gulf the third largest oilfield.

²⁵² "New Oil and Gas field with Enormous Reserve Found in Xinjiang," *People's Daily*, December 13, 2005. http://english.people.com.cn/200512/13/print20051213_227724.html (accessed December 13, 2005). The oilfield is reported to possess up to a hundred million tons of oil and gas.

²⁵³ "China Plans 2nd Natural Gas Pipeline," *People's Daily*, December 21, 2005. http://english.people.com.cn/200512/21/print20051221_229755.html (accessed December 21, 2005). The second pipeline, still in its planning stage, will probably require an investment larger than the first West-East pipeline, and will require imported gas as the Tarim's reserves are insufficient to supply both the Yangtze and Pearl River Delta.

²⁵⁴ "CNPC, India's ONGC Wins Bid for Syrian Assets of Petro-Canada," *People's Daily*, December 22, 2005. http://english.people.com.cn/200512/22/print20051222_229914.html (accessed December 22, 2005).

²⁵⁵ Ziad Haider, "Oil Fuels Beijing's New Power Game," op. cit.

²⁵⁶ Gregory Wilpert, "Venezuela Offers China Greater Access to Oil to Reduce Dependency on US Market," *Energy Bulletin*, December 28, 2004. <http://www.energybulletin.net/3779.html> (accessed April 7, 2006).

²⁵⁷ Wang and Xing, "Cong guandao fazhan," 43-45.

²⁵⁸ "China Vows to Reduce Reliance on Oil Amid Soaring Prices and Increasing Import," *People's Daily*, December 29, 2005. http://english.people.com.cn/200512/29/print20051229_231492.html (accessed December 29, 2005).

²⁵⁹ "Dam of Three Gorges Project Nears Completion," *Xinhua*, March 30, 2006. http://news3.xinhuanet.com/english/2006-03/30/content_4365420.htm (accessed April 7, 2006).

region is part of a process of developing China's energy industry for the strategic and modernization challenges of the twenty-first century.

While the completion of the oil pipeline between China and Kazakhstan marked a high point in China's economic and strategic cooperation, in other aspects of its relations with Central Asia, China continued to be adversely affected by proximity to the region. The burgeoning trade in narcotics from Afghanistan continued to threaten the greater Central Asian region. Besides Afghanistan, narcotics production in Tajikistan, that accounted for more than eighty percent of the narcotics produced in Central Asia, also threatened the region. A 2002 report by the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (UNODCCP) painted a bleak picture, noting that opium cultivation in Afghanistan continued to increase even after the instatement of Hamid Karzai's regime.²⁶⁰ This has been a notable failure of the so-called "national government."

As we discussed earlier, during the anti-Soviet struggle, the majority of the narcotics produced in Afghanistan had been smuggled through Pakistan, though Iran also provided an export route from the region. After the independence of Central Asia, the bulk of narcotics were now exported out of this region. Drug seizure data suggests that the shift in routes took place after 1995. In 1995, three percent of narcotic seizures in Central Asia were Afghan-processed heroin. In the year 2000, this number had jumped to seventy-four percent, reaching ninety percent in 2001. Of the heroin seizures, eighty percent were in Tajikistan.²⁶¹ In addition, heroin seizures in Central Asia rose sharply as a percentage of total heroin seizures in the region surrounding Afghanistan, from 0.1 percent in 1994/1995, to thirteen percent in 2000, and twenty-three percent in 2001. Two conclusions can safely be drawn from this data. First, a larger amount of opium was being processed into heroin in Afghanistan,²⁶² which is corroborated by the UNODCCP report. Second, while there are obvious methodological problems in extrapolating from

²⁶⁰ UNODCCP, "Illicit Drug Situation." 3-4. In 1999, an estimated 3.6 hectares were under poppy cultivation in Tajikistan compared to 90,583 hectares in Afghanistan at the same time. As the UNODCCP report notes, there are a number of reasons why Central Asia provides favorable conditions for opium cultivation: these include, pre-existing knowledge of poppy cultivation, close ethnic ties between poppy producing regions, and lack of control of the central government in remote parts of the country.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 6.

²⁶² Evidence for the increase in manufacturing of heroin in Afghanistan comes partly from data that suggests an increasing number of chemicals used for heroin production, such as acetic anhydride that were being smuggled into Afghanistan from Central Asia. Ibid. 13-14.

the above data, I do believe that the information strongly suggests that after 1995, Central Asia became an important new export route of narcotics from Afghanistan.

Narcotic production in Afghanistan has risen continuously. According to data released at the end of 2002, in that year, 3,400 tons of opium were produced, matching production levels in 1994, and the second highest amount after the bumper harvest of 1999.²⁶³

Narcotic production continued unabated in the following year, 2003, with some evidence suggesting that the area under cultivation had increased to include areas not previously cultivated by narcotics.²⁶⁴ Recall that it was during the 2003 summit that the SCO heads of state had made their strongest denunciation of Afghan opium production, a clear indication that not only had the problem not been eliminated, but that production had actually increased. During an international security conference held in Munich in February 2004, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov chastised NATO for not doing enough to stem the drug trade, pointing out that Afghanistan was now producing nine times more narcotics as it had been under the Taliban. Ivanov suggested that NATO troops allowed drug peddling to ensure the loyalty of the regional warlords. NATO's counterargument was that its mandate in Afghanistan was limited to peacekeeping, and countries such as Germany, (that had troops in Afghanistan at the time), were reluctant to get involved in the fight against drugs.²⁶⁵

The following year, 2004, saw a dramatic increase in opium cultivation with an additional sixty-four percent of arable land brought under opium cultivation. In 2004, opium cultivation spread to every province of the country, and Afghan opium accounted for eighty-seven percent of the world's opium. Corroborating the statement made by SCO heads of state during the May 2003 conference in Moscow, the United Nation's Drug Control Program (UNDCP) stated that there were indications that remnants of al-Qaeda and the Taliban regime were benefiting from the booming drug trade. Antonio Maria

²⁶³ "Afghan Opium Trade on a High," *Asia Times*, October 31, 2002. http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/DJ31Ag02.html (accessed April 8, 2006).

²⁶⁴ "Kabul Seeks World Help in Stemming Drug Trade," *Dawn*, February 10, 2004. <http://www.dawn.com/2004/02/10intl1.htm> (accessed February 10, 2004).

²⁶⁵ "Nato ignoring Afghan drug trade, says Moscow," *Dawn*, February 8, 2004. <http://www.dawn.com/2004/02/08/intl1.htm> (accessed February 8, 2004).

Costa, director of the UNODCCP, warned that there was now a danger that “Afghanistan might degenerate into a narco-state.”²⁶⁶

Despite assurances by President Karzai that Afghanistan’s opium cultivation will be eradicated within the next two years,²⁶⁷ there is presently little indication that the Karzai administration will be able to carry out this promise. With most of the opiates destined for European markets, we need to explore how this effects China’s security concerns. According to my understanding, the continued drug trade in Afghanistan effects China at three levels. First, through the continuation of the drug trade, a steady source of funding for transnational organizations continues to exist in the region. While we do not have the information to make concrete claims to argue that the present unrest in southern Afghanistan is being led by Taliban or al-Qaeda remnants who are financing their operation through the narcotics trade, it can be inferred that the drug trade in Afghanistan is sustaining networks within Afghanistan that have a transnational reach.²⁶⁸ In addition, we can safely deduce that these organizations are not only reasonably well-organized but have counterparts in neighboring countries, be it Iran, Pakistan, or the Central Asian republics.²⁶⁹ The continued existence of these transnational networks denies the possibility of a peaceful Afghanistan, and thus, the present Afghan administration has both failed to put into place mechanisms that can stabilize the region, and has also failed to provide a viable alternative to poppy cultivation.²⁷⁰

The second destabilizing aspect of the narcotics trade is that opium is cultivated in Afghanistan for export. Given Afghanistan’s porous mountain and desert borders with Central Asia, and the presence of networks that can be tapped into within Central Asia, Central Asia provides a good option for drug runners to export the opiates out of the region. Conversely, the continuation of the import of narcotics from Afghanistan into

²⁶⁶ Carlotta Gal, “Afghan Poppy Growing Reaches Record Level, U.N. Says,” *New York Times*, November 19, 2004.

²⁶⁷ Nat Ives, “Karzai Plans to Destroy Poppy Fields in 2 Years,” *New York Times*, December 13, 2004.

²⁶⁸ UNODC, “Central Asia.”

²⁶⁹ Carlotta Gall, “Armed and Elusive, Afghan Drug Dealers Roam Free,” *New York Times*, January 2, 2005. While some drug smuggling continues to utilize beasts of burden that first made their mark on the Silk Road more than two thousand years ago, such as camels, there are also reports of convoys of ten to twenty pickup trucks and jeeps being used in single convoys, pointing to not only large volumes, but to a high degree of organization, and confidence that the narcotics will not be intercepted.

²⁷⁰ Fida Hussain, “Afghanistan Rebuilding Hinges on Poppy,” *Dawn*, January 25, 2004. <http://www.dawn.com/2004/01/25/int16.htm> (accessed January 31, 2004).

Central Asia implies the presence of local trafficking networks that are capable of transporting these narcotics to Russia, and then onto markets in Europe. Most of the profit in the drug trade comes from trafficking, not cultivation.²⁷¹ To put this in perspective, consider that a kilogram of heroin costs seven to ten thousand dollars along the Afghan-Tajik border, a hundred and fifty thousand dollars in Moscow, and commands a street price of two hundred thousand dollars in London or New York.²⁷² Using data from Bolivia and Pakistan, the UNDCP estimated that ninety percent of the “value added” in the drug trade came from trafficking, while the remaining ten percent was divided between processors, farmers, and traders.²⁷³ While the methodology is far from perfect, we can nonetheless infer that the income generated by drug traffickers in Central Asia and Russia far exceeds the income generated by farmers, producers, and petty merchants in Afghanistan.

It is noteworthy that while SCO member-states chide Afghanistan for flooding the region with narcotics, there is no discussion on the transport of narcotics out of Central Asia to Russia and Europe. Afghanistan is the starting point for the narcotics; once the narcotics cross into Central Asia, it is no longer only Afghanistan that is contributing to regional insecurity. One scarcely imagines Pashtoon truck drivers racing their drug-laden Land Cruisers all the way to Western European metropolises. The point is this: as long as the drug trade in Afghanistan continues, criminal transnational networks will exist in Central Asia. Corruption in Central Asia continues to be a big problem, and it is highly probable that many within the government benefit from the drug trade.²⁷⁴ Thus, as long as the drug trade continues, its destabilizing effect on the greater Central Asian region will also continue.

Lastly, is the issue of Afghan narcotics in Xinjiang. As has been established, the large majority of heroin that enters China is produced in the so called “Golden Triangle,” that is, Burma, Thailand, and Laos. Due to the lack of substantial data from the PRC, it hard to say what percentage of Afghan opiates make up the total narcotics smuggled into

²⁷¹ Beyrer, “HIV Infection Rates.”

²⁷² Olcott and Udalova, “Drug Trafficking,” 13.

²⁷³ UNODC, “World Drug Report,” 131.

²⁷⁴ The 2003 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index ranked Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan at 100, Kyrgyzstan at 118, and Tajikistan at 124 out of 133 countries. Turkmenistan was not ranked. See UNODC, “Central Asia.”

the country. One recent study suggests that twenty percent of all opiates consumed in China originate in Afghanistan, though there is little hard evidence to back this claim.²⁷⁵ In all likelihood, most, if not all heroin consumed in Xinjiang comes from Southeast Asia.²⁷⁶

Whatever the exact breakdown of the heroin smuggled into Xinjiang may be, it is clear that HIV/AIDS infection in Xinjiang is a growing problem. So far, the large majority of HIV/AIDS infection in Xinjiang appears to be spread through intravenous drug use, and less through sexual contact. According to one study produced in 2002, Xinjiang had the second highest rate of infection after Yunnan;²⁷⁷ a later (2004) study put the HIV/AIDS rates as being higher than Yunnan.²⁷⁸ C. Beyrer's hypothesis, that there is a correlation between trafficking and the spread of HIV/AIDS, suggests the presence of an entry route of narcotics into Xinjiang.²⁷⁹ This would also imply that a substantial amount of heroin consumed in Xinjiang is not of Burmese, but Afghan origin. Unfortunately, at the present moment we simply do not have the data to substantiate these claims, though the fact that narcotics are being brought into Xinjiang through its overland borders is most certainly true.²⁸⁰ Though drug trafficking has been a problem within Xinjiang, my understanding is that the actual destabilizing aspect of this trade was that it contributed to instability in Xinjiang.

Conclusion

On July 5, 2005, the SCO asked the United States for a timetable for withdrawing its military from Central Asia.²⁸¹ The request was made following US criticism over Uzbekistan's suppression of the May 13, 2005, Andijan uprising, and its insistence on an internal inquiry into the events. President Karimov fired back saying that the United

²⁷⁵ Townsend, "China and Afghan Opiates."

²⁷⁶ Rudelson and Jankowiak, "Acculturation and Resistance," 318; and Townsend, "China and Afghan Opiates." Rudelson and Jankowiak suggest that the heroin consumed in Xinjiang comes from Myanmar though they fail to provide any evidence to substantiate their claim, whereas Townsend suggests that the opiates consumed in the region are from both Afghanistan and southeast Asia.

²⁷⁷ Beyrer, "HIV Infection Rates."

²⁷⁸ Rudelson and Jankowiak, "Acculturation and Resistance," 318

²⁷⁹ Beyrer, "HIV Infection Rates."

²⁸⁰ In conversations with Pakistani shuttle traders in 2003, who frequently traveled to Xinjiang, the traders complained of thorough body searches, and claimed to have been witness to at least one occasion where PRC border security found heroin on the person of one woman.

²⁸¹ "Declaration by the Heads of the Member-States," (Astana).

States had “far reaching geopolitical plans, the final aim of which is to change the balance of power and dominate the Central Asian region.”²⁸² President Karimov’s first visit abroad at the end of May was to China, shortly after which Uzbekistan gave the United States six months to withdraw its troops from the country. With the traditionally close relations between the United States and Uzbekistan soured, and China playing an increasingly prominent role in the region, was it safe to say that China’s moment in Central Asia had come?

It is tempting to suggest that such was the case. In this chapter we saw the development of two important trends with reference to China’s security interests in Central Asia. First was the development of a discourse that sought to explain unrest in Xinjiang as being sustained, if not instigated by the instability in Afghanistan. To me it appears as though the Chinese discourse was strongly influenced by the discourse on transnational terrorism generated within the United States following the September 11 attacks. My reason for believing so, is the stark difference between the security discourse as it prevailed in China before and after September 11, 2001. While this study has indicated that instability in Afghanistan had a destabilizing effect on the region since the early 1990s, the role of Afghanistan-based transnational organizations were largely absent from the state discourse in the late 1990s. The adoption of the US-generated discourse was probably considered necessary if China wanted to play an assertive role in matters of regional security.

The other notable trend was the strengthening of the SCO as an institution that could meaningfully address security concerns in the greater Central Asian region. After the attacks of September 11, the United States led-armada brought some of the most sophisticated war machinery the world has known to deliver retribution both to the transnational terrorist organizations based in the greater Central Asian region, and those who harbored them. But despite the fact that the United States sought a long-term strategic presence in the region, this presence was conditional on the ability of the US-led forces to exert overwhelming military power, and bilateral military alliances that turned out to be short-term. We saw this with regard to the Uzbek decision requesting the Americans to vacate the Karshi-Khanabad base at short notice. More recently, Kyrgyz

²⁸² CFR, “U.S. Military Bases.”

President Kurmanbek Bakiev (2005-) has suggested that annual rent on the Manas airbase should be raised from two million dollars to more than two hundred million dollars.²⁸³ While it is premature to speculate on the reasons for this announcement, or what the outcome may be, it does suggest that the United States has failed in securing the kind of long-term presence that was envisioned by Secretaries Rumsfeld and Powell after September 11. This leads one to question just how much staying power the United States actually has in the region, and how much it is likely to have in the foreseeable future.

Unlike the United States, China was geographically proximate to the greater Central Asian region. China took a gradualist approach towards the region; as we saw, scholars in the PRC saw the SCO – as a forum for multilateral cooperation – as an organization that took a gradualist approach not out of weakness, (although China did face regional setbacks after September 11, 2001), but with the purpose of establishing long-term relations, which had the potential to address a range of issues. The difference between the United States and China's position became stark after the attacks of September 11; while some within the United States saw this as a sign of weakness, the consensus in China was that this was a deliberate effort to establish long-term relations with a region which is clearly an area of great strategic importance.

Recent events that occurred in Central Asia marked an impasse for China, most notably the estranging of relations between the United States and its traditional regional ally, Uzbekistan, along with the beginning of long-term energy cooperation between Kazakhstan and China. Central Asia's economic dependence on China continues to grow every year, and there is no reason to believe that this trend will change in the foreseeable future. But challenges will remain. The United States will continue to have strategic interests in the region; that China's influence in Central Asia has grown does not take away from the fact that the US government still has cordial relations with these republics. Recently, many within the US foreign policy establishment have been critical of the growing Chinese closeness with Central Asia,²⁸⁴ and according to one US-based analyst, the United States is keen to obtain observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation

²⁸³ "Kyrgyzstan Seeks US Base Hike," *BBC News*, February 15, 2002. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/ft/-/asia-pacific/5715780.stm> (accessed February 16, 2005).

²⁸⁴ See for example, Stephen Blank, "Islam Karimov and Heirs of Tiananmen," *Eurasia Daily Monitor* 2, issue 115, June 14, 2005. http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=407&issue_id=3365&article_id=2369877 (accessed February 22, 2006).

Organization.²⁸⁵ Whether this will happen is uncertain, but what is likely is that the United States will continue to monitor China and Russia's activities in Central Asia closely, with the result that Central Asia will emerge as a region where the relationship between China and the US will be marked by a high degree of competition.

Regional countries have also shown increasing interest in the organization. In 2004, Mongolia was given observer status in the organization. During the summit held on June 5, 2005, in Astana, Kazakhstan, observer status was extended to India, Iran, and Pakistan. Though still preliminary, this suggests that the organization will have to evolve as countries with different political cultures seek membership in the organization.²⁸⁶

Perhaps most importantly, challenges from within the greater Central Asian region will require a high degree of vigilance on the part of China and other member-states. While the SCO evolved into a viable multilateral forum between 2001 and 2005, regional challenges such as the narcotics trade, and the presence of transnational organizations still threaten the region. More successfully than any other country in the organization, China has managed to stem its internal unrest by using its state security apparatus to bear down heavily on restive elements within the autonomous region. But the situation in neighboring Central Asia is markedly different. It is almost certain, that as long as resistance to the state persists, and in the absence of effective state security mechanisms in Afghanistan and Central Asia, the ability of these regimes to wield authority decisively over the region will continue to be a challenge, which is indicative of the still-fragile nature of political power in the greater Central Asian region.

²⁸⁵ Ariel Cohen, "United States Goes on Geopolitical Counter-offensive in Central Asia," *Eurasia Insight*, October 21, 2005. http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insight/articles/eav102105_pr.shtml (accessed February 24, 2006).

²⁸⁶ "Reshenie sovema ... Indiya"; "Reshenie sovema ... Iran"; and "Reshenie sovema ... Islamskoy Respublike Pakistan." See also, "Regulations."

Conclusion

Deng Xiaoping once admonished Party cadres to cross the river by feeling for the stones; this oft-quoted saying captures the measured and deliberated manner in which Chinese policy towards independent Central Asia evolved. The independence of Central Asia had threatened Beijing's authority in Xinjiang as pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism, threats which had largely lain dormant since the formation of the People's Republic, now emerged as powerful political forces. Adding to the regional instability was the post-Cold War jostling for influence by powers big and small. China made space for itself in this new neighborhood cautiously, first, by developing strong bilateral relations predicated on mutual trust and economic cooperation, then, through the development of a multilateral forum whose agenda has evolved over a ten-year period. Instead of rushing headfirst into the region, China consolidated its relations with the new republics by gradually building comprehensive relations. Following the attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, and the beginning of the US-led "War on Terror," Beijing advocated for a greater role for the UNSC in determining the military campaign that was unfolding beyond China's Central Asian frontiers. Surveying China's achievements during this fifteen-year long process, it is not hard to appreciate why pundits in Beijing note with a degree of understated satisfaction that time is on China's side. More generally, this would appear characteristic of Chinese foreign policy over the past decades: slow and deliberate.

The present study sought to investigate two aspects of contemporary Sino-Central Asian relations. These were, first, an exploration of variables that shaped China's policy towards post-Soviet Central Asia, and, second, the manner in which China's relations reflected its perception of the new challenges and opportunities in both a regional and a global context. This thesis approached Sino-Central Asian relations from a Sinocentric perspective, specifically, from the perspective of Chinese interests in Xinjiang.¹ Methodologically, this study was informed by Owen Lattimore's analysis of Inner Asian frontiers, which he conceptualized both as amorphous marginal zones over which the

¹ It would be equally valid to address the problematic from other angles, such as from a Central Asian, Russian, or an International Relations perspective.

power of the oftentimes distant political center waned, and also as regions where influences from peripheral political centers overlapped. This study indicates that many of Owen Lattimore's observations, some of which were first proposed more than half a century ago, continue to have relevance in understanding the region today.

The underlying argument in this study has been that China's policy towards Central Asia was determined primarily by its security and economic imperatives in Xinjiang; additionally, China's diplomacy was influenced by its relations with Russia, which continued to exert considerable influence in post-Soviet Central Asia. Sino-Russian cooperation was a benchmark of the post-Cold War era, in which US unilateralism was perceived as contrary to a multipolar world-order advocated by China and Russia as a means of exerting their respective influence. These considerations determined China's policy towards Central Asia in the fifteen years since the region has been independent. We should also stress that Beijing's authority in Xinjiang was essential for maintaining national cohesiveness; weakening of Beijing's authority in Xinjiang would surely adversely effect its authority in Tibet.

Since Xinjiang was incorporated into the Qing empire in the mid-eighteenth century, Beijing's jurisdiction was predicated on its ability to project decisive power in the distant frontier region. Chinese control could only be possible if it could overcome cross-border challenges to its rule. From the beginning of the eighteenth to the middle of the twentieth century, Xinjiang saw foreign influence, first from the Central Asian khanates, and then Russia. The success of the Communist revolution in 1949 saw a modernization process that brought the region more firmly under Beijing's control. However, independence of Soviet Central Asia, along with Afghanistan's enduring war economy led to renewed security concerns after 1991 that the Chinese government now had to address. Foremost amongst these were challenges posed by pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism.² While I have tried to stay clear of a generalized (and sensationalized) narrative of Islamic fundamentalism running amuck in the greater Central Asian region, I have argued that Islamism in its regional manifestations, which oscillated between coalescing

² It is possible, although not certain, that Iran's receiving of full-membership in the SCO may have an impact on the Islamist challenges faced in Central Asia. For a recent announcement of Iran's probable admission into the SCO as a full-fledged member, see "Iran Hopes to Join Shanghai Group this Summer," *People's Daily*, April 15, 2006. http://english.people.com.cn/200604/15/print20060415_258566.html (accessed April 15, 2006).

along ethnic lines (manifested best in Tajikistan), and internationalism (à la Sa'udi or Taliban-style literalism), posed severe challenges to Chinese jurisdiction in Xinjiang in the post-Cold War era. If these had gone unchecked, China's authority in Xinjiang would have been notably weaker today.

China sought to use its diplomatic initiatives in Central Asia to address these challenges. In this regard, China benefited from two factors: first, that the Central Asian leadership shared identical views on challenges to state power, and, second, its willingness to develop close economic ties with the new republics. According to my understanding, China's success can be attributed to its measured diplomacy as a result of which it did not come across as having hegemonic designs on the region. Recall that in the years following independence, this had been a criticism levied against Russia. Following the United States' military deployment in Central Asia, China did not seek to influence the republics' cooperation with US.

Instead, China continued strengthening the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, working towards building a mechanism through which it would be able to address issues of regional security. The low-profile approach to diplomacy appears to have paid off: in the last year, Uzbekistan asked the United States to withdraw its military from the country, and China began importing oil from Kazakhstan via a newly built pipeline. While I do not want to exaggerate the importance of either of these two events, I do believe that 2005 should be seen as a year during which China made notable strategic and economic inroads in Central Asia. There is little doubt that in the fifteen years since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, China's relations towards Central Asia, predicated on a stated policy of mutual benefit and non-interference, have developed considerably.

It is tempting to unconditionally accept the Chinese narrative that stressed mutual benefit and non-interference as being the cornerstone of China's Central Asian foreign policy. My wanting to do so would not only be because I believe it carries more than a kernel of truth, but because of my aversion to the "New Great Game" approach, which in its multifarious geo-political/geo-strategic manifestations appears to be a painful flashback from a bygone imperial era woefully out of place in the twenty-first century.

But insofar as a stated (or unstated) zero-sum game approach guided, and continues to influence foreign policy towards Central Asia, it would be foolish to

disregard the “New Great Game” approach, just as it would be naïve to uncritically accepted the Chinese narrative. China’s policy towards the region was determined by security imperatives within Xinjiang, which meant that besides creating a win-win relationship, China also sought to influence events in Central Asia to its own benefit. This was because the independence of Central Asia not only triggered instability in Xinjiang, but because foreign engagement in the region, particularly that of the United States after September 11, 2001, was detrimental to China’s strategic considerations. China’s measured diplomacy since 1991 was illustrative of an approach whereby China consolidated its position at every point before progressing to the next stage.

This strain runs through China’s fifteen yearlong relations with the independent republics. Recall for example that China was content both with Russian influence in Central Asia, and continued rule by the Soviet-era oligarchy (Of course, China also did not have the means to challenge Russian influence in the region). More recently, consider that President Islam Karimov’s first visit abroad after he faced international condemnation for the suppression of the Andijan uprising was to Beijing,³ where President Karimov noted that the relations between the two countries had entered a new stage that laid the foundations for a “new strategic partnership.”⁴ Or the fact that after President Nursultan Nazarbaev won ninety-one percent of the votes in the December 6, 2005 elections, a *Xinhua* article quoted unidentified “analysts” as arguing: “For Kazakhs, the aftermath of the 2003 “rose revolution” in Georgia, the 2004 “orange revolution” in Ukraine, and another uprising in Kyrgyzstan this March serves as a vivid reminder of the painful lessons in these countries.”⁵ These examples are not to insinuate that China sought a hegemonic role, but to suggest that China’s regional stakes were high, mandating that it play a proactive role, which by definition implied that it would seek to influence the outcome of events. Therefore, Chinese claims for a win-win situation and

³ “Uzbek Leaders Seeks China Support,” *BBC News*, May 25, 2005. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4577501.stm> (accessed March 12, 2006).

⁴ “China, Uzbekistan Agree Further Cooperation in Regional Security,” *People’s Daily*, May 26, 2005. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200505/26/eng20050526_186796.html (accessed March 15, 2006). See also, “FM Spokesman: China “Delighted” to See Andijan Turmoil Under Control,” *People’s Daily*, May 17, 2005. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200505/17/eng20050517_185509.html (accessed March 15, 2006).

⁵ “Kazakhs Say No to “Color Revolution,”” *Xinhua*, December 6, 2005. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-12/06/content_3884699.htm (accessed March 12, 2006).

non-interference in others' affairs need to be assessed realistically in the context of China's national interest.

China's priorities after the independence of Central Asia were different from either that of Russia or the United States, both of whose regional objectives were driven by economic and strategic policy considerations. Although Chinese interests were also strategic, the difference was that the independence of the Central Asian republics had the potential to greatly adversely effect China in two ways: first, through the likelihood of Xinjiang undergoing internal instability because of the emergence of independent republics, and, second, because of foreign – especially US – posturing on China's periphery as a tool to contain China, and possibly Russia as well. Let us consider these.

In this study, I argued that China's policies towards Central Asia were a result of its security and economic imperatives in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Central Asia had been incorporated into the Russian and Manchu empires. In 1991, Soviet jurisdiction over the Soviet Central Asian republics ended abruptly; understandably, China's foremost concern was that transnational pan-Turkic and pan-Islamist forces that were subsequently unleashed would find fertile ground in Xinjiang. The overriding concern for China's diplomatic initiative was ensuring that the Central Asian leadership was sensitive to China's security concerns. Given that these were constitutionally secular states where the leadership had remained unchanged through the dissolution of the Soviet Union, China's efforts were successful at both the bilateral and multilateral level. Steady economic engagement by China, including multibillion dollar investments in the region's energy sector, suggested that China was not only seeking a lasting partnership, but was willing to make the investment to reap the dividends at a later date.

China has also benefited from economic engagement with Central Asia. Xinjiang today has nineteen international ports of entry and exit, and it is hard to imagine how the recent economic development of the autonomous region could have been possible without opening up to the independent republics. From a materialist perspective that sees a rising standard of living as contributing to overall stability, the significance of Xinjiang's economic development cannot be overstated. But this does not mean that Xinjiang's security does not continue to require vigilance. A recent report about an anti-

terrorism center slated to open in an unspecified location in Xinjiang is indicative of Beijing's continued security concerns.⁶

China's relations with Central Asia were also influenced by its relations with countries such as Russia and the United States. After the end of the Cold War, Central Asia emerged as an important arena for Sino-Russian cooperation. China was mindful of Russian influence in the region, and saw cooperation in Central Asia as part of their united front against perceived US hegemonic impulses. Sino-US relations had remained tense through much of the 1990s, with the mid-air collision between the US spy plane and a Chinese chase aircraft on April 1, 2001, marking a low point in bilateral relations. Though following September 11, 2001, both maintained cordial relations on the surface, as we discussed, there was deep distrust about the intention of the other within both countries. In addition, China now had to contend with US military deployment in Central Asia. In a broader perspective, Sino-US competition in Central Asia can be seen as yet another issue of bilateral disagreement, which currently include trade imbalance and differences over the reevaluation of the Renminbi, besides sharp disagreements over the other's military activity in the Taiwan Straits, Northeast Asia, the Middle East, and Central Asia.

After September 11, 2001, China found itself at odds with the United States' deployment in Central Asia, and consequently stepped up its efforts to counter the US's regional presence. Lacking mechanisms to directly challenge US deployment, China sought to gradually strengthen the SCO, while deepening bilateral relations with important regional countries such as Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. When an opportunity presented itself – such as through the souring of US relations with its closest regional ally, Uzbekistan – China was suitably poised to play a greater regional role. This reveals another generalization about China's foreign policy; China will await errors by others and then take opportunity of the situation.

But we should not assume that the United States is going to be withdrawing from the region soon, or that China has conclusively trumped the United States in Central Asia. Since the end of the Cold War, and especially after September 11, 2001, Central Asia has

⁶ "China Plans Anti-terrorism Centre," *BBC News*, August 29, 2005. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4201572.stm> (accessed March 13, 2006). The center is slated to open in 2009 at a cost of eighty-six million dollars. It is not clear if the center will be linked to the SCO.

been important to US strategic concerns and there is no evidence to indicate that the United States will change its strategic assessment of the region. In the last year alone, the region was visited twice by the US Secretary of Defense and once by the Secretary of State. Following Uzbekistan's request for the dismantling of the Karshi-Khanabad military base, *Pravda* reported that the US was securing a military base in Turkmenistan.⁷ While China will certainly play a more prominent regional role, not least through growing economic engagement and cooperation in the energy sector, it is realistic to assume that international interest in the region will be marked by competition. There is every likelihood that Central Asia will emerge as another arena of Sino-US rivalry on China's periphery.

This bodes poorly for China's strategic concerns. Since the formation of the People's Republic, China has had to contend with aggressive posturing by foreign powers on its periphery. Along the coastal regions, US Secretary of State Dean Acheson's (1949-1953) so-called "great crescent" sought to contain socialist states through the fostering of client states from Japan to the Persian Gulf.⁸ On its Inner Asian frontiers, China was walled in by Soviet Central Asia and by the deployment of Soviet troops and nuclear weapons in Mongolia. Even following rapprochement with the United States in the 1970s and the Soviet Union in the 1980s, China had to deal with tough posturing by the superpowers and those of its neighbors who were aligned with either of the two countries.

After the end of the Cold War, foreign policy challenges on China's periphery did not disappear, though the nature of the challenges did change; in part, this was because of the forces of globalization, as we discussed in the second chapter, and in part, a resurfacing of regional linkages and consolidation of transnational economic activity following the breakup of the centralized Soviet state. What remained consistent between the Cold War and post-Cold War era was that China's periphery was the site of foreign policy challenges. But there was also one notable difference, namely that the end of the Cold War created possibilities for building new alliances. Thus, alongside fresh challenges, came a new set of opportunities that allowed China to not only address these challenges, but to develop valuable new areas of cooperation and help it exert itself on

⁷ "US Deploys Another Military Base on Post-Soviet Territory," *Pravda*, September 6, 2005. <http://english.pravda.ru/world/ussr/06-09-2005/8876-turkmenistan-0> (accessed March 15, 2006).

⁸ Cumings, "Japan," 37.

the world stage, while resolving outstanding issues leftover from the past, such as disputes over the borders.

In *Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and the Inner Asian Frontiers of China* that was published in 1950, Owen Lattimore described the Xinjiang landmass as a land of frontiers, noting that “a circle with a radius of a thousand miles, centering on Urumchi, capital of Sinkiang, encloses more different kinds of frontier than could be found in any area of equal size anywhere else in the world.”⁹ These included “linguistic and cultural frontiers between Mongols, Chinese, Tibetans, Indians, Afghans, the people who speak one of the Inner Asian Turkic languages, and Russian.” Likewise there were frontiers between the different religious groups that inhabited the region, and also “political frontiers between independent states, overlord states, satellite or dependent states, and states which have only recently been freed from colonial status, and also between the monarchy of Afghanistan, the principality of Kashmir, and theocratic Tibet.” These frontiers overlapped in Xinjiang, which lead Lattimore to observe: “In the midst of these problems of change and transition Sinkiang holds a pivotal position.”¹⁰

Though the regional and global situation has undergone important changes, Owen Lattimore’s classification of Xinjiang as a region where influences from different centers intersect has as much relevance today as it did in 1950. So long as a centralized China and Soviet Union both had jurisdiction over Central Asia, these different influences were kept in check. The sudden dissolution of the Soviet Union created an imbalance between the weak independent republics, where traditional economic and political forces reemerged after remaining underground for the duration of Soviet rule, versus a highly centralized Chinese state that was now threatened by these developments, mandating that if China wants to secure its western borders and retain absolute control over its westernmost autonomous region, it needed a proactive foreign policy. This much is a story that dates back to the earliest forays into the Western Regions during the Han dynasty that were motivated, foremost, by political considerations.¹¹ While I am reluctant to invoke a Braudelian *long durée* perspective to explain other aspects of Xinjiang’s

⁹ Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia*, 3.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4

¹¹ Di Cosmo, *Ancient China*, 248.

place (or lack thereof) within China, I believe one factor that has remained constant is Xinjiang's role as a frontier region situated at the crossroads of Asia.

For the best part of two thousand years Xinjiang was China's principal gateway to Eurasia. Since a dusty and disheveled – or so I like to imagine – Zhang Qian (d. 114 BCE) first made a surprise appearance at Han Wudi's court after being missing in action for over a decade, China has been inextricably linked to the greater Central Asian region. Since this time, a complex and ever-changing web of economic and political relations spanning the amorphous Central Asian frontiers has influenced China's economic and political fortunes. Frontiers are characterized by the overlapping of ethnicities, languages, religions, and local cultures; frontiers are also almost always the site of economic engagement, and either strategic cooperation or military confrontation between power centers weak or strong, near or far. Most importantly, as two thousand years of cultural, economic, and political interaction in the heart of ancient Asia illustrates, what transpires on the frontiers does not always remain confined to the frontier regions; its effects can oftentimes be felt much further afield. Conversely, at times the opposite has been true, with developments at the political center influencing policy on the distant frontier. As China continues to grapple with its diplomatic efforts in a troubled region situated in an equally troubled world order, these are some of the historical legacies that will continue to impact China's contemporary initiatives along the ancient Silk Road.

Bibliography

- Akaev, Askar. "President of Kyrgyzstan on CIS," *Interfax*, January 15, 1993. In FBIS-SOV-93-012.
- . "Akayev on Relations in with EU, China," *Le Soir*, June 1, 1994. In FBIS-SOV-94-106.
- Ajami, Fouad. *The Arab Predicament: Arab Political Thought and Practice since 1967*, rev. ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Allison, Roy, and Lena Jonson, eds. *Central Asian Security: The New International Context*. London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2001.
- Allworth, Edward, ed. *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance, A Historical Overview*, 3rd ed. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999.
- . *The Modern Uzbeks: From the Fourteenth Century to the Present; A Cultural History*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1990.
- Amnesty International. "AI Report 1997: China." <http://www.amnesty.org/ailib/aireport/ar97/ASA17.htm> (accessed October 10, 2005).
- . "Gross Violation of Human Rights in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region," <http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/ENGASA170181999> (accessed October 22, 2005).
- Anderson, Ewan W. "NATO Expansion and Implications for Southern Tier Stability." In *Crossroads and Conflict: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, edited by Gary K. Bertsch et. al, 129-139. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Andrews-Speed, Philip. *Energy Policy and Regulation in the People's Republic of China*. The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 2000.
- Aras, Bülent, and George Foster. "Turkey: Looking for Light at the End of the Caspian Pipeline." In *Oil and Geopolitics in the Caspian Sea Region*, edited by Michael P. Croissant and Bülent Aras, 229-248. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1999.
- Asad, Talal. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003.

- Bachman, David. "Making Xinjiang Safe for the Han? Contradictions and Ironies of Chinese Governance in China's Northwest." In Rossabi, *Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers*, 155-185.
- Barfield, Thomas J. *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China, 221 BC to AD 1757*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992.
- Barnds, William J. "China's Relations with Pakistan: Durability Amidst Discontinuity," *The China Quarterly*, no. 63 (September 1975): 463-489.
- Barnes, Joe. "US National Interests: Getting Beyond the Hype." In *Energy in the Caspian Region: Present and Future*, edited by Yelena Kalyuzhnova, Amy Myers Jaffe, Dov Lynch, and Robin C. Sickles, 212-233. New York: Palgrave, 2002.
- Barnett, A. Doak. *China's Far West: Four Decades of Change*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1993.
- Bartke, Wolfgang. *Oil in the People's Republic of China: Industry Structure, Production, Export*. Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 1977.
- Becker, Abraham S. *Russia and Caspian Oil: Russia Loses Control*. Washington, DC: RAND Corporation, 1998.
- Bello, David. "Opium in Xinjiang and Beyond." In *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*, edited by Timothy Brook and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, 127-151. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000.
- Belokrenitsky, Vyacheslav Ya. "Russia and Greater Central Asia," *Asian Survey* 34, no. 12 (December 1994): 1093-1108.
- [В. Я. Белокреницкий]. "Ginizis i osnoviye kharakteristiki regiona" Генезис и основные характеристики региона [Genesis and Characteristics of the Region]. In *Tsentral'naya Aziya: puti v mirovoe soobshchestvo* Центральная Азия: пути интеграции в мировое сообщество [Central Asia: Means of Integrating into the World Community], edited by V. Ya. Belokrenitsky [В. Я. Белокреницкий], 9-39. Moscow: institut vostokovedeniya RAN, 1995.
- Benson, Linda, and Ingvar Svanberg. *China's Last Nomads: The History and Culture of China's Kazaks*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1994.
- Beyrer, C. "Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Infection Rates and Heroin Trafficking: Fearful Symmetries," *Bulletin on Narcotics* 54, nos. 1 and 2 (2002).

- http://www.unodc.org/pdf/bulletin/bulletin_2002_01_01_Art8.pdf (accessed January 5, 2006).
- “Bishkek Statement,” *Beijing Review* 42, no. 37, September 13, 1999.
- Black, J. L., ed. *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual 1992*. Vol. 2, *CIS and Successor States*. Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1994.
- . *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual 1993*. Vol. 2, *Central Eurasian States*. Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1995.
- . *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual 1994*. Vol. 2, *Central Eurasian States*. Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1995.
- . *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual 1995*. Vol. 2, *Central Eurasian States*. Gulf Breeze, FL: Academic International Press, 1996.
- Blank, Stephen. “Russia and China in Central Asia.” In Blank and Rubinstein, *Imperial Decline*, 65-98.
- . “Military Capabilities of the People’s Republic of China: Testimony of Professor Stephen J. Blank of the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College,” House Armed Services Committee, July 19, 2000. http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/congress/2000_hr/00-07-19blank.html (accessed December 6, 2005).
- . “The United States and Central Asia.” In Allison and Jonson, *Central Asian Security*, 127-151.
- Blank, Stephen, and Alvin. Z. Rubinstein, ed. *Imperial Decline: Russia’s Changing Role in Asia*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Bovingdon, Gardner. “Autonomy in Xinjiang: Han Nationalist Imperatives and Uyghur Discontent,” *Policy Studies* 11. Washington, DC: East-West Center Washington, 2004.
- . “Heteronomy and its Discontents: “*Minzu* Regional Autonomy” in Xinjiang.” In Rossabi, *Governing China’s Multiethnic Frontiers*, 117-154.
- Bregel, Yuri. *An Historical Atlas of Central Asia*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
- British Petroleum. *Statistical Review of World Energy 2005*. <http://www.bp.com/downloads.do?categoryId=9003093&contentId=7005944> (accessed October 27, 2005).

- Brose, Robert M. "US Perceptions of China: Has September 11 Changed American Interests or Policy Towards the People's Republic of China?" in Wang, Yu, and Gao, *9.11 yu Zhongguo*, 52-79.
- Brzezinski, Zbigniew. *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and its Geostrategic Imperatives*. New York: Basic Books, 1997.
- Burles, Mark. *Chinese Foreign Policy Towards Russia and the Central Asian Republics*. Washington, DC: RAND Corporation, 1999.
- Bush, George W. "Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People," United States Capitol, Washington, D.C., September 20, 2001. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html> (accessed November 27, 2005).
- Calabrese, John. "China and the Persian Gulf: Energy and Security," *Middle East Journal* 52, no. 3 (Summer 1998): 351-366.
- Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook: Kazakhstan*. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/kz.html> (accessed February 14, 2005).
- . *The World Factbook: Kyrgyzstan*. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/kg.html> (accessed February 14, 2005).
- . *The World Factbook: Tajikistan*. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/ti.html> (accessed February 14, 2005).
- . *The World Factbook: Turkmenistan*. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/tx.html> (accessed February 14, 2005).
- . *The World Factbook: Uzbekistan*. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/uz.html> (accessed February 14, 2005).
- Chang, Felix K. "China's Central Asian Power and Problems," *Orbis* 41 (Summer 1997): 401-425.
- "Charter of Shanghai Cooperation Organization," St. Petersburg, June 7, 2002. Shanghai Cooperation Organization Website. http://www.secsco.org/news_detail.asp?id=96&LanguageID=2 (accessed December 4, 2005).
- Chatterjee, Partha. *Nationalist Thought in the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

- Chen Lianbi 陈联璧. "Sange "jiduan zhuyi" yu Zhongya anquan" 三个“极端主义”与中亚安全[The Three Extremisms and Central Asian Security], *Dongou Zhongya yanjiu* 东欧中亚研究, no. 5 (2002): 56-62.
- . "Zhongya wuguo minzu wenti" 中亚五国民族关系问题[The Problems of Ethnicity in the Five Central Asian States], *Dongou Zhongya yanjiu* 东欧中亚研究, no. 3 (2001): 42-47.
- "China, Russia Joint Declaration, September 3, 1994: To Stop Targeting Each Other with Missiles" Moscow. <http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/statement-940903-nuclear.html> (accessed March 20, 2005).
- Chinese Communist Party. "Central Committee Document No. 7: Record of the Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party Concerning the Maintenance of Stability in Xinjiang." March 19, 1996. <http://www.ibiblio.org/mongol-tibet/archive/topsecret.html> (accessed September 25, 2005).
- Christoffersen, Gaye. "Xinjiang and the Great Islamic Circle: The Impact of Transnational Forces on Chinese Regional Economic Planning," *The China Quarterly*, no. 133 (1993): 130-151.
- Clubb, O. Edmund. *China and Russia: The "Great Game"*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1971.
- Cohen, Ariel. "Hizb ut-Tahrir: An Emerging Threat to U.S. Interests in Central Asia," Heritage Foundation Backgrounder #1656, May 30, 2003. <http://www.heritage.org/Research/RussiaandEurasia/BG1656.cfm> (accessed January 25, 2006).
- . "U.S. Interests in Central Asia," Testimony Before the Subcommittee of Asia and the Pacific/House International Relations Committee – the United States House of Representatives, March 17, 1999. <http://www.heritage.org/Rsearch/AsiaandthePacific/Test031799.cfm> (accessed November 9, 2005).
- Commonwealth of Independent States. "Agreement on the Establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States," Minsk, Belarus, December 9, 1991. <http://www.therussiasite.org/legal/laws/CISAgreement.html> (accessed February 7, 2005).

- . “Agreements Signed by CIS Member States at Summit, Kiev, 20 March 1992: Declaration on the Non-Use of Force in Relations Between CIS Member States.” In Black, *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual, 1992: CIS and Successor States*, Vol. 2, 63-64.
- . “Agreements Signed by CIS Member States at Summit, Minsk, 14-15 February: Agreement among the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States on the Status of the Strategic Forces.” In Black, *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual, 1992: CIS and Successor States*, Vol. 2, 20-24.
- . “Agreements Signed by CIS Member States at Summit, Minsk, 14-15 February: Declaration on the Observation of the Principles of Cooperation within the Framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States.” In Black, *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual, 1992: CIS and Successor States*, Vol. 2, 20.
- . “Charter of the Commonwealth of Independent States,” Minsk, Belarus, January 22, 1993. <http://www.therussiasite.org/legal/laws/CIScharter.html> (accessed February 7, 2005).
- . “Protocol to the Agreement on the Establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States, signed on December 8, 1991 at the city of Minsk, by the Republic of Belarus, the Russian Federation (RSFSR) and Ukraine,” Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, December 21, 1991. <http://www.therussiasite.org/legal/laws/CISagreement.html> (accessed February 7, 2005).
- “Constitution of the People’s Republic of China,” Adopted December 4, 1982. <http://english.people.com.cn/constitution/constitution.html> (accessed February 27, 2006).
- Council of Europe. “Resolution 1418: The Circumstances Surrounding the Arrest and Prosecution of Leading Yukos Executives,” December 25, 2005. <http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/AdoptedText/TA05/ERES1418.htm> (accessed April 13, 2006).
- Council on Foreign Relations. “East Turkestan Islamic Movement.” Updated November 2005. http://www.cfr.org/publication/9179/east_turkestan_islamic_movement_china_separatists.html?breadcrumb=default (accessed 3 January, 2006).
- . “U.S. Military Bases in Central Asia,” July 26, 2005. <http://www.cfr.org/>

- publications/8440.asia.html (accessed December 1, 2005).
- Cumings, Bruce. "Japan's Position in the World System." In *Postwar Japan as History*, edited by Andrew Gordon, 34-63. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993.
- . *Parallax Visions: Making Sense of American-East Asian Relations*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002.
- Dai, Shen-Yu. "China and Afghanistan," *The China Quarterly*, no. 25 (January-March 1966): 213-221.
- Dawisha, Karen and Bruce Parrott. *Russia and the New States of Eurasia: The Politics of Upheaval*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- "Declaration by the Heads of the Member-States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization," Astana, July 5, 2005. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2005/20050705_sco_07.html (accessed February 22, 2006).
- "Declaration by the Heads of the Member-States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization," St. Petersburg, June 7, 2002. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/sco_20020610_4.html (accessed December 9, 2005).
- "Declaration of the Heads of States Participating in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization," Moscow, May 30, 2003. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/20030530_sco_decl.html (accessed January 3, 2006).
- "Declaration on the Creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization," June 15, 2001. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/sco_1_20010620.html (accessed November 21, 2005).
- Di Cosmo, Nicola. *Ancient China and its Enemies: The Rise of Nomadic Power in East Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Dillon, Michael. *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Far Northwest*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004.
- Dittmer, Lowell. "China and Russia: New Beginnings." In *China and the World: Chinese Foreign Policy in the Post-Cold War Era*, edited by Samuel S. Kim, 94-112. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994.
- . *Sino-Soviet Normalization and its International Implications, 1945-1990*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992.

- Dobell, W. M. "Ramifications of the China-Pakistan Border Treaty," *Pacific Affairs* 37, no. 3 (Autumn 1964): 283-295.
- "Dokad soveta regionalnoy antiterroristicheskoy struktury Shankhayskoy organizatsii sotrudnichestva Sovetu glab gosudapstv – chlenov Shankhayskoy organizatsii sotrudnichestva o deyatel'nocti regional'noy antyteterroristicheskoy struktury v 2004 godu" Доклад Совета Региональной антитеррористической структуры Шанхайской организации сотрудничества Совету глав государств – членов Шанхайской организации сотрудничества о деятельности Региональной Shankhayskoy organizatsii sotrudnichestva антитеррористической структуры Шанхайской организации сотрудничества в 2004 году [Report on the Activities of the Regional Antiterrorism Center of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2004], Astana, June 5, 2005. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2005/20050705_sco_06.html (accessed February 24, 2006).
- Dong Fangxiao 东方晓. *Yisilan yu lengzhan hou de shijie* 伊斯兰与冷战后的世界 [Islam and the Post-Cold War World]. Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 1999.
- Dorian, James P., Brett H. Wigdortz, and Dru C. Gladney. "China and Central Asia's Volatile Mix: Energy, Trade, and Ethnic Relations," *Analysis from the East-West Center* 31 (May 1997). http://www.eastwestcenter.org/res-rp-publicationdetails.asp?pub_ID=30&SearchString= (Accessed November 9, 2005).
- Downs, Erica Strecker. *China's Quest for Energy Security*. RAND Corporation, 2000. <http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1244/> (accessed November 7, 2005).
- Dreyer, June Teufel. "Go West Young Han: The Hsia Fang Movement to China's Minority Areas," *Pacific Affairs* 48, no. 3 (Autumn 1975): 353-369.
- . "The Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region at Thirty: A Report Card," *Asian Survey* 26, no. 7 (July 1986): 721-744.
- Dumbaugh, Kerry. "China-U.S. Relations: Current Issues and Implications for U.S. Policy," *CRS Report for Congress* RL32804, updated July 8, 2005. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL32804.pdf> (accessed December 21, 2005).
- Duara, Prasenjit. *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

- Dupont, Alan. "Transnational Crime, Drugs, and Security in East Asia," *Asian Survey* 39, no. 3 (May-June 1999): 433-455.
- Dupree, Louis. *Afghanistan*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997. First Published 1973 by Princeton University Press.
- "Dushanbe Statement of the Heads of the State of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan." July 5, 2000. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/dushanbe_20000705.html (accessed November 14, 2005).
- Dwyer, Arienne M. "The Xinjiang Conflict: Uyghur Identity, Language Policy, and Political Discourse," *Policy Studies* 16. Washington, DC: East-West Center Washington, 2005.
- Ebel, Robert, and Rajan Menon, eds. *Energy and Conflict in Central Asia and the Caucasus*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.
- . "Introduction: Energy, Conflict, and Development in the Caspian Sea Region." In Ebel and Menon, *Energy and Conflict*, 1-20.
- Edgar, Adrienne Lynn. *Tribal Nation: The Making of Soviet Turkmenistan*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004.
- Elliot, Mark C. *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001.
- Energy Information Administration. "Caspian Sea Regional Analysis Brief," September 2005. <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Caspian/Full.html> (Accessed October 27, 2005).
- Fairbank, John King, ed. *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 10, Part 1, *Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- . "A Preliminary Framework." In *The Chinese World Order: Traditional Chinese Foreign Relation*, edited by John King Fairbank, 1-19. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968.
- Fang Ning 房宁. *Xin diguo zhuyi shidai yu Zhongguo zhanlue* 新帝国主义时代与中国战略 [The Era of New Imperialism and China's Strategy]. Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 2003.

- Feng Shaolei 冯绍雷. "Meiyou zhongjie de "zhongjie" — "9.11" hou zhong, mei, e, guanxi bianhua de xianzhuang, dongyin, tedian qianjing" 没有终结的“终结” — “9.11” 后中, 美, 俄, 关系变化的现状, 动因, 特点前景 [No End to “The End”: Features of, and Prospects for, Change in Relations Between China, the United States, and Russia Post-9.11], in Wang, Yu, and Gao, *9.11 yu Zhongguo*, 3-20.
- Fierman, William, ed. *Soviet Central Asia: The Failed Transformation*. Boulder, CO: Westview, 1991.
- . “The Soviet “Transformation” of Central Asia.” In Fierman, *Soviet Central Asia*, 11-35.
- Fleming, Peter. *News from Tartary: A Journey from Peking to Kashmir*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1936.
- Fletcher, Joseph. “China and Central Asia, 1368-1884.” In *The Chinese World Order: Traditional Chinese Foreign Relations*, edited by John King Fairbank, 206-224. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968.
- . “Ch’ing Inner Asia c. 1800.” In Fairbank, *Cambridge History*, 35-106.
- . “The Heyday of the Ch’ing Order in Mongolia, Sinkiang and Tibet.” In Fairbank, *Cambridge History*, 351-408.
- . “Sino-Russian Relations, 1800-62.” In Fairbank, *Cambridge History*, 318- 352.
- Forbes, Andrew D. W. *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang, 1911-1949*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.
- Franke, Herbert, and Denis Twitchett. “Introduction.” In *The Cambridge History of China*, Vol. 6, *Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368*, edited by Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, 1-42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Fuller, Graham E., and Jonathan Lipman. “Islam in Xinjiang.” In Starr, *Xinjiang*, 320-352.
- Fuller, Graham E., and S. Frederick Starr. “The Xinjiang Problem,” Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (Publication Date Unavailable). http://www.cornellcaspien.com/pub2/xinjiang_final.pdf (accessed March 4, 2006).

- Gammer, Moshe. "Post-Soviet Central Asia and Post-Colonial Francophone Africa: Some Associations," *Middle Eastern Studies* 36, no. 2 (April 2000): 124-149.
- Garnet, Sherman, "The Russian Far East as a Factor in Chinese-Russian Relations," *SAIS Review*, (Summer-Fall 1996): 1-17.
- Garver, John W. "The Sino-Soviet Territorial Dispute in the Pamir Mountain Region," *The China Quarterly*, no. 85 (March 1981): 107-118.
- Gao Jiuyong 高久永. *Xiyu gudai minzu zongjiao zonglun* 西域古代民族宗教综论 [A Study of the Ancient People and Religion of the Western Regions]. Beijing: Gaodeng jiaoyu chubanshe, 1997.
- Gelber, Harry G. "Strategic Arms Limitations and the Sino-Soviet Relationship," *Asian Survey* 10, no. 4 (April 1970): 265-289.
- Geng Shimen 耿世民. *Xinjiang wenshi lunji* 新疆文史论集 [Collection of Papers on Language, Literature, and History of Xinjiang]. Beijing: Zhongguo minzu daxue chubanshe, 2001.
- George, Paul. "Islamic Unrest in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region," *Commentary*, no. 73. Canadian Security Intelligence Service Publication, Spring 1998. <http://www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/eng/comment/com73e.html> (accessed September 26, 2005).
- Gerges Fawaz A. *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Gibb, H. A. R. "The Arab Invasion of Kasghar in A. D. 715," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 2, no. 3 (1922): 467-474.
- Gladney, Dru C. "China's Xinjiang Problem," Presentation at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC, June 5, 2003. <http://www.csis.org/media/isis/events/030605gladney.pdf> (accessed March 4, 2006).
- . "The Ethnogenesis of the Uighur," *Central Asian Survey* 9, no. 1 (1990): 1-28.
- . *Muslim Chinese: Ethnic Nationalism in the People's Republic*, 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1996.
- . "Responses to Chinese Rule: Patterns of Cooperation and Opposition." In Starr, *Xinjiang*, 375-396.

- Gleason, Gregory. *The Central Asian States: Discovering Independence*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997.
- . “Inter-State Cooperation in Central Asia from the CIS to the Shanghai Forum,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 53, no.7 (November 2001): 1977-1095.
- . “Policy Dimensions of the West Asian Borders after the Shanghai Accord,” *Asian Perspectives* 25, no. 1 (2001): 107-131.
- Goldstein, Melvyn C. “Tibet and China in the Twentieth Century.” In Rossabi, *Governing China’s Multiethnic Frontiers*, 186-229.
- Goodhand, Jonathan. “From Holy War to Opium War? A Case Study of the Opium Economy in North Eastern Afghanistan,” *Central Asian Survey* 19, no. 2 (2000): 265-280.
- Guo Wen 郭文. ““Dong tu” zuzhi: ji ben qingkuang, tedian, dongxiang” “东突”组织: 基本情况, 特点, 动向 [“East Turkestan” Organizations: State of Affairs, Characteristics, and Direction]. In Pan, *Zhongnanya*, 299-317.
- Hali, Awelkhan, Zengxiang Li, and Karl W. Luckert. *The Kazakh Traditions of China*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1998.
- Halper, Stefan, and Jonathan Clarke. *America Alone: The Neo-conservatives and the Global Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Hanks, Reuel. “Civil Society and Identity in Uzbekistan: The Emergent Role of Islam.” In Ruffin and Waugh, *Civil Society in Central Asia*, 158-179.
- Harada, Chikahito. *Russia and North-east Asia*. London: Oxford University Press, Adelphi Paper 310, 1997.
- Harris, Lillian Craig. “Xinjiang, Central Asia and the Implications for China’s Policy in the Islamic World,” *The China Quarterly*, no. 133 (1993): 111-129.
- Harrison, Selig S. *China, Oil, and Asia: Conflict Ahead?* New York: Columbia University Press, 1977.
- Hevia, James L. *Cherishing Men From Afar: Qing Guest Ritual and the Macartney Embassy of 1793*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995.
- . *English Lessons: The Pedagogy of Imperialism in Nineteenth-Century China*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.

- Hilali, A. Z. "China's Response to the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan," *Central Asian Survey* 20, no. 3 (2001): 323-351.
- "History of the Development of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization," Shanghai Cooperation Organization Website (Publication Date Unavailable).
<http://www.sectsco.org/html/00035.html> (accessed November 21, 2005).
- Holmes, Leslie. "Afghanistan and Sino-Soviet Relations." In *The Soviet Withdrawal From Afghanistan*, edited by Amin Saikal and William Maley, 122-141. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Hopkirk, Peter. *The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia*. New York: Kodansha Globe, 1994. First Published 1990 by John Murray.
- Horsman, Stuart. "Uzbekistan's Involvement in the Tajik Civil War, 1992-97: Domestic Considerations," *Central Asian Survey* 18, no. 1 (1999): 37-48.
- Hsu, Immanuel C. Y. "The Great Policy Debate in China, 1874: Maritime Defense Vs. Frontier Defense," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 25 (1964-65): 212-228.
- . "Late Ch'ing Foreign Relations, 1866-1905." In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 11, Part 2, *Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911*, edited by John K. Fairbank and Kwang-Ching Liu, 70-141. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- Human Rights Watch. "World Report 2001: Uzbekistan," <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k1/europe/uzbekistan.html> (accessed January 26, 2006).
- Humphrey, Caroline and David Sneath. *The End of Nomadism? Society, State and the Environment in Inner Asia*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991.
- Hunter, Shireen T. *Central Asia since Independence*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1996.
- . "Religion, Politics, and Security in Central Asia," *SAIS Review* 21, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 2001).
- Hyman, Anthony. "Moving out of Moscow's Orbit: The Outlook for Central Asia," *International Affairs* 69, no. 2 (April 1993): 288-304.
- Information Office of the State Council, PRC. "'East Turkestan' Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity," January 21, 2002. <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/other/archive.html> (accessed September 26, 2005).
- . "Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in China," February 2005.
<http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20050301/> (accessed February 12, 2006).

- . “White Paper on History and Development of the Xinjiang,” May 26, 2003. http://english.people.com.cn/200305/26/eng20030526_117240.shtml (accessed January 15, 2006).
- International Research and Exchanges Board. “The Dynamics of Economic Development in the Central Asian Region,” Conference Report, August 28-30, 1994, Urumchi, Xinjiang, China. <http://www.irex.org/pubs/policy/urumqi.asp> (accessed February 16, 2005).
- Iredale, Robyn, Naran Bilik, and Fei Guo, eds. *China's Minorities on the Move: Selected Case Studies*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2003.
- Jackson, Nicole J. *Russian Foreign Policy and the CIS: Theories, Debates and Actions*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.
- Jaschok, Maria, and Shui Jingjun. *The History of Women's Mosques in Chinese Islam: A Mosque of Their Own*. Richmond: Curzon, 2000.
- Jia, Qingguo. “The Success of the Shanghai Five: Interests, Norms and Pragmatism,” 2001. <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/symposia/pacific2001/jiafinal.htm> (accessed November 11, 2005).
- “Joint Statement by the Heads of State of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan.” June 15, 2001 (accessed November 22, 2005).
- “Joint Statement by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization,” Beijing, January 7, 2002. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/sco_3_20020107.html (accessed November 28, 2005).
- “Joint Statement by the Presidents of the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation on Anti-Missile Defense,” July 18, 2000. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/r_c_jc_20000718.html (accessed November 14, 2005).
- “Joint Communiqué Issued at Conclusion of Extraordinary Meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers of Members States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Tashkent, September 5, 2003.” http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/20030905_sco_fm_jc.html (accessed January 3, 2006).

- “Joint Communiqué of the Ministers of Defense of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People’s Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan.” May 17, 2005. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/sco_dm_20020514.html (accessed December 4, 2005).
- “Joint Communiqué of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People’s Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tajikistan,” April 28, 2001. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/rmfa_jc20010428.html (accessed November 14, 2005).
- “Joint Statement of Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan on the Almaty Meeting, July 3, 1998.” *Xinhua*, July 3, 1998. In FBIS-CHI-98-184.
- “Joint Statement on the Results of Chinese-Russian High-Level Meeting, November 23, 1998.” <http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/statement-981123.html> (accessed November 14, 2005).
- Jonson, Lena. “Russia and Central Asia.” In Allison and Jonson, *Central Asian Security*, 95-126.
- Jones, Scott A. “Turkish Strategic Interests in the Transcaucasus.” In *Crossroads and Conflict: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, edited by Gary K. Bertsch, et. al, 55-65. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Kaldor, Mary. *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001. First Published 1999 by Polity Press.
- Kakar, Hassan M. *Afghanistan: The Soviet Invasion and the Afghan Response, 1979-1982*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997.
- Kan, Shirley. “U.S.-China Counter-Terrorism Cooperation: Issues for U.S. Policy,” CRS Report for Congress RS21995, updated May 12, 2005. www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS21995.pdf (accessed December 8, 2005).
- Karimov, Islam. “Speech on Uzbekistan and Russia,” *Moscow Mayak Radio Network*, January 26, 1994. In FBIS-SOV-94-017.
- Karl, Terry Lynn. “Crude Calculations: OPEC Lessons for the Caspian Region.” In Ebel and Menon, *Energy and Conflict*, 29-54.
- Katzman, Kenneth. “Iran: Current Developments and U.S. Policy,” Congressional Research Service, IB93033, updated July 23, 2003. <http://www.fas.org/>

- man/crs/IB93033.pdf (accessed February 7, 2006).
- Keller, Shoshana. *To Moscow, Not Mecca: The Soviet Campaign Against Islam in Central Asia, 1917-1841*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 2001.
- Kemp, Geoffrey. "U.S.-Iranian Relations: Competition or Cooperation in the Caspian Sea Basin." In Ebel and Menon, *Energy and Conflict*, 145-162.
- Khalid, Adeeb. *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000. First Published 1998 by University of California Press.
- Kim, Hodong. *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864-1877*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.
- Kirsch, Marian P. "Soviet Security Objectives in Asia," *International Organization* 25, no. 3 (Summer 1970): 451-478.
- "Kontsepsiya sotrudnichestva gosudarstv – chlenob Shankhayskoy organizatsii sotrudnichestva v bor'be s terrorizmom, separatyzmom i ekstremizmom"
Концепция сотрудничества государств -- членов Шанхайской организации сотрудничества в борьбе с терроризмом, сепаратизмом и экстремизмом July 5 5, 2005, Astana [Concept of Cooperation of the Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation organization in the Struggle with Terrorirms, Separatism, and Extremism [http](http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2005/20050705_sco_03.html)], Astana , July 5, 2005. [://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2005/20050705_sco_03.html](http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2005/20050705_sco_03.html) (accessed February 24, 2006).
- Kortunov, Andrei, and Andrei Shoumikhin. "Russia and Central Asia: Evolution of Mutual Perceptions, Policies, and Interdependence." In Zhang and Azizian, *Ethnic Challnges*, 11-31.
- Kudaya, Mamuka, and Cassady Craft. "Developing Nonproliferation Export Controls in Georgia in the Context of the Emerging Eurasian Transportation Corridor." In *Crossroads and Conflict: Security and Foreign Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia*, edited by Gary K. Bertsch et. al, 207-225. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Kutlukov, M [Кутлуков, М.]. "Iz istorii mezhdunarodnykh svyazey v Tsentral'noy Azii v 1755-1859 gg. (svedeniya Kashgarskikh istorikov)" Из Истории Международных Связей В центральной Азии В 1755-1859 гг. (Сведения

- Кашгарских Историков) [The History of International Communications in Central Asia (Information on Kashgari Historians)]. In *Iz istorii Sredney Azii i Vostochnogo Turkestana XV-XIX vv.* Из Истории Средней Азии и Восточного Туркестана XV-XIX вв. [The History of Central Asia and Turkestan from the Fifteenth to the Nineteenth Century] edited by B. A. Akhmedov [Б. А. Ахмедов], 59-82. Tashkent: Fan izdatel'stvo, 1987.
- Kuznetsov, V. S. [Кузнецов, В. С.]. *Tsinskaya imperiya na Rubezhakh Tsentrala'ioy Azii (vtoraya polovina XVII – perbaya polovina XIX v.)* Цинская Империя На Рубежах Центральная Азии (Вторая Половина XVII –Первая Половина XIX в.) [The Qing Empire on the Borders of Central Asia from the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century to the First Half of the Twentieth Century]. Novosibirsk: Nauka izdatel'stvo, 1983.
- Lampton, David M., ed. *The Making of Chinese Foreign and Security Policy in the Era of Reform, 1978-2000*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001.
- . *Same Bed Different Dreams: Managing U.S.-China Relations, 1989-2000*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001.
- Lapidus, Ira M. *A History of Islamic Societies*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Lattimore, Eleanor Holgate. *Turkestan Reunion*. New York: Kodansha Globe, 1994. First Published 1934 by John Day Company.
- Lattimore, Owen. "Chinese Turkestan." In Lattimore, *Studies*, 183-200. First Published *The Open Court*, XLVII, No. 921 (March 1933).
- . "The Chinese as a Dominant Race." In Lattimore, *Studies*, 200-217. First Published *Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society*, XV, part III (1928) and *Asia*, (June 1928).
- . *The Desert Road to Turkestan*. New York: Kodansha Globe, 1995. First Published 1929 by Little, Brown, and Company.
- . *High Tartary*. New York: Kodansha Globe, 1994. First Published 1930 by Little, Brown, and Company.

- . *Inner Asian Frontiers of China*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1962. First Published 1940 the American Geographical Society of New York.
- . “The New Political Geography of Inner Asia.” In Lattimore, *Studies*, 165-179. First Published *The Geographic Journal*, CXIX, part 1 (March 1953).
- . *Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and the Inner Asian Frontiers of China and Russia*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1950.
- , ed. *Studies in Frontier History: Collected Papers, 1928-1958*. London: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- Lawrence, Bruce B. *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age*. San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1989.
- Li Jingjie 李静杰. *Shi nian jubian* 十年巨变 [Ten Years of Great Change]. Beijing: Shufang chubanshe, 2003.
- . “Zhong E zhanlue zuo huoban guanxi ji qi Meiguo yinsu” 中俄战略作伙伴关系及其美国因素 [Strategic Cooperation Between China and Russia and the American Factor], *Dongou Zhongya yanjiu* 东欧中亚研究, no. 3 (2000): 3-13.
- Li Sheng 厉声. *Zhongguo Xinjiang lishi yu xianzhuang* 中国 新疆历史与现状 [History and Contemporary Affairs of Xinjiang, China]. Urumchi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2003.
- Li Yiwen 李一文 and Ma Fengshu 马风书. *Dangdai guoji zuzhi yu guoji guanxi* 当代国际与国际关系 [Contemporary International Organizations and International Relations]. Tianjin: Tianjin renmin chubanshe, 2002.
- Ling, H. C. *The Petroleum Industry of the People's Republic of China*. Stanford: Hoover Institute Press, 1975.
- Lipman, Jonathan N. *Familiar Strangers: A History of Muslims in Northwest China*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997.
- . “Hyphenated Chinese: Sino-Muslim Identity in Modern China.” In *Remapping China: Fissures in Historical Terrain*, edited by Gail Hershatter, Emily Honig, Jonathan N. Lipman, and Randall Stross, 97-112. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.
- Lipovsky, Igor. “The Awakening of Central Asian Islam,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 32, no. 3 (July 1996): 1-21.

- Liu, Gengchen. "Ethnic Harmony and Conflicts in Central Asia: Origins and Policies." In Zhang and Azizian, *Ethnic Challenges*, 73-92.
- Liu, Kwang-Ching, and Richard J. Smith. "The Military Challenge: the North-west and the Coast." In *The Cambridge History of China*. Vol. 11, Part 2, *Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911*, edited by John K. Fairbank and Kwang-Ching Liu, 202-273. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- Liu, Qingjian. "Sino-Central Asian Trade and Economic Relations: Progress, Problems and Prospects." In Zhang and Azizian, *Ethnic Challenges*, 179-200.
- Lubin, Nancy. "Implications of Ethnic and Demographic Trends." In Fierman, *Soviet Central Asia*, 36-61.
- . "Turkmenistan's Energy: A Source of Wealth or Instability?" In Ebel and Menon, *Energy and Conflict*, 107-122.
- Luo Zhenxing 罗振兴. "Meiguo zai Zhongya — Lihai diqu de nengyuan zhengce pingxi" 美国在中亚 — 里海地区的能源政策评析 [Analysis of American Policy in the Central Asian – Caspian Region], *Meiguo yanjiu* 美国研究 19, no. 2 (June 2005): 116-137.
- Ma Pinyan 马品彦. "Afuhan de "shengzhan" zhi huo neng ximie ma?" 阿富汗的“圣战”之火能熄灭吗? [Can the Fires of Afghanistan's Holy War be Extinguished?]. In Pan, *Zhongnanya*, 129-140.
- Ma Rong. "Population Distribution and Relations Among Ethnic Groups in the Kashgar Region, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region." In Iredale et. al., *China's Minorities on the Move*, 106-122.
- Mackerras, Colin. "The Uighurs." In *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia*, edited by Denis Sinor, 317-336. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- . "Xinjiang at the Turn of the Century: The Causes of Separatism," *Central Asian Survey* 20, no. 3 (2001): 289-303.
- Magnus, Ralph H. and Eden Naby. "Afghanistan and Central Asia: Mirrors and Models," *Asian Survey* 35, no. 7 (July 1995): 605-620.
- Malashenko, A. V. [A. B. Малащенко]. "Tsentral'naya Aziya i Rossiya" Центральная Азия и Россия [Central Asia and Russia]. In *Tsentral'naya Aziya: puti v mirovoe soobshchestvo* Центральная Азия: пути интеграции в мировое сообщество

- [Central Asia: Means of Integration into the World Community], edited by V. Ya. Belokrenitsky [В. Я. Белокреницкий], 72-85. Moscow: Institut vostokovedeniya RAN, 1995.
- Maxwell, Neville. "China and India: The Un-Negotiated Dispute," *The China Quarterly*, no. 43 (July-September 1970): 47-80.
- McMillen, Donald H. *Chinese Communist Power and Policy, 1949-1977*. Boulder, CO: Westview/Dawson Replica Edition, 1979.
- . "The Urumqi Military Region: Defense and Strategy in China's West," *Asian Survey* 22, no. 8 (August 1982): 705-731.
- . "Xinjiang and Production and Construction Corps: A Han Organization in a Non-Han Region," *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, no. 6 (July 1981): 65-96.
- . "Xinjiang and Wang Enmao: New Directions in Power, Policy and Integration?" *The China Quarterly*, no. 99 (September 1984): 569-593.
- McNeal, Dewardic L. "China's Relations with Central Asian States and Problems with Terrorism," CRS Report for Congress RL 31213, December 17, 2001.
<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/7945.pdf> (accessed November 30, 2005).
- "Meeting of the Heads of State of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Tajikistan and Republic of Uzbekistan," June 15, 2001. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/sco_3_220010620.html (accessed November 22, 2005).
- Meisner, Maurice. *The Deng Xiaoping Era: An Inquiry into the Fate of Chinese Socialism, 1978-1994*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1996.
- Merriam, John G. "Arms Shipments to the Afghan Resistance." In *Afghan Resistance: The Politics of Survival*, edited by Grant M. Farr and John G. Merriam, 71-102. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987.
- Meyer, Karl E. and Shareen Blair Brysac. *Tournament of Shadows: The Great Game and the Race for Empire in Central Asia*. Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1999.
- Millward, James A. *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia, 1759-1864*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

- . “Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment,” *Policy Studies* 6. Washington, DC: East-West Center Washington, 2004.
- Millward, James, and Nabijan Tursun. “Political History and Strategies of Control, 1884-1978.” In Starr, *Xinjiang*, 63-98.
- Millward, James, and Peter C. Perdue. “Political and Cultural History of Xinjiang through the Late Nineteenth Century.” In Starr, *Xinjiang*, 27-62.
- Misra, Amalendu. “Shanghai 5 and the Emerging Alliance in Central Asia: The Closed Society and its Enemies,” *Central Asian Survey* 20, no. 3 (2001): 305-321.
- Moltz, James Clay. “Regional Tensions in the Russo-Chinese Rapprochement,” *Asian Survey* 35, no. 6 (1995): 511-527.
- Morris, Peter. “The Russians in Central Asia, 1870-1887,” *Slavonic and East European Studies* 53 (1975): 521-538.
- Moseley, George. *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier: The Ili Kazakh Autonomous Chou*. Cambridge, MA: East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1966.
- Mukimdshanova, R. M. [Р. М. Мукимджанова]. “Vneshnyaya politika gosudarstv regiona” Внешняя политика государств региона [Foreign Policy of the Regional States]. In *Tsentral'naya Aziya: puti v mirovoe soobshchestvo* Центральная Азия: пути интеграции в мировое сообщество [Central Asia: Means of Integration into the World Community], edited by V. Ya. Belokrenitsky [В. Я. Белокреницкий], 39-71. Moscow: Institut vostokovedeniya RAN, 1995.
- Naumkin, Vitaly V. “Militant Islam in Central Asia: The Case of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan,” Berkeley Program in Soviet and Post-Soviet Studies Working Paper, (2003). <http://repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1027&context=iseees/bps> (accessed January 16, 2006).
- Naylor, R. T. “Bin Laden, Crime and Opportunism,” Nathanson Centre for the Study of Organized Crime and Corruption, November 3, 2001. <http://www.yorku.ca/nathanson/Publications/Bin%20Laden.htm> (accessed January 17, 2006).
- Nazarbaev, Nursultan. “Nazarbaev Interview on Relations with China,” *Ostankino Television*, November 10, 1993. In Black, *Russia and Eurasia 1993*, 303-304.

- Needham, Joseph. "Geography and Cartography." In *Science and Civilization in China*, Vol. 3, *Mathematics and the Sciences of the Heavens and the Earth*, 497-590. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959.
- Newby, L. J. "The Begs of Xinjiang: Between Two Worlds," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 61, no. 2 (1998): 278-297.
- Newman, Robert P. *Owen Lattimore and the "Loss" of China*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992.
- Nguyen, Hung P. "Russia and China: The Genesis of an Eastern Rapallo," *Asian Survey* 33, no. 3 (1993): 285-301.
- Niyazi, Aziz. "Islam and Tajikistan's Human and Ecological Crises." In Ruffin and Waugh, *Civil Society in Central Asia*, 180-197.
- Norins, Martin R. "The New Sinkiang – China's Link with the Middle East," *Pacific Affairs* 15, no. 4 (December 1942): 457-470.
- Noumoff, S. J. "First United Front (1922-1927)." Unpublished Paper.
- . "Is China the Next Threat?" *China Report* 35, no. 4 (1999): 467-491.
- . "Reflections on the Afghan Revolution," *BISS Journal* 6 (1985): 1-37.
- Olcott, Martha Brill. *Central Asia's New States: Independence, Foreign Policy, and Regional Security*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996.
- . "Islam and Fundamentalism in Independent Central Asia." In *Muslim Eurasia: Conflicting Legacies*, edited by Yaacov Roi, 21-40. London: Frank Cass, 1995.
- . *Kazakhstan: Unfulfilled Promise*. Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2002.
- . "Regional Cooperation in Central Asia and the South Caucasus." In Ebel and Menon, *Energy and Conflict*, 123-144.
- . "The Growth of Political Participation in Kazakhstan." In *Conflict, Cleavage, and Change in Central Asia and the Caucasus*, edited by Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrot, 201-241. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Olcott, Martha Brill, and Natalia Udalova. "Drug Trafficking on the Great Silk Road: The Security Environment in Central Asia," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Working Paper, no. 11, March 2000.

- Paine, S. C. M. *Imperial Rivals: China, Russia, and their Disputed Frontier*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1996.
- Pan Zhiping 潘志平. ““Dong tu” kongbu zhuyi: youlai he fazhan” “东突” 恐怖主义: 由来和发展 [“East Turkestan” Terrorism: Origins and Development]. In Pan, *Zhongnanya*, 287-299.
- . “Xinjiang de anquan huanjing — lishi yu xianzhuang de kaocha” 新疆的安全环境 — 历史与现状的考察 [An Investigation of the History and Present Situation of the Security Environment of Xinjiang]. In Pan, *Zhongnanya*, 317-337.
- , ed., *Zhongnanya de minzu zongjiao chongtu* 中南亚的宗教冲突 [Religious and Political Conflicts of South and Central Asia]. Urumchi: Xinjiang Renmin chubanshe, 2003.
- Peimani, Hooman. *Regional Security and Future of Central Asia: The Competition Between Iran, Turkey, and Russia*. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998.
- Peng Xihua 彭习华. “Lengzhan hou Zhongmei shounao waijiao chuyi” 冷战后中美首脑外交刍议 [Sino-US Summit Diplomacy After the Cold War], in Xiao and Tang, *Daguo Waijiao*, 441-457.
- Perdue, Peter C. *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Pfaltzgraff, Robert L. “China, Soviet Strategy, and American Policy,” *International Security* 5, no. 2 (Autumn 1980): 24-48.
- Pirseyedi, Bobi. *The Small Arms Problem in Central Asia: Features and Implications*. Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 2000.
- Powell, Colin. “Interview: Secretary of State Colin Powell; Roundtable with Japanese Journalists,” Washington, DC, August 12, 2004. [http:// hongkong.usconsulate.gov/uscn/state/2004/081201.htm](http://hongkong.usconsulate.gov/uscn/state/2004/081201.htm) (accessed November 11, 2004).
- . “Testimony at Budget Hearing Before the House International Relations Committee,” Washington, DC, February 6, 2002. <http://hongkong.usconsulate.gov/uscn/state/2002/020601.htm> (accessed December 1, 2005).
- Pringsheim, Klaus H. “China, India, and their Himalayan Border (1961-1963),” *Asian Survey* 3, no.10 (October 1963): 474-495.

- Putin, Vladimir. "President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin Press Statement at Conclusion of Shanghai Cooperation Organization Heads of State Meeting," St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, June 7, 2002. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/sco_20020610_2.html (accessed December 9, 2005).
- . "Statement by the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, at a Meeting of the Heads of State of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Moscow, the Kremlin, May 29, 2003." http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/20030530_sco_putin.html (accessed January 3, 2006).
- Putin, Vladimir and Nursultan Nazerbayev. "Press Conference of President of Russian Federation Vladimir Putin and President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev," St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, June 7, 2002. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/sco_20020610_3.html (accessed December 9, 2005).
- Qu Hong 曲洪. *Dangdai Zhongdong zhengzhi yisilan: guan cha yu sikao* 当代中东政治伊斯兰: 观察与思考 [Political Islam in the Contemporary Middle East: Observation and Reflections]. Beijing: Shehui kexue chubanshe, 2001.
- Rashid, Ahmed. "The Fires of Faith in Central Asia," *World Policy Journal* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 45-55.
- . *Jihad: The Rise of Militant Islam in Central Asia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.
- . "The New Struggle in Central Asia," *World Policy Journal* 17, no. 4 (Winter 2000/2001): 33-45.
- . "The Taliban: Exporting Extremism," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 6 (November/December 1999): 22-35.
- . *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism?* London: Zed Books, 1994.
- . *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*, rev. ed. London: I.B. Taurus, 2001.
- Rawski, Evelyn S. *The Last Emperors: A Social History of Qing Imperial Institutions*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998.
- "Regulation on the Status of the Observer to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization," June 17, 2004. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2004/20040621_sco_

observer.html (accessed February 24, 2006).

Ren Qing, and Yuan Xin. "Impacts of Migration to Xinjiang since the 1950s." In Iredale et. al., *China's Minorities on the Move*, 89-105.

"Reshenie sovema glav gosudapstv – chlenov Shankhayskoy organizatsii sotrudnichestva "o npredostavlenii Indiya statusa nablyugatelya pry ShOS"" Решение Совета глав государств -- членов Шанхайской организации сотрудничества "О предоставлении Республике Индия статуса наблюдателя при ШОС" [Decision of Council Member-States of the Shanghai Cooperation Granting Observer Status to India], Astana, July 5, 2005. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2005/20050705_sco_09.html (accessed February 24, 2006).

"Reshenie sovema glav gosudapstv – chlenov Shankhayskoy organizatsii sotrudnichestva "o npredostavlenii Iran statusa nablyugatelya pry ShOS"" Решение Совета глав государств -- членов Шанхайской организации сотрудничества "О предоставлении Исламской Республике Иран статуса наблюдателя при ШОС" [Decision of Council Member-States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Granting Observer Status to Iran], Astana, July 5, 2005. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2005/20050705_sco_11.html (accessed February 24, 2006).

"Reshenie sovema glav gosudapstv – chlenov Shankhayskoy organizatsii sotrudnichestva "o npredostavlenii Islamskoy Respublike Pakistan statusa nablyugatelya pry ShOS"" Решение Совета глав государств -- членов Шанхайской организации сотрудничества "О предоставлении Исламской Республике Пакистан статуса наблюдателя при ШОС" [Decision of Council of Member-States of Shanghai Cooperation Organization Granting Observer Status to Pakistan], Astana, July 5, 2005 http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2005/20050705_sco_10.html (accessed February 24, 2006).

Rigby, T. H. "The Afghan Conflict and Soviet Domestic Politics." In *The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan*, edited by Amin Saikal and William Maley, 67-81. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

- Robinson, Thomas W. "The Sino-Soviet Border Dispute: Background, Development, and March 1969 Clashes," *The American Political Science Review* 66, no. 4 (December 1972): 1175-1202.
- Rorlich, Azade-Ayse. "Islam and Atheism: Dynamic Tension in Soviet Central Asia." In Fierman, *Soviet Central Asia*, 186-218.
- Rossabi, Morris, ed. *Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004.
- . "Introduction." In Rossabi, *Governing China's Multiethnic Frontiers*, 3-18.
- . *Modern Mongolia: From Khans to Commissars to Capitalists*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005.
- Roy, Denny. *China's Foreign Relations*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.
- Roy, Olivier. *The Failure of Political Islam*. Translated by Carol Volk. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994.
- . *The Foreign Policy of the Islamic Renaissance Party*. New York: Council of Foreign Relations, 2000. http://www.cfr.org/pub3587/olivier_roy/muslim_politics_project_the_foreign_policy_of_the_central_asian_islamic_renaissance_party.php (accessed January 23, 2005).
- . *Islam and Resistance in Afghanistan*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- . "The Islamic Movement in Central Asia: Between Nationalism and Internationalism." Paper presented at the Harvard Forum for Central Asian Studies and the Caspian Studies Program, April 4, 2000.
- . *Globalized Islam: The Search for a New Ummah*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.
- . "Kolkhoz and Civil Society in the Independent States of Central Asia." In Ruffin and Waugh, *Civil Society in Central Asia*, 109-121.
- . *The New Central Asia: The Creation of Nations*. New York: New York University Press, 2000.
- . "Qibla and the Government House: The Islamist Networks," *SAIS Review* 21, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 2001): 53-63.

- Rozman, Gilbert. "China's Soviet Watchers in the 1980s: A New Era in Scholarship," *World Politics* 37, no. 4 (July 1985): 435-474.
- . "Moscow's China-Watchers in the Post-Mao Era: The Response to a Changing China," *The China Quarterly*, no. 94 (June 1983): 215-241.
- Rubin, Barnett R. *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan: State Formation and Collapse in the International System*, 2nd ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.
- Rudelson, Justin. *Oasis Identities: Uyghur Nationalism along China's Silk Road*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
- . "Xinjiang's Uyghurs in the Ensuing US-China Partnership," Congressional Executive Commission on China, Uyghur Panel, June 10, 2002.
<http://www.cecc.gov/pages/roundtables/061002/rudelsonStatement.php> (accessed March 4, 2006).
- Rudelson, Justin, and William Jankowiak. "Acculturation and Resistance: Xinjiang Identities in Flux." In Starr, *Xinjiang*, 299-319.
- Ruffin, M. Holt, and Daniel Waugh, eds. *Civil Society in Central Asia*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999.
- Rupert, James. "Dateline Tashkent: Post-Soviet Central Asia," *Foreign Policy*, no. 87 (Summer 1992): 175-178+180-195.
- "Russian-Chinese Joint Communiqué, November 24, 1998." <http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/communique-981124.html> (accessed November 14, 2005).
- "Russian Federation, Republic of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Tajikistan and People's Republic of China on Confidence Building in the Military in the Border Area," April 26, 1996. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/shaps/shanghai_19960426.html (accessed April 11, 2005).
- Rutland, Peter. "Paradigms for Russian Policy in the Caspian Region." In Ebel and Menon, *Energy and Conflict*, 163-188.
- Rywkin, Michael. *Moscow's Muslim Challenge: Soviet Central Asia*, 2nd ed. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1990.
- Sageman, Marc. *Understanding Terror Networks*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

- Segal, Gerald. "China and Afghanistan," *Asian Survey* 21, no. 11 (November 1981): 1158-1174.
- Sestanovich, Stephen. "U.S. Policy Towards Russia," Statement Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on European Affairs, May 20, 1998. http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/us/980520_sestan_russia.html (accessed November 4, 2005).
- Shan Weiguo 单卫国. "Shilun shiyou anquan" 试论石油安全[Preliminary Discussion of Petroleum Security], *Guoji shiyou jingji* 国际石油经济[International Petroleum Economics] 11, no. 10 (October 2003): 5-11.
- "Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism," June 15, 2001. http://sectsco.org/news_details.asp?id=93&LanguageID=2 (accessed November 22, 2005).
- Shlapentokh, Vladimir. "Russia, China and the Far East: Old Geopolitics or a New Peaceful Cooperation?" *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 28, no. 3 (1995): 307-318.
- Skrine, C. P. *Chinese Central Asia*. London: Methuen & Co., 1926.
- Skrine, C. P., and Pamela Nightingale. *Macartney at Kashgar: New Light on British, Chinese and Russian Activities in Sinkiang, 1890-1918*. London: Methuen, 1973.
- Song Dexing 宋德星. "Zhongya diyuan zhanlue taishi de wu da dezheng" 中亚地缘战略态势的五大特征 [The Five Main Characteristics for the Central Asian Strategy], *Xiandai guoji guanxi* 现代国际关系, no. 2 (2005): 3-5.
- Starr, S. Frederick. "Introduction." In Starr, *Xinjiang*, 3-24.
- . ed. *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004.
- "Statement of China-Kazakhstan Friendly Relations," *Xinhua*, October 21, 1993. In Black, *Russia and Eurasia 1993*, 299-300.
- "Statement of Principles," Project for the New American Century, June 3, 1997. <http://www.newamericancentury.org/statementofprinciples.htm> (accessed December 11, 2005).
- "Statement on the Defense of Taiwan," Project for the New American Century, August 20, 1999. <http://www.newamericancentury.org/Taiwandefensestatement.htm> (accessed December 11, 2005).

- Su Hao 苏浩. *Yatai hezuo anqu yanjiu* 亚太合作安全研究[Asia-Pacific Security Research]. Beijing: Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 2003.
- Sun Zhuangzhi 孙壮志. *Zhongya xin geju yu diqu anquan* 中亚新格局与地区安全[The New Order and Regional Security in Central Asia]. Beijing: Shehui kexue chubanshe, 2001.
- . “Central Asia’s Transition to a Market Economy: An Analytical Comparison with China.” In Zhang and Azizian, *Ethnic Challenges*, 147-165.
- Talbot, Strobe. “A Farewell to Flashman: American Policy in the Caucasus and Central Asia,” Address at the SAIS, the Johns Hopkins University, July 21, 1997.
<http://www.state.gov/www/regions/nis/970721talbot.html> (accessed October 17, 2005).
- Tarock, Adam. “The Politics of the Pipeline: The Iran and Afghanistan Conflict,” *Third World Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (1999): 801-20.
- Tazmini, Ghoncheh. “The Islamic Revival in Central Asia: A Potent Force or a Misconception,” *Central Asian Survey* 20, no. 1 (2001): 63-83.
- Terrill, Ross. *The New Chinese Empire – and What it Means for the United States*. New York: Basic Books, 2003.
- “Text of China-Russia Statement, April 25, 1996.” <http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/statement-960425.html> (accessed March 20, 2005).
- “Text of Chinese-Russian Joint Statement, April 23, 1997.” *Xinhua*, April 23, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-079.
- “Text of Chinese-Russian Joint Statement, November 11, 1997.” *Xinhua*, November 11, 1997. In FBIS-CHI-97-315.
- “Text of Chinese-Russian Joint Statement, September 3, 1994.” <http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/statement-940903.html> (accessed March 20, 2005).
- “Text of Hu Jintao-Nazarbayev Joint Declaration on Cooperation, June 3, 2003,” *Xinhua*, June 3, 2003. In FBIS-CHI-2003-0603.
- “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America.” The White House: Washington, DC, September 2003. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html> (accessed December 11, 2005).

- Tian Chunrong 田春荣. "2002 nian Zhongguo shiyou jinchukou zhuangkuang fenxi" 2002 年中国石油进出口状况分析 [An Analysis of China's Oil Imports and Exports in 2002], *Guoji shiyou jingji* 国际石油经济 11, no. 3 (March 2003): 24-30.
- Tilly, Charles. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." In *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, 169-191. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Toops, Stanley W. "The Demography of Xinjiang." In Starr, *Xinjiang*, 241-263.
- Townsend, Jacob. "China and Afghan Opiates: Assessing the Risk," *Silk Road Paper*, June 2005.
- "Transcript of Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage Press Conference – Conclusion of China Visit," Beijing, China, August 26, 2002.
<http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn/press/release/2002/ptr/1502-armitage.html> (accessed December 8, 2005).
- "Treaty on Friendship, Collaboration and Mutual Aid Between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation (25 May)." In Black, *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual, 1992*. Vol. 2, *CIS and Successor States*, 92-97.
- Tsu Yen Hu. "Uyghur Movement Within Xinjiang and its Ethnic Identity and Cultural Implications." In Iredale et. al., *China's Minorities on the Move*, 123-38.
- U.S. Census Bureau. "Foreign Trade Statistics." <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5700.html#1996> (accessed March 12, 2006).
- "U.S., China Stand Against Terrorism: Remarks Made by President Bush and President Jiang Zemin in Press Availability," Shanghai, People's Republic of China, October 19, 2001. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011019-4.html> (accessed November 27, 2005).
- "U.S. Interests in the Central Asian Republics." Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of the Committee on International Relations in the House of Representatives, February 12, 1998. http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa48119.000/hfa48119_0.HTM (accessed October 17, 2005).
- United Nations Drug Control Programme. "Supply of and Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances 1996." Vienna, 1998.

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Afghanistan Opium Survey 2005," November 2005. http://www.unodc.org/pdf/afg/afg_survey_2005.pdf (accessed January 26, 2006).
- . "Central Asia: Strategic Programme Framework, 2004-2007." December 6, 2005. www.unodc.org/pdf/uzbekistan/SPF_Central_Asia_2004-2007.pdf (accessed January 5, 2006).
- . "Definitions of Terrorism." Publication Date Unavailable. http://www.unodc.org/unodc/terrorism_definitions.html (accessed November 23, 2005).
- . "The Opium Economy in Afghanistan: An International Problem." 2003. http://www.unodc.org/pdf/publications/afg_opium_economy_www.pdf (accessed January 16, 2006).
- . "World Drug Report 1997," http://www.unodc.org/adhoc/world_drug_report_1997/Contents/CONT.pdf (accessed January 26, 2006).
- United Nations Office on Drug Control and Crime Prevention. "Illicit Drugs Situation in the Regions Neighboring Afghanistan and the Response of the ODCCP." October 2002.
- United Nations Security Council. "Resolution 1368: Adopted by the Security Council at its 4370th Meeting, on 12 September 2001." <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/533/82/PDF/N0153382.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed December 8, 2005).
- . "Resolution 1373: Adopted by the Security Council at its 4385th Meeting, on 28 September, 2001." <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/557/43/PDF/N0155743.pdf?OpenElement> (accessed December 8, 2005).
- United States Department of State. "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, 1996." http://www.state.gov/www/global/narcotics_law/1996_narc_report/index.html (Accessed March 20, 2005).
- "United States-Uzbekistan Declaration on the Strategic Partnership and Cooperation Framework," United States Department of State, Washington, DC, March 12, 2002. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2002/8736.htm> (accessed December 4, 2005).
- van Creveld, Martin. *The Transformation of War*. New York: The Free Press, 1991.

- van der Leeuw, Charles. *Oil and Gas in the Caucasus and the Caspian: A History*. New York: St. Martin's, 2000.
- Vasil'ev, Aleksey [Алексей Васильев]. *Rossiia na blizhnem i Srednem Vostoke* Россия на Ближнем и среднем Востоке [Russia in its Neighborhood and in the Middle East]. Moscow: Nauka izdatel'skaya, 1993.
- Vernadsky, George. "Notes of the History of the Uighurs in the Late Middle Ages," *Journal of American Oriental Society* 56, no. 4 (December 1936): 453-461.
- Vertzberger, Yaacov. "Afghanistan in China's Policy," *Problems of Communism* 31, no. 3 (May-June 1982): 1-23.
- . "India's Border Conflict with China: A Perceptual Analysis," *Journal of Contemporary History* 17, no. 4 (October 1982): 607-631.
- . "The Political Economy of Sino-Pakistan Relations: Trade and Aid 1963-82," *Asian Survey* 23, no. 5 (May 1983): 637-652.
- Vorob'eva, V. Ya [В. Я. Воробьева]. "Interv'yu spetsial'nogo predstavatelya prezidenta Rossii po delam ShOS V. Ya. Vorob'eva, opublikobannoe b gazete "Vremya nobostey"" Интервью специального представителя Президента России по делам ШОС В.Я.Воробьева, опубликованное в газете "Время новостей" 5 июля 2005 года [Interview of the Special Representative of the Russian President to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization V. Ya. Vorob published in Vremya Novostei, July 5, 2005] http://russia.shaps.hawaii.edu/fp/russia/2005/20050705_sco_04.html (accessed February 24, 2006).
- Voskressenski, Alexei D. *Russia and China: A Theory of Inter-State Relations*. London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.
- Walsh, Richard J. "China and the New Geopolitics of Central Asia," *Asian Survey* 33, no. 3 (1993): 272-284.
- Wang, John Z. "Eastern Turkestan 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.
- Wang, David D. *The Yining Incident: Under the Soviet Shadow; Ethnic Conflicts and International Rivalry in Xinjiang, 1944-1949*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 1999.

- Wang Gongli 王功礼 and Xing Zhihe 邢治河. "Cong guandao fazhan kan woguo tianran qiye fazhan de jieduan xing" 从管道发展看我国天然气业发展的阶段性 [From Pipeline Development to Development of China's Natural Gas Industry], *Guoji shiyou jingji* 国际石油经济 12, no. 4 (April 2004): 43-45.
- Wang Guoqiang 王国强. "Yingxiang diqu jushi de junshi yinsu" 影响地区局势的军事因素 [Influence of the Regional Situation on the Military Factor], *Xiandai guoji guanxi* 现代国际关系, no. 2 (2005): 10-12.
- Wang Jinguo 汪金国. "Sulian jieti hou Afuhan zai Zhongya diyuan zhengzhi zhuanbian zhong de yingxiang" 苏联解体阿富汗在中亚地缘政治转变中的影响 [Afghanistan's Role in Transforming Central Asia after the Breakup of the Soviet Union], *Dongou Zhongya yanjiu* 东欧中亚研究 no. 5 (2001): 77-82.
- Wang Li 王莉. "Zhongguo duobian waijiao de xin fazhan: 'Shanghai hezuo zuzhi' de shijian" 中国多边外交的新发展——“上海合作组织”的实践 [New Developments in Chinese Multilateral Diplomacy: A Case Study of the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization"], in Xiao and Tang, *Daguo waijiao*, 510-528.
- Wang Xinsheng 汪新生. "Yantai xin qiju xia de anquan guan, hezuo guan" 亚太新棋局下的安全观合作观 [The New Chessboard of the Asia Pacific: Perspectives on Security and Cooperation], in Wang, Yu, and Gao, *9.11 yu Zhongguo*, 1-9.
- Wang Xinsheng, Yu Changsen 喻常森, and Gao Hongbin 高宏斌, eds. *9.11 yu Zhongguo jiaru WTO zhi hou de yantai diqu guoji guanxi* 9.11与中国加入WTO之后的亚太地区国际关系 [International Relations of the Asia Pacific After 9.11 and China's Accession to the WTO]. Beijing: Shehui kexue chubanshe, 2003.
- Wang Yeqi. "Waiguo shiyou gongsi zai Eluosi touzi mianlin de wenti" 外国石油公司在俄罗斯投资面临的问题 [Issues Facing Foreign Oil Companies Investing in Russia], *Guoji shiyou jingji* 国际石油经济 11, no. 2 (February 2003): 34-36.
- Wang Zhijuan 王智娟. "Fei erganna: dangdai 'Basimaqi' de wochao" 费尔干纳: 当代“巴斯马奇”的窝巢 [Ferghana: The Nest of the Contemporary Basmachis]. In Pan, *Zhongnanya*, 195-206.
- Whiting, Allen S., and Sheng Shih-ts'ai. *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1958.

- Whitson, William. "The Field Army in Chinese Communist Military Politics," *The China Quarterly*, no. 37 (January-March): 1-30.
- Wiemer, Calla. "The Economy of Xinjiang." In Starr, *Xinjiang*, 163-189.
- Wishnick, Elizabeth. *Mending Fences: The Evolution of Moscow's China Policy From Brezhnev to Yeltsin*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001.
- Wiens, Herold J. "Change in the Ethnography and Land Use of the Ili Valley and Region, Chinese Turkestan," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 59, no. 4 (December 1969): 753-75.
- . "Cultivation Development and Expansion in China's Colonial Realm in Central Asia," *Journal of Asian Studies* 26, no. 1 (November 1966): 67-88.
- . "The Historical Geography of Urumqi, Capital of Chinese Central Asia," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 53, no. 4 (December 1963): 441-64.
- Wolfowitz, Paul. "Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz Interview with New York Times," United States Department of Defense, January 7, 2002. http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2002/t01132002_t0107dsd.html (accessed December 8, 2005).
- Wortzel, Larry M. "The Effects and Consequences of an Emerging China," Testimony Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Washington, D.C., March 20, 2003. <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/test031903.cfm> (accessed December 1, 2005).
- Wu, Aitchan K. *Turkistan Tumult*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1984. First Published 1940 by Methuen & Co.
- Wu Lei 吴磊. "Fan kong zhanlue, dao sa zhanzheng yu meiguo de shiyou zhengduo" 反恐战略倒萨战争与美国的石油争夺 [Counter Terrorism Strategies, the War in Iraq and American Scramble for Oil], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* 世界经济与政治 273, no. 5 (2003): 17-22.
- Xiao Jialing 肖佳灵, and Tang Xianxing 唐贤兴, eds. *Daguo waijiao — lilun, juece, tiaozhan* 大国外交 — 理论, 决策, 挑战 [Diplomacy of the Great Powers: Theory, Decision Making, and Challenges]. Beijing: Shishi chubanshe, 2003.
- Xing, Guangcheng. "China and Central Asia." In Allison and Jonson, *Central Asian Security*, 152-170.

- . “China and Central Asia: Towards a New Relationship.” In Zhang and Azizian, *Ethnic Challenges*, 32-49.
- Xu Tao 许涛. ““Shanghai hezuo zuzhi” de fazhan ji yiyi” “上海合作组织”的发展及意义 [Development and Implications of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization]. In *Yatai zhanlue chang* 亚太战略场 [Asia-Pacific Strategic Arena], edited by Lu Zhongwei 陆忠伟, 505-536. Beijing: Shishi chubanshe, 2002.
- . “Zhengju zou shi chongman bian shu” 政局走势充满变数 [Movement of the Variables in the Political Conditions], *Xiandai guoji guanxi* 现代国际关系, no. 2 (2005): 5-7.
- Xue Jundu 薛君度, and Xing Guangcheng 邢广程. *Zhongguo yu Zhongya* 中国与中亚 [China and Central Asia]. Beijing: Shehui kexue chubanshe, 1999.
- Ye Jiang. “Danbian zhuyi yu duobian zhuyi de xianghu zhuanhuan” 单边主义与多边主义的相互转换 [Interchanges of Unilateralism and Multilateralism], *Meiguo yanjiu* 美国研究 18, no. 4 (December 2004): 59-72.
- Yergin, Daniel. *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992.
- Yang Shu 杨恕. “Nengyuan lingyu de jingzheng yu hezuo” 能源领域的竞争与合作 [Competition and Cooperation in the Energy Sector], *Xiandai guoji guanxi* 现代国际关系, no. 2 (2005): 12-14.
- Yang Shu, and Wang Jinguo 汪金国. “Zhongya anquan he Afuhan dupin,” 中亚安全和阿富汗毒品 [Central Asian Security and Narcotics from Afghanistan], *Dongou Zhongya yanjiu* 东欧中亚研究 no. 4 (2001), 58-61.
- Yom, Sean L. “Power Politics in Central Asia: The Future of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization,” *Harvard Asia Quarterly*, (Autumn 2002). <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~asiactr/haq/200204/0204a003.htm> (accessed December 6, 2005).
- Yousaf, Mohammad, and Mark Adkin. *Afghanistan - The Bear Trap: The Defeat of a Superpower*. South Yorkshire: Leo Cooper, 2001.
- Zaman, Muhammad Qasim. *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Zhang Laiyi 张来仪. “Zhongya de yisilan jiduan zhuyi” 中亚的伊斯兰极端主义 [Islamic Extremism in Central Asia], *Dongou Zhongya yanjiu* 东欧中亚研究

- no. 5 (2001): 69-76.
- Zhang Wenmu 张文本. "Zhongguo nengyuan anquan yu zhengce xuanze" 中国能源安全与政策选择 [China's Energy Security and Policy Choices], *Shiji jingji yu zhengji* 世界经济与政治 273, no. 5 (2003): 11-16.
- Zhang Ximing 张西明. *Xin Meilijian diguo* 新美利坚帝国 [The New American Empire]. Beijing: Shehui kexue chubanshe, 2003.
- Zhang Yao 张耀. "'Xin diguo lun' pingxi" "新帝国论" 评析 [A Comment on Neo-Imperialism], *Shijie jingji yu zhengzhi* 世界经济与政治 275, no. 7 (2003): 33-38.
- Zhang, Yongjin, and Rouben Azizian, eds. *Ethnic Challenges Beyond the Borders: Chinese and Russian Perspectives on the Central Asian Conundrum*. London, McMillen Press, 1998.
- Zhao Huasheng 赵华胜. "Zhongya xingshi bianhua yu 'Shanghai hezuo zuzhi'" 中亚形势变化与“上海合作组织” [The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Changes in the Central Asian Situation], *Dongou Zhongya yanjiu* 东欧中亚研究 no. 6 (2002): 54-59.
- Zheng Lifeng 郑立峰, and Zhao Jingwen 赵景文. "Lengzhan hou Meiguo nengyuan zhan tiange ji zai Lihai diqu de nengyuan waijiao" 冷战后美国能源战田各及其在里海地区的能源外交 [America's Post-Cold War Strategy and Diplomacy in the Caspian Sea Region], *Guoji shiyou jingji* 国际石油经济 9, no. 10 (October 2001): 9-12.
- Zheng Yu 郑羽, and Li Jianmin 李建民. *Dulianti shi nian — xianzhuang, wenti, qianjing* 独联体十年—现状·问题·前景 (1991-2001), 2 vols. [Ten Years of the CIS: Present Situation, Problems, and Prospects]. Beijing: Shiji zhishi chubanshe, 2002.
- Zhonghua renmin gong heguo guoji tongji ju 中华人民共和国国家统计局 [National Bureau of Statistics of China]. *Zhongguo tongji nianjian 2003* 中国统计年鉴 2003 [China Statistical Yearbook 2003]. Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 2004.
- . *Zhongguo tongji nianjian 2002* 中国统计年鉴2002 [China Statistical Yearbook 2002]. Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 2003.

- . *Zhongguo tongji nianjian 2001* 中国统计年鉴2001 [China Statistical Yearbook 2001]. Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 2002.
- . *Zhongguo tongji nianjian 2000* 中国统计年鉴2000 [China Statistical Yearbook 2000]. Beijing: Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 2001.
- Zhu Qihuang 朱起煌. “Zhongya youqi diyuan zhengzhi xin taishi ji qi dui woguo de yingxiang” 中亚油气地缘政治新态势及其对我国的影响 [Latest Developments in Central Asian Oil and Gas Politics and its Influence on China], *Guoji shiyou jingji* 国际石油经济 10, no. 11 (November 2002): 32-37.
- Zhu Xingshan 朱兴珊, and Zhou Dadi 周大地. “Ruhe kandai Zhongguo de nengyuan anquan wenti” 如何看待中国的能源安全问题 [A Discussion on China’s Energy Security], *Guoji shiyou jingji* 国际石油经济 9, no. 10 (October 2001): 5-8.
- Zinni, Anthony C. “Anthony Zinni: Avoid a Military Showdown with Iraq,” *The Middle East Quarterly* 5, no. 3 (September 1998). <http://www.meforum.org/article/408> (accessed October 30, 2005).
- “Zuohao baozhang shiyou gongying anqu de da wenzhang,” 做好保障石油供应安全的大文章 [Oil Security: Systematic Work to be Done Well], *Guoji shiyou jingji* 国际石油经济 9, no. 3 (March 2001): 1.