

IMPACT OF THE XINJIANG PROBLEM
ON
THE CHINA'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS: 1990-2010

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ABSTRACT

IMPACT OF THE XINJIANG PROBLEM ON CHINA'S EXTERNAL RELATIONS: 1990-2010

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This thesis analyses the impact of the Xinjiang Problem on the foreign policy of China. Because of its strategic location and natural resources, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) has great importance for China. Contrary to the scholars who view Chinese foreign policy towards Central Asia as a product of China's economic ambitions, this thesis argues that Chinese foreign policy towards Central Asian region has been shaped by security considerations of China related to the Xinjiang Problem. The Xinjiang Problem shapes China's foreign relations with Central Asian states, Russia, the U.S. and Turkey because this problem has become an important element of China's territorial integrity as well as its strategy of stabilizing Central Asian region.

This thesis is composed of eight chapters. The first chapter is the introduction. The second chapter looks at the evolution of the problem of Xinjiang. Chapter three examines the main characteristics of the Chinese Foreign policy. The fourth chapter discusses the China's relations with the Central Asian states. The relation between China and Russia is analyzed in the fifth chapter. The sixth chapter deals with China's relations with the U.S. as well as the Taiwan and Tibet issues. The seventh chapter explores the impact of the Xinjiang Problem on China's relations with Turkey.

Keywords: The Xinjiang Problem, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the Uyghurs, China, Central Asia, Turkey, Russia, the U.S.

ÖZ

SİNCAN SORUNUNUN ÇİN DIŞ POLİTİKASINA ETKİSİ: 1990-2010

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Bu tez, Sincan sorununun Çin dış politikasına etkisini incelemektedir. Sincan Uygur Özerk Bölgesi (SUÖB) stratejik konumu ve doğal kaynakları nedeniyle Çin için büyük öneme sahiptir. Çin'in Orta Asya'ya yönelik politikalarını ekonomik isteklerinin bir ürünü olarak gören teorisyenlerin aksine, bu tez Çin'in Orta Asya bölgesine yönelik dış politikasının Sincan sorununa ilişkin güvenlik endişeleri ile şekillendiğini ileri sürmektedir. Sincan sorunu Çin'in Orta Asya ülkeleri, Rusya, Amerika ve Türkiye ile ilişkilerini şekillendirmektedir çünkü bu sorun Çin'in toprak bütünlüğü ve Orta Asya bölgesinin istikrarının sağlanması stratejisinin önemli bir unsurudur.

Bu tez 8 bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölüm giriş bölümüdür. İkinci bölümde Sincan sorununun tarihsel gelişimi incelenmektedir. Üçüncü bölümde, Çin dış politikasının ana özelliklerine değinilmektedir. Dördüncü bölümde Çin'in Orta Asya ülkeleri ile olan ilişkileri tartışılmaktadır. Beşinci bölümde Çin ve Rusya arasındaki ilişkilerin analizi yapılmaktadır. Altıncı bölümde Tayvan ve Tibet sorunları vurgulanmak suretiyle Çin ve A.B.D. arasındaki ilişkilerden bahsedilmektedir. Yedinci bölümde Çin ve Türkiye arasındaki ilişkiler ile tüm bu ilişkilere Sincan sorunun etkisi araştırılmaktadır. Sekinci bölüm ise sonuç bölümüdür.

Anahtar kelimeler: Sincan sorunu, Sincan Uygur Özerk Bölgesi, Uygur, Çin, Orta Asya, Rusya, Amerika, Türkiye.

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CHAPTER-1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis will evaluate the effect of the Xinjiang problem on the foreign relations of China. Xinjiang can be understood as “Chinese Central Asia” which implies two forms of transnational politics. In the first form Xinjiang presents itself as part of the historical and geocultural Central Asian region that is in the border of People’s Republic of China (PRC). In the second form Xinjiang represent a distinctive aspect of China’s claim to be a Central Asian power; that is, as a multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, and multi-confessional state.¹

The name of ‘Xinjiang’, meaning “New Dominion”, “New Frontier” or “New territory” in Chinese, was given by the court of Emperor Guang Xu, the emperor of the Qing Dynasty in 1885.² Xinjiang³, covers an area of 1.6 million square kilometres, located in the far northwest of China, bounded on the northeast by Mongolia, on the

¹ David Kerr & Laura C. Swinton, “China, Xinjiang and The Transnational Security of Central Asia”, *Critical Asian Studies*, vol 40, no 1, 2008, pp. 118-119

² Thomas K. Kostrzewa, “Separatist Nationalism in Xinjiang”, unpublished Phd thesis submitted to the University of Notre Dame, the USA, April 1996, p. 83
For the Uighurs, the majority of population in the region, it is part of their ancestral homeland of Turkestan, meaning the land where Turks live. So they called the region as “East Turkestan”. See in Liza Steele & Raymond Kuo, “Terrorism in Xinjiang?”, *Ethnopolitics*, vol 6, no 1, March 2007, p. 2; Barış Adıbelli, *Doğu Türkistan*, İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2008, 13
According to Chinese sources Xinjiang means that, ‘the ancient lands which reunited with fatherland’. See in Sheng Li, *Çin’in Xinjiang Bölgesi, Geçmişi ve Şimdiki Durumu*, Urumçi: Xinjiang Halk Yayınevi, 2006, p. 101

³ The region calls as “Uyghurstan” or “East Turkestan” by the ethnic Uyghur population living in region and the Uyghur Diaspora which Chinese authorities never accepts. According to China such use of “Uyghurstan” or “East Turkestan” threatens the sovereignty of China in the region. In this thesis for describing the problem between Uyghur and China “The Xinjiang Problem”; for referring a national identity and its problem “Uyghur problem”; and for implying the states established by Uyghurs and then collapsed in the history “East Turkestan” words were used, that are academically accepted.

north by Russia. On the west Xinjiang shares border with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan⁴. It also shares borders with Afghanistan, Pakistan and India on the south. To the east and south, Xinjiang borders on the Chinese regions and provinces of Tibet, Qinghai, and Gansu.⁵

The region consists of three major subregions: the Zungharian Basin in the north, the Tianshan Mountains in the center, and the Tarim Basin in the south. The Tarim basin has huge area and makes up southern Xinjiang. The area rimmed by Tarim River on the east and north, and at the centre of the basin there is Taklamakan⁶ desert, which is among the biggest deserts in the world. Although the desert is uninhabitable land, around the desert there are fertile oases, the “Silk Road” has focused on the oases of the the Tarim Basin.⁷ Historically, Xinjiang’s importance lies in the fact that it is on the trade routes, the “Silk Road”, linking China and Europe on the one hand, and China and India on the other.⁸

⁴ Hasan Haider Karrar, “The New Silk Road Diplomacy: A Regional Analysis of China’s Central Asian Foreign Policy, 1991-2005”, unpublished Phd thesis submitted to McGill University, the U.S., April 2006, p. 31

⁵ James A. Millward & Peter C. Perdue, “Political and Cultural History of the Xinjiang Region through the Late Nineteenth Century”, in Frederick Starr (ed.) *Xinjiang, China’s Muslim Borderland*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2004, pp. 29-31

⁶ According to Western literature “Taklamakan” means, “once you go in you cannot come out”. For Uighur scholars the word comes from “Taklimak-Makan” which means “buried civilization”. Part of Uighur lore is that buried somewhere perhaps under more than 200 meters of sand lies a city of gold. Justin Jon Rudelson, “Bones in the Sand: The Struggle to Create Uighur Nationalist Ideologies in Xinjiang, China”, unpublished Phd thesis submitted to Harvard University, the U.S., May 1992, pp. 22-24

⁷ James A. Millward & Peter C. Perdue, *ibid*, pp. 29-31, Bariş Adbelli, *ibid*, pp. 15-16; Eric Francis Mckenzie, “Chinese Communist Policy Toward Minority Nationalities in the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region in the Context of the Sino-Soviet Dispute, 1956-1965”, unpublished Phd thesis submitted to the University of Virginia, January 1986, pp. 18-24

⁸ Thomas K. Kostrzewa, *ibid*, p. 76

It also situated at the cultural and commercial crossroads between the Islamic world and the Han Chinese heartland. After the independence of the Central Asian republics the trade between China and Central Asia has made via Xinjiang. Region has historical, ethnic, cultural and social ties with Central Asian republics. China is also worried about the radical Islamist movements, drug trafficking, weapon trade, illegal migration and AIDS, which increasing in Central Asia, to spread over Xinjiang and also to China.⁹

Xinjiang is also among the most important countries in terms of the natural resources. In sources of industrial raw materials, it has been commonly acknowledged that Xinjiang has a wealth of minerals and metals. There are 118 types of minerals and metals which are officially identified in the region. Among the minerals; chrome, plutonium, iron, copper, silicon, lead, gold, silver, diamond and uranium are the most important sources. In terms of energy resources there are petroleum, natural gas, coal and lignite reserves. Xinjiang has the one-third of countries total petrol reserves and also has rich uranium reserves. Beside these Xinjiang meets the half of the cotton needs of the China and contains gold and copper resources.¹⁰ In a report of Xinhua News Agency, four new petrol and natural gas areas have been discovered in the region in which it is expected to get billions of tons petrol and natural gas.¹¹ In energy

⁹ Ahat Andican, *ibid*, pp. 13-14

¹⁰ Barış Adbelli, *ibid*, p. 18; Eric Francis Mckenzie, “Chinese Communist Policy Toward Minority Nationalities in the Xinjiang-Uighur Autonomous Region in the Context of the Sino-Soviet Dispute, 1956-1965”, unpublished Phd thesis submitted to the University of Virginia, January 1986, pp. 24-28

¹¹ R. Kutay Karaca, *Güç Olma Stratejisi Çin*, İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2008, pp. 244-245

depending international economy, the oil and natural gas resources of Tarim basin in Xinjiang makes region attractive for all great powers, especially for China.

The population of the Xinjiang which is 16 million people contains around 8 millions Uyghur, 1 million Kazakh, 140.000 Kyrgyz, 35.000 Tajik and 15.000 Uzbek people, which constitute the world's fourth largest concentration of Turkic peoples, after only Turkey, Iran and Uzbekistan.¹² As a result of such potentials, today's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) is a target of China's assimilation policies.¹³

Beside its geographic and economic significance, China gives importance for Xinjiang because of its security concerns. The demand of independence and any kind of compliance of this demand is against the China's 'One State' ideology. For China Uyghur secessionism would have a great influence on the secessionism of Tibet, Taiwan and Inner Mongolia as domino effect. As a result Uyghur secessionism can lead to a dissolution and further insecurity of the China.¹⁴ Since Xinjiang is a border

¹² Ahat Andican, "Central Asia in the Chinese Chess Game", *Avrasya Dosyası*, vol 12, no 1, 2006, p. 13; Graham E. Fuller & S. Frederick Starr, *The Xinjiang Problem*, Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, p. 10

¹³ Michael Clarke, "Xinjiang and China's Relations with Central Asia, 1991-2001: Across the 'Domestic-Foreign Frontier'", *Asian Ethnicity*, vol 4, no 2, June 2003, p. 215, (here after Xinjiang and China) Ahat Andican, *ibid*, p. 13; İsa Yusuf Alptekin, *Doğu Türkistan Davası*, İstanbul: Marifet Yayınları, 1981, pp.23-26

¹⁴ Ahat Andican, *ibid*, p. 13; Soohye Baek, "Uyghur (Eastern Turkestan) Secessionism in the People's Republic of China", unpublished MSC thesis submitted to Bilkent University, Ankara, June 2008, p. 4

province, there has been numerous struggle and wars over territory throughout history. As a result of this the stability of the region has vital importance for China¹⁵.

There is huge literature on this topic that for Michael Clarke, “This geo-strategic position, which made Xinjiang a pawn in the ‘Great Game’ for Central Asia in the nineteenth century, has again made it a key strategic frontier for China.”¹⁶ He also mentions that “the Chinese state can be conceived of as confronting an internal security dilemma in Xinjiang that is largely of its own making. The rise of ethnic nationalism and even terrorism in Xinjiang has at its core an essential contestation of identities reflected in the state’s discourse of development and security.”¹⁷ Although Yitzhak Shichor states that “While there have been a number of violent confrontations, there is no real threat to Chinese rule in Xinjiang. And while those who try to undermine Chinese rule in Xinjiang are not only Uyghurs but also Muslim, Islamic radicalism is a marginal phenomenon at best.”¹⁸ In the point of view of the Martin Wayne, for protecting its hegemony and providing security, China tries to reshape the society in Xinjiang from the bottom to the up using economic and educational development as a tool and aiming to counter insurgency in Xinjiang.¹⁹

¹⁵ Stephen Blank, “Xinjiang and China’s Security”, *Global Economic Review*, vol 32, no 4, 2003, pp. 124-125. Xinjiang is also described as ‘flashpoint’ means that disputed territory, an area of recurring international conflict.

¹⁶ M.Clarke, *Xinjiang and China*, p. 215

¹⁷ Michael Clarke, “China’s Internal Security Dilemma and the ‘Great Western Development’”, *Asian Studies Review*, vol 31, September 2007, p.324. Here after Great Western Development.

¹⁸ Yitzhak Shicor, “Blow Up: Internal and External Challenges of Uyghur Separatism and Islamic Radicalism to Chinese Rule in Xinjiang”, *Asian Affairs: An American Review*, vol 32 no 2, Summer 2005, pp. 123-124

¹⁹ Martin I. Wayne, *China’s War on Terrorism*, London: Routledge, 2008, p. 125

Christian Tyler, on the other side, has titled his book “Wild West China” because the Uyghur’s relationship with Beijing resembles that of the Native Americans with Washington: as China began to develop into a state with a distinct national identity in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Chinese, with their own version manifest destiny, began to see Xinjiang as a place inhabited by barbarians ready for civilizing. As a result of what Tyler calls “Chinese orientalism”, Beijing even convinced itself that untamed Xinjiang would welcome China’s intervention which ignore the region’s historical and cultural links to Central Asia.²⁰ The Chinese also underestimated the resistance Xinjiang would mount to Han culture.

For Frederick Starr, Uyghurs are now more desperate than they have been since 1949. This pressure could lead Uyghurs to become more radicalized and to turn to very Islamist groups with which Beijing has accused them of cooperating.²¹ According to Yuchua Zhu and Dongyan Blachford, as a multinational state China’s ethnic minority issue which emphasizes Xinjiang, is always a large political concern. China often treats this issue exclusively as a sovereignty matter and refuses outside criticism.²²

While these academicians analyses the Xinjiang problem from the realist point of view by concerning security issues with primary importance, on the other side, Michael Yahuda emphasizes the importance of economy for China. According to him,

²⁰ Josgua Kurlantzick, “the Unsettled West”, *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2004, <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/59942/joshua-kurlantzick/the-unsettled-west>. For further information see; Christian Tyler, *Wild West China: The Taming of Xinjiang*, London: John Murray, 2003

²¹ Frederick Starr, *Xinjiang, China’s Muslim Borderland*, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2004, pp.3-24

²² Yuchao Zhu & Dongyan Blachford, “China’s Fate as a Multinational State: a preliminary assessment”, *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol 15, no 47, May 2006, pp. 330-340

“foreign policy of China is very much a product of its domestic arena... The weight of China in international affairs and the degree to which its domestic society and economy is directly linked.”²³ Eric Hyer considers that the Chinese objectives as that: “concluding military agreements to dampen concerns about China’s ambitions in the region, taking firm measures against any separatist organisations and activities and, as the most dynamic economy in the region, developing economic relationships that tie Central Asia to China and lessen its dependence on Russia and Europe.”²⁴

This thesis argues that Chinese foreign policy towards Central Asia has been determined by its sense of insecurity related to the Xinjiang problem which has internal as well as external dynamics through Uyghur diaspora in Central Asia, Turkey and U.S., in contrast to the views of scholars who argues that the China’s policy towards Central Asia has been guided by energy related economic concerns.

This thesis analyses the China’s foreign relations and its Xinjiang problem within the neorealist theory framework which emphasizes the importance of the security and balance of power regarding to the economic issues. According to Kenneth Waltz, international system defines by the states behaviour which acts as independent sovereign political units. The desires and abilities of each state aiming to maximize power results in a “balance of power” that shapes international relations.²⁵

²³ Michael Yahuda, “China’s Foreign Policy Comes of Age”, *The International Spectator*, Vol. 42, No. 3, September 2007, p. 349

²⁴ Eric Hyer, “China’s Policy towards Uighur Nationalism”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol 26, no 1, April 2006, p. 83

²⁵ Kenneth N. Waltz, “Theory of International Politics”, In *Handbook of Political Science, International Politics*, vol III., edited by Fred J. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, 1-85; Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing company, 1975, pp. 69-70

“Neorealism holds at its basis that external pressures will outweigh domestic ones as state leaders rationally choose a foreign policy that will minimize security risk in an anarchical international system.”²⁶ According to Kenneth Waltz’s neorealist theory “in seeking to ensure their survival under anarchy, states have security as their primary goal and are primarily egoistic, pursuing the other goals they may have, including altruistic ones, only once security is assured. Generally, the interstate competition for security results in a balance of power.”²⁷

The thesis will firstly try to focus on the historical background of the conflict, China’s policies towards “Xinjiang Autonomous Region” and the actions of Uyghurs against China in the first chapter. In the second chapter, the evaluation of Chinese foreign policy culture throughout history, main foreign policy objectives and determinants of China’s foreign policy is analysed. The most important objective of China’s foreign policy is territorial integrity and non-interference of the domestic issues which mentioned mostly for Xinjiang problem.

In the third chapter, the foreign relations between China and other Central Asian states will be evaluated. Central Asia which has huge natural energy resources have great importance for China’s energy and economic policies, it is more important for security concerns of China because of region’s Uyghur population, historical and cultural links with Uyghurs, and threat of Islamic radicalism. The development of relations between China and Central Asian states, major issues between them,

²⁶ <http://hir.harvard.edu/interventionism/the-limits-of-neorealism>

²⁷ Menno R. Kamminga, “Is Neorealism Obsolete?” *Crossroads*, vol 9, n 1, p. 6
http://www.webasa.org/Pubblicazioni/Kamminga_2010_1.pdf

establishing cooperation through Shanghai Cooperation organisation and the role of Xinjiang problem in this relation will be mentioned in this chapter.

China's relations with Russian Federation, the historical background of relations between China and Russia, their efforts to gain hegemony and balance of power in the Central Asia through the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and the role of Xinjiang problem in their relations will be analysed in the fourth chapter.

In the fifth chapter China's relations with the U.S. will be examined. As one of the most powerful state in the international arena China's relations with U.S. has great importance. The evaluation of the diplomatic relations and major issues between the two great powers such as Taiwan and Tibet issues, and trade disputes will be mentioned and the role of Xinjiang problem in their relations will be analysed.

In the sixth chapter China's relations with Turkey will be examined. Turkey has importance for China especially because of its cultural, religious and historical bounds with Uyghur and also its Uyghur population. The development of relations and major issues between China and Turkey such as PKK and Cyprus issues will be mentioned.

Finally I will come to conclusion that the Xinjiang problem has great impact on the determining China's foreign policy because of China's security concerns. As long as preserving One-China policy and territorial integrity has vital importance for China, the Xinjiang problem will have great affect of shaping China's foreign relations with other countries. This sensibility of Xinjiang problem of China, gives other countries a chance to use this card against China when they needed.

CHAPTER-2

EVOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM OF XINJIANG

In this chapter, the historical origins of the Xinjiang Problem will be evaluated. In this regard, after explaining the origins and evaluation of the problem in a chronological order, the importance of the region for China and the policies of Chinese government towards Uyghurs will be explained.

2.1. HISTORY OF THE UYGHURS

The ethnical name of Uyghur first mentioned in epitaph of Bilge Kagan for the events in 716.²⁸ The term Uyghur originally applied to the ruling tribe of Turkic steppe nomadic society which practiced Shamanism, Manichaeism and Buddhism. From the mid-10th to the mid-15th centuries it was restricted to an elite Turkic society, referred as Uyghur, centered in Turpan oasis region.²⁹ Since the 1st century BC considered a geopolitically strategic area, Xinjiang is the fatherland of the Uyghur Turks.

²⁸ Kutay Karaca, *ibid*, p. 229

²⁹ Justin Jon Rudelson, *ibid*, p. 56

The most important characteristic of the Uyghur identity was their Islamic tradition. In the eighth century AD the Arap armies came into Central Asia and spread the Islam.³⁰

“Islam providing a unifying consciousness and Xinjiang Muslims identified themselves as belonging to the Umma which means the world community of Islam. Islam linked the specific identity of Xinjiang Muslims to the wider Muslim community and at the same time functioned as an ‘ethnic marker’ by drawing the boundaries of the community in opposition to other religious communities”³¹.

Therefore, religion is regarded as a tool for preserving their historical traditions and culture by Uyghur Muslims.³²

The Xinjiang region was the homeland of various branches of Turkic people such as the Uyghur, Kazak, Kyrgyz, Tatar and Uzbek people. The Uyghurs comprised the largest ethnic group in Xinjiang. They had common Turkic ancestry and rich Uyghur language. Located on the Silk Road, Uyghur played an important role in cultural exchanges between the East and the West, because of their location on the Silk Road. By this way they developed a unique culture and civilization of their own.³³

Uyghurs had their own empire in 744 AD in Mongolia. With the Kyrgyz invasion, the Uyghur kingdom however disintegrated and thereafter, split into two branches. The eastern branch founded the Kingdom of Kanchow in the present-day Gansu region.

³⁰ Abanti Bhattacharya, “Conceptualising Uyghur Separatism in Chinese Nationalism”, *Strategic Analysis*, vol 27, no 3, Jul-Sep 2003, p. 361

³¹ Abanti Bhattacharya, *ibid*, p.361

³² Abanti Bhattacharya, *ibid*, p. 361

³³ Abanti Bhattacharya, *ibid*, p. 359

The western branch set up the kingdom of Karakhoja or Qocho in present-day Turpan, Xinjiang. It is the latter branch that lasted for four centuries, from 850 to 1250 AD.³⁴

In 1220 AD Uyghurs came under the influence of the Mongols and many of the Uyghurs were incorporated into the Mongol administration. Under the Mongol rulers, the Central Asian region was divided into two khanates: Transoxiana or Western Turkestan in the west, the present day Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, and Eastern Turkestan in the East, the present-day Xinjiang. During this period, the Uyghurs existed as several small principalities. The Islamic Uyghur Kingdom of East Turkestan maintained its independence until 1876. In this year the Manchu Empire invaded East Turkestan and formally annexed East Turkestan into its territory.³⁵

Throughout history Xinjiang has had ruled by the Huns, the Uzbek Confederation, the Tibetans, the Uyghurs, the Arabs and the Mongols. The region also had invaded six times by the Chinese who have controlled the territory for 500 out of the last 2000 years.³⁶

2.2. XINJIANG AFTER CHINESE INVASION

Xinjiang's connection with China dates back more than 2000 years, the area has only been under effective Chinese control for about five centuries.

³⁴ Svat Sauced, *A History of Inner Asia*, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 266-269; Abanti Bhattacharya, *ibid*, p. 360 ; also see in Özkan İzgi, *Uygurların Siyasi ve Kültürel Tarihi (Hukuk Vesikalarına Göre)*, Ankara, Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1987 , pp. 9-47

³⁵ Abanti Bhattacharya, *ibid*, p. 360

³⁶ Liza Steele & Raymond Kuo, *ibid*, p. 3

According to Chinese chronicles, the earliest political relations between Xinjiang and central China can be traced back to 115 B.C. to 59 B.C.³⁷

Xinjiang came under Chinese rule in 1758 with the defeat of Jungar Mongols by the Manchus who established Qing dynasty. Qing policies of control were built on coercion, commercial incentives and the active promotion of colonial settlement. Military force came first and the headquarters of the military garrison in Ili region became the administrative center for the entire territory. By the mid-19th century Russian Empire was attacking from northern border of China. The Opium wars, Taiping and other rebellions in China proper had restricted its abilities to maintain its garrisons in distant Xinjiang. In 1864 the Chinese Muslims, called *Hui*, and Uyghurs rebelled in Xinjiang cities. During the Qing rule, starting with an unsuccessful uprising sparked by Manchu and Uyghur officials in *Üç Turfan* (Uch Turfan) in 1765, Uyghur revolted 42 times against the Qing rule for regaining their independence.³⁸ In 1865, Yakup Bey a warlord of Kokand Khanate entered Xinjiang via Kasghar, established Kasghar Khanate and conquered almost all region over the next six years.³⁹ The period from the Chinese military forces enter into the Xinjiang in 1755 to the Yakup Bey's coming to power in 1865 described as First Chinese invasion.⁴⁰ Yakup Bey's rule lasted until

³⁷ Ji Ping, "Frontier Migration and Ethnic Assimilation: A Case of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China", unpublished PhD thesis submitted to Department of Sociology at Brown University, May 1990, p. 49

³⁸ Soohye Baek, *ibid*, p.7

³⁹ Kulbhushan Warikoo, "Ethnic Religious Resurgence in Xinjiang", in Touraj Atabakı & John O'Kane (ed. By), *Post-Soviet Central Asia*, London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1998, p. 270; Svat Soucek, *ibid*, pp. 263-267

⁴⁰ Kutay Karaca, *ibid*, p. 231

General Zuo Zongtang reconquered the region between 1875 and 1877 for Qing China.

Xinjiang became a province of China in 1884, when the emperor of the Qing dynasty sent his army to suppress the Muslim rebellions.⁴¹ In 1884 Xinjiang was brought within the regular administrative structure of Chinese Empire and given the name of 'Xinjiang'. After the Chinese revolution of 1911 and the end of the Qing rule, Xinjiang entered upon an era of warlordism which lasted until the mid-1940s. This period was characterized by the authoritarian Han Chinese governors and by the subsequent turmoil of national rebellions and series of Muslim uprisings.⁴²

After this year the period of 'Second Chinese invasion' begun and lasted until the People's Liberation Army (PLA) re-established Beijing's rule in 1949. During the Second Chinese invasion, although China could not established stability in the region, the efforts to set up the independent Republic of Eastern Turkestan in 1933 and in 1944 ended in failure.⁴³

In 1931 as a result of maltreatment of Chinese governors against Uyghurs series of rebellions occurred. In the course of 1932-1933 the rebellions spread

⁴¹ Ji Ping, *ibid*, p. 49

⁴² Kulbhushan Warikoo, *ibid*, p. 270; Svat Soucek, *ibid*, 269

⁴³ Kulbhushan Warikoo, *ibid*, p. 271

over the other regions such as Turfan, Kasghar, Aksu. In 1933 Uyghurs declared Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkistan lasted until 1934.⁴⁴

During the following 10 years Soviet Union maintained a military detachment in north Xinjiang. The Chinese Guomindang government re-established control over Xinjiang from the early 1940s and cut the Soviet influence. During 1944-1949 a national liberal uprising exploded among Kazakhs and Uyghurs in northern Xinjiang and Kyrgyz in Tashkurghan (in the southwestern corner of the province) against China because of China's oppression and Han chauvinism, harsh warlord rule, economic hardship following a Chinese embargo on Xinjiang's trade with the Soviet Union. It was led by the "Provisional East Turkestan Revolutionary Government" directly sponsored by the Russian Troops. As a result of this movement East Turkistan Republic (ETR) emerged in 1944 and lasted until 1949. This was a secular, socialist government backed by the Soviet Union. Because of the Soviet Union's pressure to reach a cease-fire with China, Chinese forces in Urumqi, the ETR and Chinese government entered into an arrangement to govern Xinjiang jointly. After this arrangement the ETR continued virtually without Chinese interference in northern Xinjiang. This second East Turkistan Republic came to an end when the PLA entered Xinjiang in

⁴⁴ James Millward, "Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment", *Policy Studies*, 6, East-West Center: Washington, <http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/PS006.pdf>, pp.4-5; Kutay Karaca, *ibid*, p.232; Yuchao Zhu & Dongyan Blachford, "China's Fate as a Multinational State: a preliminary assessment", *Journal of Contemporary China*, vol 15, no 47, May 2006, p. 337

1949.⁴⁵ On 17 December 1949 a Provisional People's Government was established at Urumqi.⁴⁶

2.3. XINJIANG UNDER THE RULE OF COMMUNIST CHINA

2.3.1. Policies of PRC (1949-1989)

Ethnic identity is stronger in some ethnic groups than others. In Xinjiang strong ethnic identity enables the Uyghurs to claim their rights to have an independent state.⁴⁷ Recognizing Xinjiang's special ethnic position, China gave it the status of an "autonomous region", with the name of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). At the beginning China allowed the natives to assert their cultural identity, speak, use and teach their languages, and associate with the Chinese on a basis of personal equality. Economic development has been pursued vigorously, transportation and communications media expanded, education and the foundation of schools, including University of Urumqi, supported.⁴⁸

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) policies in Xinjiang over the 1949-1976 periods were aiming to the integration of the region into China's political and economic system and assimilation of the ethnic minorities. However, when

⁴⁵ James Millward, *ibid*, pp. 4-5; Ji Ping, *ibid*, p. 50

⁴⁶ Svat Soucek, *ibid*, p.272

⁴⁷ Zheng Yongnian, "Nationalism: Dynamics of Domestic Transformation and International Relations in China", in Wang Gungwu & Zheng Yongnian, *China and The New international Order*, London & New York: Routledge, 2008, p. 39

⁴⁸ Svat Soucek, *ibid*, p. 273; Sheng Li, *ibid*, pp.181-188

they came to the power the Communists supported the right of national self-determination. Then they narrowed their view of self-determination to mean autonomy within a united China.⁴⁹ On the other hand, China imposed its Marxist system on the province, with collectivization and other measures of questionable economic soundness. One of the targets was religion and organized Islam. The Chinese language also played important role.

“The period between 1949 and 1956 characterised by the ‘united front’ strategy of gradual reform of existing political, economic and cultural order via co-optation of ethnic”⁵⁰. The new Communist government declared in 1949 that China was a united nation with multiple nationalities. Main elements in Xinjiang were the activities of the Production and Construction Corps (PCC), which was primarily composed of demobilised PLA soldiers. Beside its military function PLA also served as absorbing large numbers of Han immigrants. “The First National People’s Congress drafted a constitution that did not consider secession a legitimate right and considered regions inhabited by non-Chinese “inalienable parts of the People’s Republic of China”⁵¹. The new government allowed to the establishment of autonomous regions, but stated that “all national autonomous districts shall be inseparable part of the territory of the PRC”⁵².

⁴⁹ Eric Hyer, “China’s Policy towards Uighur Nationalism”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol 26, no 1, April 2006, p. 77

⁵⁰ Michael Clarke, *Xinjiang and China*, p.209

⁵¹ National People’s congress, *Documents of the First Session*, Article 3, Chapter 1, Beijing: Xinhua, 1955, cited in Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p.77

⁵² *Survey of China Mainland Press*, Hong Kong: US Consulate, no 394, August 1952, p.9, cited in Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p. 77

During the 1950s the minority policies of PRC in Xinjiang were in culturally pluralistic way. The CCP was afraid of pursuing strong anti-Islam policies, fearing that it can lead to higher conflict between the Han Chinese and the Uyghur, and increase the anti Han sentiments.⁵³

“Because of the existence of strong traditional tendencies among local nationalities toward autonomy, the presence of distinct cultures, languages and religions in the non-Han area, the Soviet influence in the region, the continued resistance by counterrevolutionary elements in XUAR, and lastly the great distance between XUAR and China proper, which were amplified by the inadequate nature of the existing transportation PRC pursued more careful and tolerated policies.”⁵⁴

In 1957 speech, Premier Zhou Enlai argued that assimilation is a “progressive act if it means natural merger of nations advancing towards prosperity. Assimilation is such has the significance of promoting progress.”⁵⁵ According to this view non-Han peoples economically and culturally accept signification (*Hanhua*).⁵⁶

The period between the years 1958-1960 included the Great Leap⁵⁷ policies. Through these policies of Mao Zedong, China attempted to accelerate the process of assimilation of Xinjiang’s ethnic minorities with the Han. According to him, the ethnic minority policy was mainly to create a common identity among the all

⁵³ Soohye Baek, *ibid*, p. 24

⁵⁴ Donald H. McMillan, *Chinese Communist Power and Policy in Xinjiang, 1949-1977*, Boulder: Westview Press, 1979, p. 42

⁵⁵ Zhou Enlai, “Some Questions on policy towards nationalities”, *Beijing Review*, vol 32, no 9, 1980, p. 19, cited in Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p. 78

⁵⁶ Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p. 78

⁵⁷ The Great Leap Forward was begun in 1957 by Chairman Mao Zedong to bring the nation quickly into the forefront of economic development. He aimed to transform a predominantly agricultural society into an industrial economy within a few years which also lead society into the Great Leap Famine... See in <http://chronicle.uchicago.edu/960314/china.shtml>

nationalities in China. But the ultimate goal was to establish a communist society in which the ethnicity problem would be resolved.⁵⁸ The Great Leap policies were generally implemented without regarding local conditions. They were characterized by a campaign against the influence of Islam, the systematic elimination of pro-Soviet cadres and Soviet influence throughout the region. The economic programmes included radical collectivization and industrialization, which led famine and immigration of Uyghurs to the Soviet Union.⁵⁹ Beside the effects of economic program in the Great Leap years, assimilationist cultural thrust, political attacks on Xinjiang natives and upsurge in Han in-migration and settlement in northern Xinjiang led to numbers of Uyghurs, Kazakhs and others the Soviet Union in April-May 1962.⁶⁰

2.3.2. The Impact of Cultural Revolution

There were continuous conflicts on XUAR border from 1966 to 1976, which were the years of Cultural Revolution. This period witnessed a reassertion of the assimilationist policies of the Great Leap period. Beside that there was high tension in Sino-Soviet relations. As a result of policies in Cultural Revolution by 1972-1973 in Xinjiang, there occurred a five-year interregnum. This period was

⁵⁸ Yuchao Zhu & Dongyan Blachford, "Ethnic Minority issues in China's foreign policy: perspectives and implications", *the Pacific Review*, vol 18, no 2, June 2005, p. 246, here after "Ethnic Minority Issues"

⁵⁹ Michael Clarke , *Xinjiang and China*, p. 210

⁶⁰ James Millward, *ibid*, p. 6; for detailed information looked in, Ren Qiang&Yuan Xin, "Impact of Migration to Xinjiang Since the 1950s", (ed) Robyn Iredale, Noran Bilik, Fei Guo, *China's Minorities on the Move*, New York: M. E. Sharpe Inc., 2003.

characterised by the continued deterioration of Xinjiang's economic and security situation.⁶¹

Following the Cultural Revolution, the ascendancy of Deng Xiaoping⁶² continued to the disruptive condition. Deng-led reforms led to an approach to minority affairs focused upon encouraging stability and economic development, they also allowed a partial revival of religious and cultural traditions.⁶³ The limited liberalisation of CCP minority policy in Xinjiang was based upon the assumption that the minorities would be “content with being culturally, but not politically, distinct”.⁶⁴

There were still serious discontents among Han youths in XUAR. In 1979, many Han youth who had been dispatched from Shanghai and other urban centers in XUAR in the previous decade, demonstrated in Aksu. They requested better jobs, improved living conditions and educational opportunities in the region. In that time, they occupied both party and government offices for 40 days and many of them even staged hunger strike. PRC authorities dealt with these Han youth with tolerance.⁶⁵ After PLA occupied XUAR, Uyghurs, especially in the southern Tarim Basin, occasionally resisted to the efforts of Chinese Communist Party to

⁶¹ Michael Clarke, *Xinjiang and China*, p. 210

⁶² Deng Xiaoping (22 August 1904-19 February 1997) was a prominent Chinese revolutionary, politician, pragmatist and reformer. He was the late leader of the Communist Party of China.

⁶³ Donald H. Mcmillen, “Xinjiang and Wang Enmao: New Directions in Power, Policy and Integration?”, *The China Quarterly*, no. 99, 1984, pp. 579-580

⁶⁴ Donald H. Mcmillen, *ibid*, p.580

⁶⁵ James Millward, *ibid*, p.7

consolidate its rule and develop its policies. Chinese authorities claim that there were 194 cases of counterrevolutionary secessionist activities and 19 revolts in XUAR between 1951 and 1981.⁶⁶

The CCP's policies toward Xinjiang in the early 1980s were marked by increased liberalisation, particularly toward religion. Various reforms in nationality policies by Hu Yaobang⁶⁷ relaxed more assimilationist aspects of cultural policy and brought non-Han cadres back into the party and government.⁶⁸ In 1980, for instance, the provincial government reinstated the Xinjiang Islamic Association and encouraged Muslim minorities to establish contacts with Muslims outside the China. In May 1980, Hu Yaobang used its six-point reform programme for Tibet as a model for Xinjiang. These six-point included “the institution of genuine autonomy, economic policies consistent with local conditions, investment in agriculture and animal husbandry, the revival of culture and education, the phased transfer of Han officials out of autonomous regions”⁶⁹. Because of the belief that increased economic and cultural autonomy would generate demands for greater political autonomy, these liberal policies could not be implemented. These arguments turned out to be right when Uyghur stated to

⁶⁶Zhang Yumo, “Anti-Seperatism Struggle and Its Historical Lessons Since the Liberation of Xinjiang”, in <http://uyghuramerican.org/articles/141/1/The-Anti-Seperatism-Struggle-and-its-Historical-Lessons-Since-The-Liberation-of-Xinjiang.html>

⁶⁷ Hu Yaobang (1915-1989) served as chairman of the CCP 1981-1982, General Secretary of the CCP 1980-1987.

⁶⁸ James Millward, *ibid*, p. 8

⁶⁹ James Millward, *ibid*, p. 8

demand of greater political autonomy and jobs. These calls resulted in new impositions and surveillance from the Chinese authorities.⁷⁰

During the 1980s, the revival of the Uyghur's Islamic culture and identity has led to the formation of student associations aiming to promote the rights and culture of Uyghurs. In the years between 1949 and 1979, almost no demonstration was held by the Xinjiang minority students in Xinjiang. But after 1980, student demonstrations have broken out one after another.⁷¹

Although there were such liberal policy efforts, China systematically continued its migration and settlement policies. Through these policies, China has been following the policy of Han settlement in Xinjiang and adjoining Central Asian states “as means to work towards regional stability and bring the new Central Asian republics and peoples of Xinjiang closer to China’s world view.”⁷² During the period between 1949 and 2000, the number of Han settlers to XUAR has been increased. As a result of these policies, Hans now comprise almost half of the population in the XUAR,⁷³ which was another reason for Uyghur discontent.

Table 1 : Demographic strength of the main Xinjiang nationalities

⁷⁰ Amnesty International, “People’s Republic of China: Gross Violation of human Rights in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region”, April 12, 1999, p.4
<http://archive.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGASA170251999?open&of=ENG-CHN>

⁷¹ Remi Castets, “The Uyghurs in Xinjiang – The Malaise Grows”, *China perspectives*, September-October 2003, p. 9, <http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/document648.html>

⁷² Kulbhushan Warikoo, *ibid*, p. 272

⁷³ Liza Steele & Raymond Kuo, *ibid*, p. 3; Robyn Iredale, Naran Bilik, Wang Su, *Contemporary Minority, Migration, Education and Ethnicity in China*, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, UK, 2001, pp. 165-169

	Total Population (thousand)	Uyghurs (%)	Han (%)	Kazakhs (%)	Hui (%)
1949	4 330	3 291 (75 %)	291 (6.7 %)	443 (10.2 %)	122 (2.8 %)
1964	7 440	4 020 (54 %)	2 440 (32.8 %)	501 (6.7 %)	271 (3.6 %)
1982	13 002	5 950 (45.4 %)	5 287 (40.4 %)	904 (6.9 %)	571 (4.3 %)
1990	15 291	7 249 (47.4 %)	5 746 (37.5 %)	1 161 (7.4 %)	688 (4.5 %)
2000	18 494	8 523 (46 %)	7 250 (39.2 %)	1 318 (7.1 %)	844 (4.5 %)

Source: *Fenjin de sishi nian: 1949-1989. Xinjiang fenci* (The advancing 40 years. 1949-1989. Xinjiang Volume), Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, Urumchi, 1989, p. 332; *2002 Xinjiang tongji nianjian* (Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook), Pékin, Zhongguo tongji chubanshe, 2002, pp. 107, 109.⁷⁴

The provincial government's major problem in this period was to balance the implementing reform policies to generate economic stability and growth, while guarding against external influences. The most important events in 1980s were the protests against the use of Xinjiang for nuclear tests in November 1985, demonstrations in June 1988 against the publication of a book against Uyghurs and Kazaks, and the May-June 1989 student demonstrations in sympathy with those in Tiananmen Square.⁷⁵

2.3.3. The Movements in Xinjiang in 1990s

There is not so many common characteristic between Muslim Uyghur population of Xinjiang and China culturally, linguistically or historically. The

⁷⁴ <http://chinaperspectives.revues.org/document648.html>

⁷⁵ Michael Clarke, *Xinjiang and China*, p. 211. Tiananmen Square massacre were series of demonstrations by labor activists, students and intellectuals in PRC between April 15 and June 4, 1989. Although the protests lacked a unified leadership, participants were generally against Chinese authoritarianism and economic policies under the CCP rule. In Beijing, the resulting military response to the protesters by the PRC government left many civilians dead or injured. The official death toll according to the Chinese government was 200 to 300, but Chinese student associations and the Chinese Red Cross reported 2000 to 3000 deaths. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiananmen_Square_protests_of_1989

independence of Central Asian republics which have common ethnic origin with Uyghurs triggered the nationalist independence movement among Uyghurs in Xinjiang. “Due to ethnic character and the geopolitical significance of the region, the nationalist movements in Xinjiang more threatening to China’s unity than any such movements in Tibet or inner Mongolia”.⁷⁶

The 1990s witnessed the riots breaking out in Urumchi, Kashgar, Khotan, Kuqa, Aksu and Arrtush with the impact of the dissolution of Soviet Union and emerging new independent Turkic republics⁷⁷.

A Chinese “White Paper” demonstrates the situation of 1990s from Chinese point of view that;

“From the early 20th century to the late 1940s, the “East Turkistan” forces created many disturbances with the connivance and support of hostile foreign forces...Since the peaceful liberation of Xinjiang, the “East Turkistan” forces have never resigned themselves to their defeat. The tiny group of separatists who had fled abroad from Xinjiang collaborated with those at home, and looked for opportunities to carry out splittist and sabotage activities with the support of international anti-China forces. Especially in the 1990s, influenced by religious extremism, separatism and international terrorism, part of the “East Turkistan” forces both inside and outside China turned to splittist and sabotage activities with terrorist violence as their chief means. Some “East Turkistan” organizations openly stated that they would use terrorist and violent means to achieve their purpose of separation. The “East Turkistan” forces in China’s Xinjiang and relevant countries plotted and organized a number of bloody incidents of terror and violence, including explosions, assassinations, arsons, poisonings and assaults, seriously jeopardizing the lives, property and security of the Chinese people of various ethnic groups, and social stability in Xinjiang, and posing a threat to the security and stability of the countries and regions concerned.”⁷⁸

The largest incident occurred in Baren on April 5, 1990, Uyghurs called for the removal of the Chinese from Xinjiang and the formation of an independent

⁷⁶ Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p. 78

⁷⁷ Sheng Li, *ibid*, p. 298

⁷⁸ Information office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, White Paper on National Minorities and Its Practice in China, May 2003, <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20030526/4.htm>

East Turkestan state. The Baren events were the part of the wave of protests that began in April 1988 with a demonstration in Ghulja.⁷⁹ The uprising of Baren was initially organized by the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party (ETIP) under the leadership of Zehidin Yusuf and the preparations for the uprising began in 1988.⁸⁰ The People's Armed Police and Public Security Bureau intervened with lots of regular PLA troops. The uprising took three days to quell and resulted in more than 30 deaths and numerous casualties. The scale of the uprising increased China's suspicions of external influences penetrating Xinjiang and stirring up ethno-nationalist sentiments amongst Xinjiang's ethnic minorities. These suspicions were partially confirmed with reports that the insurgents around Baren were supplied with the weapons from Afghanistan. The ethnic minorities' grievances stemmed from the government's limited tolerance towards religious practices and the economic disparity between northern and southern Xinjiang. The uneven economic development in Xinjiang derives from the fact that the northern region of Xinjiang was the most heavily colonised by Han Chinese after 1949 and the region was where the bulk of the government's developmental policies were targeted.⁸¹

Three years later in 1995, there were incidents in Ili region in Xinjiang because of ethnic minority unrest which spread across 6 towns and involved

⁷⁹ Brent Hierman, "The Pacification of Xinjiang, Uighur Protest and Chinese State, 1988-2002", *Problems of Post-Communism*, vol 54, no 3, May-June 2007, p. 49

⁸⁰ Mehmet Emin Batur, "Doğu Türkistan Barın Şehitleri", *Hür Gökbayrak: Doğu Türkistan'ın Sesi*, http://www.hurgokbayrak.com/yeni_sayfa_138.htm

⁸¹ Nicolas Besquelin, "Xinjiang in the Nineties", *The China Journal*, no 44, July 2000, pp. 68-69

approximately 150,000 people. The protesters again called for the end of Chinese rule in Xinjiang and the establishment of an independent Xinjiang. The increase ethnic minority opposition to the Chinese presence in Xinjiang coincided with the authorities' mid-1990s limitations in religious expression. By the early 1990s, mosque construction and renovation curtailed, public broadcasting of sermons outside mosques was banned, and religious education was proscribed. Beside these only religious material published by the state Religious Affairs Bureau was allowed and Haj pilgrimages were tightly controlled and limited to participants over 50 years of age.⁸²

As a result of the ethnic minority opposition Chinese authorities began to implement a 'Strike Hard' campaign against ethnic separatists and criminals in 1995-1996. Number of people arrested in this period. But it could not prevent further ethnic separatist incidents.⁸³ In February 1997, anti-Chinese feelings among Xinjiang's Turkic-Muslim population erupted in Ili (Yining) region and there occurred many riots.⁸⁴ Chinese authorities continued to believe that the reason of unrest was the external influences. On 21 January 2002, Chinese Information and the State Council declared a document named 'East Turkestan Terrorists Exposed':

⁸² Michael Clarke, *Xinjiang and China*, p. 213; Paul George, "Islamic Unrest in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region", *Canadian Security Intelligence Service*, Commentary no. 73, Spring 1998, <http://www.csis-scrs.gc.ca/pblctns/cmmntr/cm73-eng.asp>

⁸³ Michael Clarke, *Xinjiang and China*, p. 214

⁸⁴ Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p. 78

“Over a long period of time the East Turkistan forces inside and outside Chinese territory have planned and organised a series of violent incidents in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China and some other countries, including explosions, assassinations, arsons, poisonings, and assaults, with the objective of founding a so-called state of ‘East Turkistan’. These terrorist incidents have seriously jeopardized the lives and property of people of all ethnic groups as well as social stability in China, and even threatened the security and stability of related countries and regions.”⁸⁵

According to this document between 1990 and 2001 there have been over 200 ‘terrorist’ incidents and they were resulted 162 death and 440 injuries. In this document it was claimed that East Turkistan Islamic Movement, led by Hasan Mahsum, has links to Osama bin Laden’s al Qaida network and also has connection to the ‘Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan’ (IMU).⁸⁶

2.3.4. The Great Western Development Program of China

The Chinese government’s strategy to combat the external influences is based upon a modernising economic agenda. The central assumption of this approach is that, if the government can deliver economic growth and well-being to Xinjiang’s ethnic minorities, ethnic separatist tendencies will diminish. In accordance with this viewpoint Chinese president Jiang Zemin declared ‘The Western Development Program’ (WDP) in June 1999. The program is the centrepiece of the Chinese government’s effort to strengthen national unity and integration.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ ‘EastTurkistan Terrorist Exposed’, China Daily, 21 January 2002, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/en/doc/2002-01/21/content_103075.htm

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Barry J. Naughton, “The Western Development Program”, in Barry J. Naughton & Dali L. Yang (ed.) *Holding China Together, Diversity and National Integration in Post-Deng Era*, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 253

At the beginning of the year 2000 a Western Development Leadership Small group was established, headed by Premier Zhu Rongji. The Western Development Leadership Group formally established its own Western Development Office in March 2000. The office announced ten large scale investment project, called as the WDP 2000 Big Ten.⁸⁸ “In October 2000, State Council announced a document which outlines the basic principles of WDP. The document included increased central funding of investments and government activity in the West; an improved investment atmosphere for foreign firms; and great investment in education, skills and technology. The first two objectives of WDP were improved infrastructure and the natural environment within five to ten years.”⁸⁹

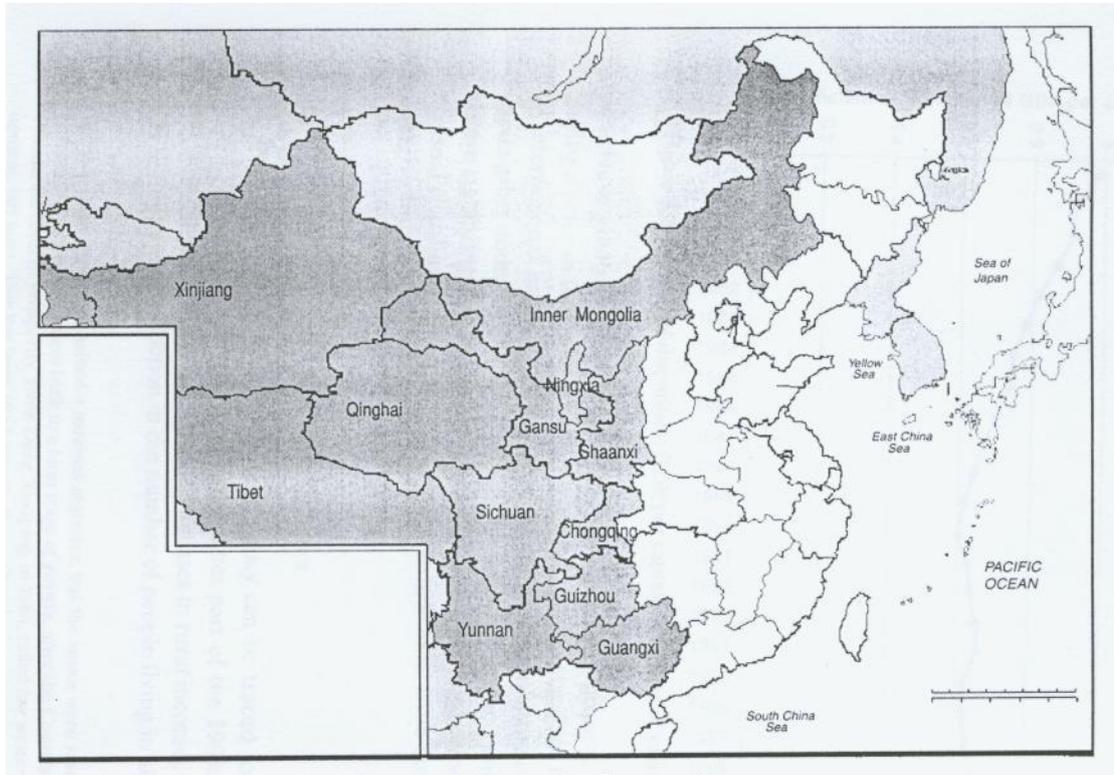
By this program China aimed to develop the region and also bring it more closely to China’s control.⁹⁰ By 2001 fourteen “western provinces and autonomous regions” were deemed to constitute the focus of the Great Western Development. The program includes the provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Shaanxi, Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhu, the municipality of Chongqing and the autonomous regions of Xinjiang, Tibet, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia, the Guangxi Zhang Autonomous Region, the Xiangxi Tujia-Miao Autonomous prefecture and the Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture. The majority of regions are characterised by economic

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 253

⁸⁹ Ibid, pp. 261-263

⁹⁰ Dru C. Gladney, “The Chinese Program of Development and Control, 1978-2001”, in Frederick Starr (ed.), *Xinjiang, China’s Muslim Borderland*, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 2004, p. 101

underdevelopment, lack of infrastructure, and large numbers of ethnic minorities, and are also far into the interior of the landmass.⁹¹



The announcement of WDP in 1999 was a realignment of existing policies into a more visible and prominent policy package. “This has been reflected in the practice of Chinese ‘minority policy’ since 1949 though the contradictory establishment and maintenance of ‘national regional autonomy’ for ethnic minorities which included the stated goal of assimilating all ethnic groups in China”⁹². The rhetoric of GWD alludes to nation-building perspectives; the exploitation of the rich resources; and the ambition of the Chinese nation to stand

⁹¹ Michael Clarke, “China’s Internal Security Dilemma and the ‘Great Western Development’”, *Asian Studies Review*, vol 31, September 2007, p. 327. Here after Great Western Development.

⁹² Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, pp. 328

up in the international environment. GWD is concerned with the uneven economic development of the west; it will do so on the basis of preserving “national unity” and “social stability”.⁹³

According to Michael Clarke, China pursued 5 major strategies under the GWD, “1) Environmental Degradation and Water scarcity; 2) Han in-migration; 3) Political and Economic Disparities; 4) Exploitation of Xinjiang’s potential energy resources; and 5) reinforced state control of ethnic minority religious and cultural expression/practice.”⁹⁴

So many people live in water-short, degraded, and over populated areas in China. The Chinese government has noted that there is a significant amount of desertification in Xinjiang. Some of the Tarim River and southern Xinjiang have dried up since 1970s as a result of urbanisation, extensive irrigation and land reclamation projects. Xinjiang is also home to some of China’s most important nuclear facilities, including the testing ground in the Lop Nor desert. The environmental impact of China’s nuclear tests has also been a cause of unrest for the region’s ethnic minorities.⁹⁵

The minority policy of China is accompanied with the WDP. Increased Han in-migration and settlement is also included in this policy. According to the 2000

⁹³ Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, pp. 328-330

⁹⁴ Michael Clarke, “China’s ‘War on Terror’ in Xinjiang: Human Security and the Causes of Violent Uighur Separatism”, *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol 20, 2008, p. 278. Here after War on Terror; *Great Western Development*, p. 331

⁹⁵ Michael Clarke, *Great Western development*, p. 335

census, the Han proportion of Xinjiang's population rose rapidly in the 1990s. Beside in-migration the Chinese authorities limited the use of Uyghur language in education and increased censoring of Uyghur literature dealing with political and cultural history⁹⁶. According to Chinese authorities;

“the languages of minority nationalities have very small capacities and do not contain many of the expression in modern science and technology, which makes education impossible. That is why the Chinese language is now used as the medium of instruction from the third grade of primary school in Xinjiang, to overcome the language barrier and obstacles to development.”⁹⁷

Regarding to the political disparities, the CCP permitted the PRC's ethnic minorities a limited territorial autonomy. Although the state's policy on regional autonomy explicitly states that the head of an autonomous region must be a member of the ethnic group exercising autonomy, in actually it is the CCP that holds real power in the region. “The ethnic minorities are under-represented in the CCP, as such the CCP apparatus in Xinjiang is dominated by Han, all first Part secretaries across the 124 prefectural, municipal, and county levels of the Party in Xinjiang, none is from an ethnic minority”⁹⁸.

At the core of the WDP was infrastructure. The infrastructure projects funded under WDP were in a broad range of sectors –including irrigation, urban construction, and environmental restoration- and the biggest share was belonged to the transport or energy related. The transport priority was highways and it is claimed that 20,000 kilometers of usable western highways were built in 2000-

⁹⁶ Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, p. 334

⁹⁷ Wen Wei Po, 2 August 2002, cited in Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, p. 333

⁹⁸ Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, p. 334

2001.⁹⁹ Although the central government has invested much in Xinjiang since 1990s, such investments has been channelled to large infrastructure projects.¹⁰⁰

The economic development program of China depends on the political stability, both national and regional level, and sufficient raw material-energy-labour force. Most of them planning to provide from Xinjiang.¹⁰¹ The economic development strategy of the state has resulted in the widening of inter-ethnic and regional disparities within Xinjiang. The urban populations of Xinjiang are predominantly Han while the rural population remains predominantly ethnic minority. The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) has also important role as conduit for Han colonisation and as an instrument of integration. The XPCC is a powerful colonising force. Its budget mostly comes from central government. The XPCC is securing territory through a string of cities, farm complexes and industries and ensuring security through its paramilitary functions.¹⁰²

Energy policy has also linked to regional policy in China, and western China has been seen as a supplier of hydropower and other forms of energy to the rest of China. Energy policy has taken on a new urgency since 1993, when China

⁹⁹ Barry J. Naughton, *ibid*, p. 269

¹⁰⁰ Michael Clarke, "China's 'War on Terror' in Xinjiang: Human Security and the Causes of Violent Uighur Separatism", *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol 20, 2008, p. 278. Here after War on Terror.

¹⁰¹ Şatlık Amanov, "China and Human Rights Policy of USA: The Case of East Turkestan", *Avrasya Dosyası*, vol 12, no 1, 2006, p. 86

¹⁰² Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, p. 335

became net importer of oil. All oil import is making by tanker to the coastal provinces. Oil reserves in the West are most promising in China, but the cost of transporting this oil to markets in eastern China is prohibitive.¹⁰³

The issue of the state's control and management of religious and cultural expression in Xinjiang is a problematic one. For controlling the religious and cultural expression China implemented hard and soft policies together. The hard strategies used when the state has perceived that the religion is a threat to security. Since 1990s China tried to regulate the rate of mosque construction, the re-education and reform of imams and greater regulation or closure of madrasahs.¹⁰⁴

In sum, the economic development strategy of state has resulted in the widening of inter-ethnic and regional disparities within Xinjiang. Moreover the Han-in-migration and environmental degradation also exacerbated inter-ethnic relations in the region. The increasing state control over cultural and religious aspects led to further marginalisation of Xinjiang's ethnic minorities. Although at the first place there were huge investments especially on transportation spheres, the geographical conditions of the region and diversification of investments prevent the complete development of region.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Barry Naughton, *ibid*, p. 264

¹⁰⁴ Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, p. 332

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 339

2.3.5. China's Policy Towards Uyghurs after 9/11

International agenda focused on the world terrorism after the attack on New York's World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Following the 9/11 events, the US attack on Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the establishment of US military bases in Central Asian republics brought Uyghur separatism into the international agenda.

Chinese government linked to "terrorist" Uyghur organizations to the Central Asian groups such as Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and Osama Bin Laden's Al Qaeda network. According to Millward; "the incidents made by Uyghurs were not necessarily bigger or threatening to the state. Any of these incidents since the 1997 Urumqi bus bombings, alleged to be the work of Uyghur terrorists, have targeted the civilians."¹⁰⁶ Although much Uyghur opposition to Chinese rule is non-violent and takes the form of passive resistance, it supports the Chinese government's discourse regarding Uyghur "terrorism".¹⁰⁷ Unrest in the region continues and the Chinese government claims many Uyghur have received covered military training in Afghanistan before the U.S. ousted the Taliban government in 2001.¹⁰⁸

Following the 9/11 Al Qaeda attacks on the US, official PRC pronouncements began to stress the threat of "terrorism" in Xinjiang as China's

¹⁰⁶ James Millward, *ibid*, p. 10

¹⁰⁷ Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, p. 336

¹⁰⁸ Bradley A. Thayer, "Confronting China: An Evaluation of Options for the United States", *Comparative Strategy*, no 24, 2005, p. 84

leadership manoeuvred to position itself “side by side with the US in the war against terror.”¹⁰⁹ By defining all separatist activity in Xinjiang as terrorist China is hoping to obtain carte blanche from the international community to take whatever action sees fit in the region.¹¹⁰ On January 21, 2002 the Information Office of the PRC State Council released a document titled “East Turkistan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity”. The document provided a catalog of violent acts committed by separatist groups in Xinjiang. It also mentions several organizations in implied connection with the incidents on the list.¹¹¹ This list was including the organizations; East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), East Turkistan Liberation Organization (ETLO), United Revolutionary Front of East Turkistan (URFET), Uyghur Liberation Organization (ULO).¹¹² In August 2002 the US embassy in Beijing announced the designation of the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) as a terrorist organization associated with al Qaeda.¹¹³ “The boundary between ethnic nationalism and terrorism is blurring, and the state’s crackdown on terrorism in some cases has been believed to involve human rights violation.”¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ James Millward, *ibid*, p. 11

¹¹⁰ Michael Dillon, *Xinjiang: China’s Muslim far northwest*, New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004, p. 162

¹¹¹ James Millward, *ibid*, p. 11

¹¹² Martin I. Wayne, *China’s War on Terrorism*, London: Routledge, 2008, pp. 44-47

¹¹³ James Millward, *ibid*, p. 13

¹¹⁴ Zheng Yongnian, “Nationalism: Dynamics of Domestic Transformation and International Relations in China”, in Wang Gungwu & Zheng Yongnian, *China and The New international Order*, London & New York: Routledge, 2008, p. 45

The US State Department's Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003 lists the East Turkistan Islamic Movement as an international terrorist organization, accused of plotting an attack against the US embassy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.¹¹⁵ In 2003 China declared the "White Paper on the History and Development of Xinjiang", which was the perceived connection between the separatist demands of Uyghurs, external forces, and religious and nationalist ideologies. The view that separatism in Xinjiang was generated by a combination of malevolent external forces and radical Islamist or nationalist ideologies is clearly expressed:

"They denied the history of the great motherland jointly built in all ethnic groups of China. They clamoured for "opposition to all ethnic groups of other than the Turks" and for the "annihilation of pagans", asserting that "China had been the enemy of the 'East Turkistan' nation for 3000 years... In the 1990s, under the influence of extremism, separatism and international terrorism, part of the "East Turkestan" forces inside and outside Chinese territory turned to splittist and sabotage activities with terrorist violence as the main means, even brazenly declaring that terrorist violence is the only way to achieve their aims. The programs of the "East Turkestan Islamist Party" and of the "East Turkestan Opposition Party" seized by the police clearly point out that they will "take the road of armed struggle," and "conduct various terrorist activities in densely populated regions..."¹¹⁶

In the context of the post 9/11 international environment, China claimed that Uyghur separatists are connected to Osama Bin Laden's al-Qaeda network and related movements in Afghanistan and the post-Soviet Central Asian states. According to China,

"the East Turkistan Islamic Movement headed by Hasan Mahsum is supported and directed by Bin Laden. Since the formation of the ETIM, bin Laden has schemed with the heads of the Central and West Asian terrorist organisations many times terrorist organisations many

¹¹⁵ Martin Wayne, *ibid*, p. 46

¹¹⁶ Information Office of the State Council of PRC, "East Turkistan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity", *People's Daily*, 21 January 2002, http://english.people.com.cn/200201/21/eng20020121_89078.shtml

times to help the “East Turkistan” terrorist forces in Xinjiang launch a “holy war”, with the aim of setting up a theocratic “Islam State” in Xinjiang.”¹¹⁷

Uyghur intellectuals established World Uyghur Congress (WUC) on April 16, 2004 in Munich Germany. The main objective of WUC is to promote the right of the Uyghur people to use peaceful, nonviolent, and democratic means to determine the political future of East Turkistan.¹¹⁸ Mr. Erkin Alptekin was elected as a president until 2006. On the second General Assembly of WUC all delegates have elected Rebiya Kadeer (Rabiye Qadir), the leader of Uyghur National Movement and the Spiritual Mother of Uyghur people, as the president of WUC.¹¹⁹

Between 21 and 25 May 2009, General Assembly of WUC convened in Washington/US and they declared three years activity report. This report includes the WUC activities aiming to internationalize the Uyghur problems and propaganda activities in other countries between the years 2006 and 2009. It also mentions the calls for boycotting of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, claiming

¹¹⁷ Information Office of the State Council of PRC, http://english.people.com.cn/200201/21/eng20020121_89078.shtml; Michael Clarke, Great Western Development, p. 337

¹¹⁸ <http://www.uyghurcongress.org/En/AboutWUC.asp?mid=1095738888>

¹¹⁹ Erkin Alptekin had lead WUC to its second General Assembly in 2006. Mr. Alptekin is a former general secretary of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) based in The Hague, the Netherlands. He has remarkable experience in working with international organizations and governments in lobbying for the Uyghur people’s right to self-determination. He is also a close friend of the Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of the Tibetan people.

Before Rebiya Kadeer (Rabiye Qadir) is elected as the president of WUC, she founded the “Uyghur Human Rights and Democracy Foundation” and headed “The Uyghur American Association” based on Washington DC. She was also the winner of Rafto Prize and the nominee for 2005-2006-2007 Nobel Peace Prize. For 5 years she spent her life in Chinese notorious prison. After her release, she has been exerting all her energy to fight for freedom, democracy and human rights for Uyghur people. For her great work she is entitled as “The Leader and The Spiritual Mother of Uyghur’s”.

that the PRC was not qualified to host the Olympic Games as the games have always been the symbol of friendship, equality and peace among nations. According to this report, WUC has effectively participated various UN bodies like United Nations Committee against Torture, and UN High Commission for Human Rights (UNHCR) Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process to bring much attention to the situation in Xinjiang. The WUC also initiated in 2007 a “Uyghur Leadership Training Program on Human Rights and Democracy” funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) to further strengthen the capacity of Uyghur leaders and activists around the world in understanding the basic concepts of international laws and mechanisms.¹²⁰

On July 5, 2009 series of violent riots broke out in Urumqi. Huge number of Uyghurs took part in these incidents. According to Chinese sources more than a hundred people died and more than a thousand people injured and most of these died and injured people are Chinese.¹²¹ “Many Uyghur men disappeared during wide-scale police sweeps in the days following the riots; Human Rights Watch (HRW) documented 43 cases and said number of disappeared persons is likely much higher”¹²². With these events Uyghur problem came into the agenda in international arena and most countries condemned the Chinese policies towards Uyghurs.

¹²⁰ <http://www.uyghurcongress.org/En/News.asp?ItemID=1243124983>

¹²¹ Erkin Emet, *5 Temmuz Urumçi Olayı ve Doğu Türkistan*, Ankara: Grafiker Yayınları, 2009, p. 29; Yan Hao, Geng Ruibin and Yuan Ye (18 July 2009). "Xinjiang riot hits regional anti-terror nerve". Xinhua. Chinaview.cn. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-07/18/content_11727782.htm

¹²² Ann Riley "China officials 'disappeared' Uighurs after Xinjiang riots: HRW", (21 October 2009). <http://jurist.law.pitt.edu/paperchase/2009/10/china-officials-disappeared-ughurs.php>

In conclusion; because of its strategic location and potential of natural resources Xinjiang has vital importance for China on one hand. On the other hand because of its Muslim Uyghur population, separatist tendencies and protests against China, Xinjiang constitutes also a threat for Chinese unity and security. In the changing context of international atmosphere after 9/11, China has begun to use the 'war on terror' rhetoric against Uyghurs for gaining support of global powers. On the other side Uyghurs have also changed their strategy and began to work for internationalization of the Uyghur problem by establishing relations with international organizations, NGOs, human right organizations, claiming human rights and democracy for Uyghur people. By this way Uyghur problem became a sensitive issue for China's security perception and for its relations with other powers.

CHAPTER-3

CHINESE FOREIGN RELATIONS

“China’s tremendous size, population, natural resources, military strength, and sense of history have placed it in the unusual position of being a poor developing country that has often been treated as a major global power having a special relationship with the United States and the Soviet Union and, since 1991, with Russia.”¹²³ Some analysts suggest that, by the mid-twenty-first century, China will have become not just the leading Asian power, but a superpower on the scale of the USA.¹²⁴ With such a huge historical background, economic and military power, the relations of China with other states have great importance for international environment. This chapter presents an overview to the roots of Chinese foreign policy.

In this chapter foreign policy understanding of China will be examined. In this framework historical development of foreign policy understanding, main determinants of Chinese foreign policy and aims of foreign policy actions of China will be discussed.

3.1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

China’s has very long and rich history. For thousands of years, the Middle Kingdom has been one of the world’s richest, most developed and powerful

¹²³ Robert G. Sutter, *Shaping China’s Future in World Affairs: The Role of the United States*, United Kingdom: Westview Press, 1996, p. 11. Here after *Shaping China’s Future*.

¹²⁴ Alan Hunter & John Sexton, *Contemporary China*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999, p. 176

civilizations. Because of the self-confidence and a lack of understanding of the world beyond its borders, Chinese rulers were not prepared against the colonial and imperial Western European powers in 16th century. China saw itself as the cultural center of the universe; it viewed non-Chinese civilians as barbarians. During history China developed a world view that “their emperor was the ruler of all humankind so that relations with other states were tributary, rather than state-to-state relations between equals.”¹²⁵

China’s view of itself as the undisputed center of civilization remained unchanged until the nineteenth century. In 19th century the Qing Dynasty began to deteriorate under Western pressure. Although European powers were able to establish colonies in China’s coastal regions, in the late nineteenth century, the Japanese also gained control of traditional Chinese territory, such as the island of Taiwan in the East China Sea.¹²⁶ In this period there occurred Opium Wars between China and Britain, which ended with the defeat of China and resulted in unequal treaty that forcefully and suddenly opened China to the world.¹²⁷ Since this date foreign powers gain superiority over China and forced it to sign unequal treaties which gives great advantages to Western powers.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Robert Sutter, *Shaping China’s Future*, p. 11

¹²⁶ Judith Kornberg & John R. Faust, *China in World Politics*, London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005, pp. 27-29

¹²⁷ Opium Wars, also known as Anglo-Chinese wars, lasted from 1839 to 1842 and 1856 to 1860. British smuggling of opium from British India into China in defiance of China’s drug laws erupted into open warfare between Britain and China.

¹²⁸ Judith Kornberg & John R. Faust, *ibid*, p.28

As the most important figure of the state of China, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was founded in 1921 by Chen Duxiu with Soviet support. It worked with Kuomintang (KMT) or Chinese Nationalist Party. In 1923 Mao Zedong had joined the CCP and formed the first Chinese Soviet Republic. After the Long March¹²⁹ in 1934, Mao Zedong became the leader of CCP. Mao's strategies and tactics were unique, based on the support of peasantry. With pursuing policies of the Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution, Mao tried to develop society.¹³⁰ The political, economic and military rise of China actually began more than a half a century ago with the success of the Communist revolution. It symbolized by Mao Zedong's phrase "China has stood up!" on the date October 1, 1949, at the official founding of the People's Republic of China.¹³¹

In the early 1950s and during the 1960s Chinese leaders called for worldwide armed struggle against colonialism and reactionary governments. China suggested that each country should adapt its revolution to its own conditions. Since 1949, China's encouragement of revolution abroad appeared to receive a lower priority than other foreign policy goals. Militancy and support for worldwide revolution peaked during the Cultural Revolution. In the mid-1970s, China reduced its support for most

¹²⁹ The Long March was a massive military retreat undertaken by the Red Army of the Chinese Communist Party, the forerunner of the People's Liberation Army, to evade the pursuit of the Kuomintang (KMT or Chinese Nationalist Party) army. The Communists, under the eventual command of Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, escaped in a circling retreat to the west and north, which reportedly traversed some 12,500 kilometers (8,000 miles) over 370 days.

¹³⁰ Judith Kornberg & John R. Faust, *ibid*, p. 29

¹³¹ Oliver M. Lee, "China's Rise and Contemporary Geopolitics in Central Asia", in *China's Peaceful Rise in the 21st Century*, (Sujian Guo ed.) England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006, p. 237

revolutionary and liberation movements around the world. It shifted from pushing for revolutionary change to seek economic and other advantages.¹³²

During Mao's time, 'world revolution' rhetoric and the 'Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence' doctrine guided its foreign policy. Mao's new concepts insure the creation of a new world which guided by the lights of Marx, Lenin and Mao.¹³³

Regarding the foreign policy actions, during the years of Cold War, Mao sided with the Soviet Union which led U.S. viewed China as a threat. Furthermore U.S. regarded China as expansionist, fanatically ideologist and reflecting uncompromising attitudes about world revolution.¹³⁴ In 1964 France, in 1970 Canada and Italy officially recognized China and established diplomatic relations. In 1970, 53 states recognized China, 68 states including U.S. and Turkey remained non-recognized.¹³⁵

After Mao's death, Deng Xiaoping terminated the political, educational and economic reforms associated with the Cultural Revolution. Xiaoping Deng made the pragmatic policy shift by opening up China to the outside world.¹³⁶ This period was the foundation of China's agricultural and industrial economy, science and technology, educational system, military strength and international standing.¹³⁷ In turning China away from Mao's politics of class struggle and the state-controlled economy, Xiaoping

¹³² Robert Sutter, *Shaping China's Future*, pp. 16-17

¹³³ Jay Tao, "Mao's World Outlook: Vietnam and the Revolution in China", *Asian Survey*, vol 8, No 5, May 1968, p. 416; Yuchao Zhu & Dongyan Blachford, *Ethnic Minority Issues*, p. 248

¹³⁴ Henry Kissinger, *Diplomasi*, İş Bankası Publishing, 2002, p. 698

¹³⁵ John S. Gregory, *The West and China Since 1500*, Palgrave Mcmillan Publishings, 2003, p. 182

¹³⁶ Yuchao Zhu & Dongyan Blachford, *Ethnic Minority Issues*, p. 248

¹³⁷ Olivier M. Lee, *ibid*, p. 237

Deng argued that “there was little prospect of a new world war – let alone a nuclear war- in the foreseeable future and that the main trend in international affairs was peaceful economic development.”¹³⁸

Xiaoping Deng worked for China’s rapid economic development that combined successful reform and openness to capitalistic international economy. In foreign policy, Xiaoping Deng shared Mao’s goal to provide equality and respect for China. He was executed the China’s foreign policy from 1978 until the early 1990s. Xiaoping Deng brought an end China’s support for revolutionary movements abroad and reduced China’s aid to the Third World. China carried on a foreign policy more balanced between the two superpowers. This policy was called “an independent foreign policy” at the 12th National Congress of the CCP in 1982. Under Deng’s leadership, Communist rule in China survived in spite of the demise of Communism in Eastern Europe and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. After the end of the Cold War, the Soviet bloc quickly disintegrated and China emerged as a superpower.¹³⁹

In 1990s, China’s leaders began to use nationalistic sentiment. Nationalism used for China’s desire to achieve territorial integrity and to restore its sovereignty over areas previously considered as part of China.¹⁴⁰ In the post Cold War period, Jiang Zemin described China’s new strategy as “new defense concept”, which puts the emphasis on cooperation and dialogue to settle conflicts. This strategy provided China the relative regional stability. It also gave the regional resident states confidence to

¹³⁸ Michael Yahuda, “China’s Foreign Policy Comes of Age”, *The International Spectator*, Vol. 42, No. 3, September 2007, p. 343

¹³⁹ [Yafeng Xia](http://www.e-ir.info/?p=518), “The Cold War and the Chinese Foreign Policy”, in <http://www.e-ir.info/?p=518>

¹⁴⁰ Robert Sutter, *Shaping China’s Future*, p. 14

deepen their ties with China without fear of domination. One of the Jiang Zemin's important legacies was the establishment of good working relations with the United States.¹⁴¹

After Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao came to power. China entered into the World Trade Organisation in 2001 under Hu Jintao. He emphasized the importance of seeking to create "harmonious society" at home and in broader terms "harmonious international order"¹⁴² which aided by "Scientific Development Concept"¹⁴³. It seeks integrated sets of solutions to economic, environmental and social problems, and recognizes a need for political reform. Hu Jintao also pursued the policy of "Peaceful Development" in international level.¹⁴⁴ He was mostly criticized about human right abuses and restrictions on media. In the aftermath of the July 2009 Urumqi riots, under the pretext that "separatists" were using the internet to organize their activities, the Chinese government cut off access to the internet in the entire Xinjiang region indefinitely.¹⁴⁵

Since its establishment and opening up to outside world, China evaluated from victim of modern history to the effective great power. During these periods the 'Five Principles' have been addressed as the cornerstone policy within which 'respect for

¹⁴¹ Michael Yahuda, *ibid*, p. 343

¹⁴² Michael Yahuda, *ibid*, p. 344

¹⁴³ The Scientific Development doctrine has been written into the constitution of the Communist Party and that of the state in 2007 and 2008. See in Kuhn, Robert Lawrence: Hu's Political Philosophies, <http://www.esnips.com/doc/907de9f2-a212-46b3-9efe-d23813bc03f3/Kuhn-Media-Press-Hu-Jintao.pdf>

¹⁴⁴ Francesco Sisci, "Hu Jintao and the New China", *Asia Times*, Jun 28, 2006, in <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/HF28Ad01.html>

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jDByyshZ0Foc4Oir2dwLSfBmpj4>

state sovereignty’ and ‘non-interference in others internal affairs’ have been two key principles.¹⁴⁶

3.2. DETERMINANTS OF CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES

China claims that it pursues an independent foreign policy which aims to safeguard world peace, oppose all forms of hegemonism and achieve economic modernization. China joined numerous international organizations and maintains diplomatic since the founding of PRC in 1949. By the mid-1990s, China had diplomatic relations with more than 150 nations and willing to interact with governments of different social systems or ideologies on basis of peaceful coexistence and mutual respect.¹⁴⁷“China has sought to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity and to achieve independence of action. Its foreign relations have been conditioned by its historical experiences, nationalism, ideology and the world view of its leaders, as well as by the governmental structure and decision-making process.”¹⁴⁸

In Chinese administration structure, the power for the most important decisions concentrated in the hands of a few key individuals at the top of the leadership hierarchy. As Michael Yahuda said; “China’s approach is conditioned more by its leaders’ views of China’s national interest than by abstract principle”.¹⁴⁹ Mao’s rule ended in 1976 with a nominal and transient successorship under Hua Guofeng. This

¹⁴⁶ Yuchao Zhu & Dongyan Blachford, *Ethnic Minority Issues*, p. 248

¹⁴⁷ Robert Sutter, *Shaping China’s Future*, p. 9

¹⁴⁸ Robert Sutter, *Shaping China’s Future*, p. 9

¹⁴⁹ Michael Yahuda, *ibid*, 341

was followed by a more dominant role for Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang.¹⁵⁰ All of them are from the Communist party tradition, so this led China more stable political actions than other democratic states.

We can classify the leaders of China as the first generation with Mao, second generation with Xiaoping Deng, third generation with Jiang Zemin and the fourth generation with Jintao Hu. The third generation leadership and its successors the political leaders lacked charisma but were more technically capable and less ideologically rigid than past leaders. “Composed of technocrats, economists, managers, and other professionals, the fourth generation was seen as likely to be more capable and innovative than previous leaders when confronted with economic and social problems; their behavior was seen as likely to be more technically competent and pragmatic when dealing with domestic and foreign policies.”¹⁵¹

China’s foreign policy is shaped by domestic agenda of its communist leadership. The economic interdependence of China to the outside world and its engagement with the international society are also effects the foreign policy actions of Chinese leaders.¹⁵² In general Chinese leaders are seen to be focused on promoting China’s economic development while maintaining political and social stability.¹⁵³ Chinese leaders view domestic and external variables in a mutually

¹⁵⁰ Allen S. Whiting, “China’s Foreign Policy options and Prospects: Toward the 1990s”, in Samuel S. Kim (ed) , *China and the World, Chinese Foreign Policy in the Post-Mao Era*, London: Westview Press, 1984, p. 321

¹⁵¹ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations, Power and Policy Since the Cold War*, New York: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers Inc., 2008, p. 27. Here after *Chinese Foreign Relations*.

¹⁵² Michael Yahuda, *ibid*, p. 339

¹⁵³ Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p.27

interactive manner. The declaration of open-door policy by Deng Xiaoping in his speech “To accelerate China’s modernization we must not only make use of other countries’ experience. We must also avail ourselves of foreign funding”, was a turning point for Chinese history.¹⁵⁴

China’s political sensitivity of dependence on foreign technology and assistance in economic development is a problem for China.¹⁵⁵ The leaders attempted to adhere to existing policies promoting rapid economic development. They also preserve their strict attitude against the opponents of one party rule in China which could result in wide range of human rights violations according to international observers.

Beside these, China has become an active member of nearly all the multilateral international and regional organisations and associations like UN, WTO, SCO. So China pursues some kind of policies which are converged with international norms and expectations. But Chinese leaders carry out these policies because they accord with China’s national interest. Although Chinese view of non-interventionism has clear foreign consequences, China accepts that intervention within certain limitations. For instance it should aim to promote regional peace and security.¹⁵⁶

China also has become the oil exporting countries’ largest economic partner and China’s leaders see it as matter of pursuing the national interest. Under governance of Hu Jintao, China tries to be seen as a “responsible great power” that supports the

¹⁵⁴ Samuel Kim, *ibid*, p. 22

¹⁵⁵ A. Whiting, *ibid*, p.323

¹⁵⁶ Michael Yahuda, *ibid*, p. 341

status quo.¹⁵⁷ For stabilizing the policies there were an effort to institutionalization of China's policies with proliferation of institutions from the top down. According to some experts one of the most important institutionalization was the growth of civil society amid the increasing wealth and influence of businesspeople and academics. On July 1, 2001, Jiang Zemin made a major speech advocating the recruitment of such wealthy and influential people into the party. The military had less representation than in the past.¹⁵⁸

When we look at the foreign policy decision making process; the decision makers represent a variety of government, party and military bureaucracies, government-affiliated and nongovernment think tanks, as well as broad segments of Chinese people reflecting aroused public opinion. Another feature of the recent foreign policy making process in China is that foreign governments' businesses, and other nongovernment groups which could effects the Chinese actors in determining the foreign policy process. But there is always a paramount leader at the top of the decision making process. Chinese foreign policy is seen as a product of an ongoing encounter between decision makers' perception of needs, interests, and values and their perception of reality.¹⁵⁹ Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaopin and Jiang Zemin became important figures in the past, and chairman of the Central Military Commission, is in the key final decision-maker role. CCP's Politburo Standing committee support paramount leader and influence his decisions. Under Hu Jintao's leadership there are nine members of

¹⁵⁷ Michael Yahuda, *ibid*, p. 341

¹⁵⁸ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 28

¹⁵⁹ Samuel S. Kim, "Chinese Foreign Policy Behavior," in Samuel S. Kim (ed) , *China and the World, Chinese Foreign Policy in the Post-Mao Era*, London: Westview Press, 1984, p. 22; Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*,p. 58

standing committee and many have experience and play important roles in foreign policy. Today Prime Minister Wen Jiabao and Vice President Zeng Qinghong are important actors in foreign policy. Beside these actors Hu Jintao allowed official Chinese media reports of politburo decision-making activities and study sessions, as well as decision-making meetings of the Politburo Standing Committee.¹⁶⁰

The communist leadership maintains the command of strong military, police, and other security forces. They use them against dissident political and social movements, such as Falun Gong, ethnic separatists, and other perceived opponents. In China there is no alternative to communist rule, which preventing the fragmentation and chaos that could accompany, regime change. And lastly there is popular acquiescence to regime authority which leads positive performance of the economy. All these are the important strengths of the communist administration of China.¹⁶¹

On the other hand leadership succession, nepotism and favoritism and increased corruption were serious problems. Though China's politics were becoming more stable and predictable, with the battles being fought on the institutional level, personal rivalries and relations remained important and could not be ignored.

3.3. MAIN AIMS OF CHINESE FOREIGN POLICY

From the nineteenth century until the end of World War II China suffered from dominations of foreign powers. As a result, the suspicion of foreign powers,

¹⁶⁰ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, pp. 58-60

¹⁶¹ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, pp. 31-32

opposition to any implication of inferior status and a desire to reassert sovereignty and independence has influenced Chinese foreign policy.

“Twentieth century Chinese felt deeply humiliated at the hands of Western imperialists and Japanese invaders... Modern Chinese nationalism, which has a strong appeal to the mass ethnic-racial stock known as the Han people, gained its strength as a protest movement against the foreign ‘devils’... Support for China’s nationalist revolution of 1911, which did away with dynastic rule, came from the Chinese masses who wished to create a strong modern China as a means of liberating the Middle Kingdom from foreign domination and humiliation. Sun Yat-sen¹⁶², in the same year, was recognized as the founder of Modern China... Sun pushed for three goal simultaneously, the Three Principles of the People... first, he wished instill a feeling of nationalist pride to unify the Chinese nation and free it from foreign control. Second, he sought to establish modern democratic institutions, which he believed were essential to mobilize the people to bring about his other goals. Third, he sought to bring about the modernization of China through education, technology, and improvement in social well-being.”¹⁶³

The Common Program of the Chinese People’s Consultative Conference (CPPCC) served as a provisional constitution after it was adopted in September 1949.

The document emphasized that the basic principle of China’s foreign policy was “to guarantee independence, freedom and territorial integrity of the state, support protection of world peace and friendly cooperation among peoples of all countries in the world, and oppose imperialist policies of aggression and war.”¹⁶⁴ Regime survival may be seen as the source of China’s reassertion of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (FPPC)¹⁶⁵ which are mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other’s internal affairs,

¹⁶² Sun Yat-sen (12 November 1866 – 12 March 1925) was a Chinese revolutionary and political leader. Sun is frequently referred to as the Father of the Nation. Sun played an instrumental role in overthrowing the Qing Dynasty in October 1911, the last imperial dynasty of China. He was the first provisional president when the Republic of China (ROC) was founded in 1912 and later co-founded the Kuomintang (KMT) where he served as its first leader.

¹⁶³ Judith Kornberg & John R. Faust, *ibid*, p. 28

¹⁶⁴ <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/china/19990914A128.html>

¹⁶⁵ “Originally proclaimed in 1954 as part of agreement between China and India, it was seen in the 1950s and 1960s as useful to overcome differences among third world countries and resist pressures from the West...”see in Michael Yahuda, *ibid*, p. 340

equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence in developing diplomatic relations and economic and cultural exchanges with other countries. Beside these China consistently opposes imperialism, hegemonism and colonialism which can see in the actions of its foreign policy.

As a great power, China has come to recognize that it has a greater stake in the system which is providing the regime survival and territorial integrity. Following the above principles over the past 50 years, China has actively engaged in foreign activities and in handling foreign affairs. China regards the right of independence as the basic principle of foreign policy.¹⁶⁶ By this way, China rejects interference in the internal affairs of a country in the name of human rights or humanitarian intervention. “The doctrine on non-interference is seen by the Chinese as the pillar of international order and the core meaning of sovereignty”¹⁶⁷. As Jiang Zemin argued at the UN in 2000, “without sovereignty, there would be no human rights to speak of.”¹⁶⁸ Accordingly it is used to avert international attempts to question one-party rule in China and provide legitimacy for Chinese rulers’ support for dictators.

Independence and territorial integrity are related to the Taiwan policy of China since the establishment of the People Republic of China. The state characteristic of China is not to be side in international disputes and not to bring disputes to the conflict.

¹⁶⁶ <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/china/19990914A128.html>

¹⁶⁷ Mihael Yahuda, *ibid*, p. 340

¹⁶⁸ <http://www.frmprc.gov.cn/english>

But Taiwan is out of the Chinese nonaggression concept. China also accepts on principle nonintervention into the internal affairs of other states.¹⁶⁹

China completely supported multilateralism within its region and more broadly in the world. For this aim China is trying to keep the prevailing international norms. It also aims to increase its influence through cooperation with its neighbors especially on security concerns and “emphasis on non-interference as defining characteristic of sovereignty can be reconciled with the right of humanitarian intervention as recognized by much of Western world.”¹⁷⁰

China’s deepening integration into international society is welcomed. But the absorption of a newly emerging great power with a fifth of the world’s population creates opportunities, challenges and problems. “The international community and the Western countries are finding that the issue in dealing with China is not whether to engage, but how to engage it.”¹⁷¹

When we look at the certain objectives of China we can see that Chinese leaders sought to perpetuate their power and avoid the fate of the Soviet Union and other East European communist regimes. Chinese leaders pursued territorial unification and integrity, especially with Taiwan and claims in the East and South China Seas. The

¹⁶⁹ R. Kutay Karaca, *Güç Olma Stratejisi Çin*, p121; Esat Arslan, “ABD ve Çin Yayılmacılığına Karşı Ön Asya Barışı”, 2023, January 2007, n. 69, p. 38

¹⁷⁰ Michael Yahuda, *ibid*, p. 338

¹⁷¹ Michael Yahuda, *ibid*, p. 349

leaders also sought to modernize China's economy, technology, and military capabilities and improve social conditions while maintaining stability.¹⁷²

In sum we see that territorial integrity, independence in movements and non-intervention in domestic affairs are basic principles for Chinese foreign policy. China behaves and conducts its policies towards Uyghurs and establishes its relations with other states with the basis of these principles, which emphasize the importance of security for China.

¹⁷² Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 37

CHAPTER-4

CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH THE CENTRAL ASIAN STATES

In Central Asia, post-cold war developments resulted in the creation of new states, reduced Moscow's influence, and opened doors for spreading Chinese interests. On the other hand the collapse of the USSR also created a power vacuum that posed problems for Chinese security. As a result of all Central Asian states are landlocked; they have to establish relations with its neighbors that could serve as contacts to the outside world. In this respect China which borders on Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan gains importance. "China has a very long frontier with Central Asia, not to mention the separatist tensions that are brewing in Xinjiang which has special economic ties and ethnic affinities with the region."¹⁷³

Effective diplomacy in bilateral relations and multilateral forms like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, growing trade relations, and increasing Chinese interest in Central Asian oil and gas laid the foundations for growing Chinese prominence in Central Asia.

This chapter contains the parts of development of the political relations between China and the Central Asian states, major issues between China and Central Asian states; and lastly the role of Xinjiang problem on the relations between these states.

¹⁷³ T.Shauman, *ibid*, p. 68

4.1. DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN CHINA AND CENTRAL ASIAN STATES

After the end of the Cold War China tried to have closer relations with Central Asia with the aim of stabilizing its western frontier, gaining access to the region's energy resources, and balancing Western influence in there. Beside these, "China also concerned about the problem arising from the linkage of religion and politics, could shield Xinjiang province and its ethnically Turkic population from outside Muslim and pan-Turkic influence".¹⁷⁴ Although Central Asian leaders assured China they would not tolerate separatist groups targeting China, China worried that they might lack sufficient response in case of such event.¹⁷⁵

After the independence almost all Central Asian states turned to autocratic regimes, which disturbed the western states. But China, different from western states, was not interested in democratization, human rights violations or regime types in the regions. China gave priority to regional stability and economic relations, which led Central Asian states to get closer with China.¹⁷⁶ One another reason leading China's strengthening its position in Central Asia is Central Asian states' fear of Russia's ambitions of establishing its hegemony towards the region. They regarded China and also US as balancing power against Russia.

¹⁷⁴ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Policy*, p. 309

¹⁷⁵ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Policy*, pp. 308-309

¹⁷⁶ Anıl Çeçen, *ibid*, pp. 303-304

Although China realized the importance of Central Asia for its security, she has some preconditions for improving relations. These were, first of all, supporting Chinese foreign policy of ‘Taiwan belongs to China’, not supporting Xinjiang problem and controlling East Turkestan diaspora living in Central Asia.¹⁷⁷

In first half of 1990s Chinese administration tried to establish political and economic relations with Central Asian states beginning with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan by trying to establish transportation infrastructure. Immediately after Kazakhstan’s gaining independence one million Chinese came to Kazakhstan and purchased land with the government support.¹⁷⁸

In military terms, China regarded expanding NATO activities as indicative of US efforts to spread its influence to the region, compress Russia and contain China. “Beijing criticized a September 1997 exercise in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan sponsored by the Partnership for Peace, which involved the so-called Central Asian Peacekeeping Battalion and contingents from four other countries, including Russia”¹⁷⁹.

In 1996 with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (which has direct border with China), Russia and China constituted Shanghai Five. This formation

¹⁷⁷ A. Andican, *ibid*, p. 30

¹⁷⁸ US cancelled this land sales of China after she entered into the region... Anıl Çeçen, “Yirmibirinci Yüzyılda Çin”, *Türkiye ve Avrasya*, Ankara: Fark Yayınları, 2006, p. 305

¹⁷⁹ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 310

provided a platform for solving border disputes between Central Asia and China, providing security on borders against Uyghur movements.¹⁸⁰

Turkmenistan is also interested in developing relations with China. In particular it wishes to follow the highly successful methods the Chinese applied in developing their oil and refining industries and in setting up small enterprises in rural areas. An agreement has been reached to lay a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to China and to commence air services between the capitals of the two countries.¹⁸¹ Turkmenistan also invited and joined Shanghai Five in 1997.

Uzbekistan preferred to be observer in Shanghai Five. Central Asian states regarded this formation as a platform for creating dialog with China. "Russia viewed it as mechanism in which Russia would control the contacts of China and Central Asian states."¹⁸² At their summit in July 2000, the Shanghai Five declared success in building a border belt of trust and transparency.¹⁸³

On the other side China desired to shift the formation to multilateral cooperation organization through providing permanent infrastructure. In early 2000 with replacing Yeltsin's presidency, as a result of economic crises begun 1998 and disagreement with NATO on Kosovo, Putin pursued more pragmatic foreign policy. In this circumstances Russia accepted China's offer and on 15

¹⁸⁰ Ahat Andican, "Çin Satrancında Orta Asya", *Avrasya Dosyası*, v. 12, n. 1, 2006, p. 9

¹⁸¹ Tatiana Shaumian, "Foreign Policy Perspectives of the Central Asian States", in *Post-Soviet Central Asia*, ed. By Touraj Atabaki & John O'Kane, London: Tauris Academic Studies, p. 70

¹⁸² Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 313

¹⁸³ Burak Bilgehan Özpek, "Şangay İşbirliği Örgütü ve Rusya", *Global Strateji*, y. 2, n. 6, Summer 2006, pp. 148-149 ; Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 313

June 2001, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan decided to transform the Shanghai Five to multilateral cooperation organization named Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).¹⁸⁴ Mongolia, Pakistan, Iran and India were allowed to join as observers.¹⁸⁵

Main aim of SCO was joint fight against terrorism, fundamentalism and separatism. SCO's importance for China is based on the organization's potential of solving the problems such as separatist movements, energy security and increasing US dominance in the region, which regarded as containment policy against China.¹⁸⁶ Russia and China used the Shanghai Five summit meetings and other occasions to call for a multipolar world. In 2001 China made a joint military exercise with Kazakhstan. In the next years joint counterterrorism military exercise implemented and in 2005 China made joint military exercise with Russia which reflects that China is using SCO for gaining military presence in Central Asia.¹⁸⁷

US entrance into Afghanistan and obtaining bases in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan disturbed Russia and China. The US strategy of 'Global war against

¹⁸⁴ Selçuk Çolakoğlu, "Future of Shanghai Cooperation Organization and China", *Uluslararası İlişkiler*, v. 1, n. 1, Spring 2004, pp. 180-182; "joint statement of China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Russia and Tajikistan on the Alma-Ata Meeting (3 July 1998)" *Beijing Review*, vol 41, no. 3, July-2 August 1998, p. 8; <http://test.china.org.cn/Beijing-Review/Beijing/BeijingReview/98Jul/98-30-8.html>

¹⁸⁵ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/int/sco.htm>

¹⁸⁶ Bahadır Pehlivan Türk, "Tarihten Bugüne Doğu Asya Düzeni ve Çin", *Avrasya Dosyası*, v.12, n.1, 2006, p. 137

¹⁸⁷ Roger N. McDermott, "The Rising Dragon: SCO Peace Mission 2007", The Jamestown Foundation, October 2007, p. 5; Alyson J. K. Bailes, Pal Dunay, Pan Guang and Mikhail Troitskiy, "The Shanghai Cooperation Organization", SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) Policy Paper no 17, May 2007, <http://books.sipri.org/files/PP/SIPRIPP17.pdf>

terror' after September 11 strengthened the similar perception in SCO and in 2004 summit they decided to establish regional antiterrorism structures which are centered in Tashkent and permanent nature. By this way China became a powerful and permanent actor in providing security of Central Asia. ¹⁸⁸

In 2004 Tashkent Summit Mongolia, in 2005 Astana Summit Iran, Pakistan and India accepted as observer member. This development led SCO shift from regional to continental organization. In the event of full membership of Iran and Pakistan, SCO's zone of influence would enlarge towards Middle East and Caucasus. ¹⁸⁹

The claims that US was supporting the colored revolutions, US's policy to force autocratic regimes on democratization, US's attitude towards Uzbekistan after the events in Andican led change in the balance of power in Central Asia. Beside these, one another reason of this change in balance of power is the successful joint military exercises of China and Russia. It reflected that they could protect region's stability without US. Central Asian states put some kind of distance on their relations with US. In the light of these developments, we can say that SCO is not only a platform for improving its multilateral economic relations, but also is a tool for military enlargement and ground for producing anti-US policies without coming to face to face with US. As the long-term goal of China

¹⁸⁸ B.Adibelli, *ibid*, p. 239-242

¹⁸⁹ A.Andican, pp. 24-26

for SCO, transforming it to the organization which provide security not only in Central Asia but also at continental level, like NATO.¹⁹⁰

In this respect we can say that China tried to establish its relations with Central Asian states and provide security not only through bilateral relations but also through multilateral organizations such as SCO.

4.2. MAIN ISSUES BETWEEN CHINA AND CENTRAL ASIAN STATES

Main issues of China's policies towards Central Asia consist of economic and international efficiency, internal and external security including Afghan war, fundamental Islamic movements and security of energy.¹⁹¹ China was also worried about the increased risk of nuclear proliferation in its neighborhood and feared that ethnic tensions in Xinjiang, Tibet and Mongolia would intensify.¹⁹²

4.2.1. Border Issue

After the dissolution of USSR, Central Asian states which have direct border with China, (Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan) inherited border disputes. Although China has unsolved border disputes with other regions, Central Asian region has special importance.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, pp. 26-27; Ilyas Kamalov, "Şangay Ekseni NATO'yu Dengeleyebilir mi?", *Stratejik Analiz*, n.69, January 2006, pp. 12-13 (here after 'Şangay Ekseni')

¹⁹¹ Roy Allison, *Challenges for the Former Soviet South*, Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 1996, p. 63

¹⁹² S.Hunter, *ibid*, p. 125

“A major turning point in Chinese-Central Asian relations was the official visit of the Chinese prime minister in April 1994. The principal purpose was to reduce hostility, the perceived threat from China in the region.”¹⁹³ In Summit of Shanghai in 1996, they decided to negotiate for sharing debated territories between the disputing parts and creating a security space by demilitarizing the some part of borders.¹⁹⁴

Kazakhstan’s relations with China were complex. In the past China claimed some parts of Kazakh territory. However during the Chinese Prime Minister Li Peng’s visit to Alm-Ata in 1994, an agreement was signed regarding the Sino-Kazakh.¹⁹⁵ With the agreement signed in 1998 debated territory shared between Kazakhstan and China.¹⁹⁶

Border disputes with Kyrgyzstan lasted until 2002. In this year Akaev administration left the large territory to China and problem solved. But this “territory transfer to China, led Akaev to be accused of traitor to his country by his parliament”¹⁹⁷. The problem with Tajikistan was also solved with Tajikistan’s acceptance to give some territory to China in 2002.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹³ S.Hunter, *ibid*, p. 126

¹⁹⁴ S.Hunter, *ibid*, p. 126

¹⁹⁵ T. Shaumian, *ibid*, p. 70

¹⁹⁶ A. Andican, p. 12

¹⁹⁷ A. Andican, *ibid*, p. 12

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 12

By this way, with 2000s China solved all border disputes with Central Asia and created mutual trust atmosphere. Through this China ensured the strategic security in the very important region and persuaded Central Asia that China not has ambitions to invade.

4.2.2. Energy Security and Nuclear Energy Issues

China's Central Asian energy projects reflected PRC efforts to obtain secure supply lines and avoid overdependence on a few sources of energy. Between the years 1978 to 2000 Chinese economy quadrupled and continuing to grow. So the continuous energy supply is vital for China. Until 1993 China was self-sufficient in energy supply with its rich coal reserves, from that year China became an energy importer country. Because of its rich coal reserves China consumes limited natural gas and petrol.¹⁹⁹ With its growing energy need, energy security gain importance in China's foreign policy objectives. Since 1993, China has imported petrol and corresponded 40% of its consumption through import. After US, as a second biggest petrol importer the energy security has vital interest. Although China transports most of its petrol from Middle East, Central Asia with rich energy reserves gained importance.²⁰⁰

In the light of its energy dependency of outside powers, China prepared "21st Century Energy Strategy" in 1990s including the aims of diversifying energy

¹⁹⁹ Necdet Pamir, "Çin ve Enerji Güvenliği", *Stratejik Analiz*, n. 66, October 2005, pp. 64-66; Bircan Dokuzlar, Hasan Yılmaz, Cenk Pala, *ibid*, p. 299

²⁰⁰ Bircan Dokuzlar, Hasan Yılmaz, Cenk Pala, "Çin'in Orta Asya Enerji Politikası", *Avrasya Dosyası*, v. 12, n. 1, 2006, pp. 299-301

resources and providing the security of energy routes to China.²⁰¹ According to this strategy China's main goals in Central Asia are; to support independence of Central Asian states, to prevent Russian Federation or another power to dominant in the region, to provide secure reach to energy resources and to make the region dependent to China economically.²⁰²

In this respect China turned its face to Central Asian states especially to Kazakhstan, which has the richest energy resources in Central Asia. China concluded agreements to develop Kazakhstan oil and gas fields and construct pipelines to Xinjiang. China and Kazakhstan signed an investment agreement on improving Uzen petrol reserves and establishing a petrol pipeline that involved development of two major oil and gas fields and the construction of pipelines in Kazakhstan. On July 4, 1997, Chinese National Petrol Company (CNPC) got the right of exploitation of Uzen petrol resources for 20 years and gained the 60% of Kazakh petrol company Aktobemunaygas. CNPC took over the Petro-Kazakhstan company in October 2005.²⁰³ One pipeline was to cover three thousand kilometers from Kazakhstan into western China, which was built and began operation in

²⁰¹ A. Andican, p. 21

²⁰² Kutay Karaca, "Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti'nin Küresel Güç Olma Stratejisinde Enerji Faktörü", 2023, n. 69, 15 January 2007, p18; John Calabrese, "China's Policy Towards Central Asia: Renewal and Accomodation", *Eurasian Studies*, n. 16, Autumn-Winter 1999, p. 86

²⁰³ K.Karaca, *ibid*, pp. 18-19; Gökçen Oğan, "Tehdit ve Fırsat Algılamaları Etrafında Gelişen Çin –Orta Asya İlişkileri", 2023, n. 69, 15 January 2007, p. 22; Asia Report, pp. 8-16

2006. This increased the Chinese energy imports coming along relatively secure routes from Central Asia.²⁰⁴

Beside these efforts, CNPC signed an agreement with Uzbekneftgas for cooperation on prospect for oil and gas. With Turkmenistan signed a treaty for establishing a pipeline for transport of Turkmen gas to China in 2006. If the efforts in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have success, China would achieve its strategy of energy diversification and securing energy routes. However China is dependent on these countries for energy, it tries to make these countries dependent on China with its exportations. With the policies of non-intervention to domestic policies and respecting of existing regimes, China is aiming to get closer the countries which have some democracy problems.²⁰⁵In spite of all these efforts, there are many signed agreements but only slow progress towards pipelines and other expensive infrastructure needed to get the oil and other energy to the consumer.²⁰⁶

On the other side there are some problems between China and Central Asian states causing by China's nuclear tests.

“China's continued nuclear tests at Lopnor, only 900 kms from the Chinese-Kazakh border, strain relations with Kazakhstan, who maintain radioactivity from China's tests has increased the incidence of congenital deformities and lung cancer in Kazakhstan. Kazakh

²⁰⁴ Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 309; for further information see: Vitaly Frolenkov, “China and the SCO Member Countries of Central Asia: Cooperation Over Energy”, *Far Eastern Affairs*, No 2 Vol 36, 2008

²⁰⁵ Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 309

²⁰⁶ Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 309

antinuclear activists have accused China of conducting the tests when the winds blow westward toward Kazakhstan rather than toward China interior.²⁰⁷

China has denied these accusations and has resisted pressure to renounce nuclear testing.

Kazakhstan also fears that China might use its nuclear status to pressure it in other areas. To eliminate this concern, Kazakhstan requested from China a written commitment that “it would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against Kazakhstan”²⁰⁸. The request was granted by China in February 1995. Nevertheless, because of its possession of nuclear weapons, China has the advantageous position in Central Asia which means that Central Asian countries must be sensitive to its interests.²⁰⁹

4.2.3. Economic Relations

China’s awareness of the potential of Central Asian markets led Prime Minister Li Peng to call for the renewal of the Silk Road in 1994. China’s efforts to dispel Central Asian fears, along with its economic attraction to these countries, have improved the atmosphere between them and have increased the level of economic and trade interaction. By the mid-1980s trade relations between China and Central Asia expanded that continued during the period of reform in Soviet

²⁰⁷ S.Hunter, *ibid*, pp. 127

²⁰⁸ S.Hunter, *ibid*, pp. 128

²⁰⁹ T.Shauman, *ibid*, p. 70; S.Hunter, *ibid*, pp. 127-128

Union and after its collapse. The most part of the trade was between China and Kazakhstan.²¹⁰

Beside its own economic relations with Central Asian states, Chinese leaders were well aware that the bulk of the Xinjiang's foreign trade was with Central Asian states. "As Xinjiang's economic development was part of Beijing's strategy to calm unrest in the area, Chinese leaders paid special attention to Central Asian trade"²¹¹. In 1992-1997 China's total trade with Central Asia doubled. In 2004, China was the second largest trading partner of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.²¹²

With the dissolution of Soviet Union, China tried to have closer economic ties with especially Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In 1992, with establishment of railroad which link Alma-Ata to Lianyuang-Lanzou, transport route opened between Kazakhstan and China. Because Chinese goods have better quality than Russian goods, cheaper than western goods, they spread in Central Asian markets. Today China is the second trade partner of Kazakhstan after Russia, has significant ratio in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan export, improving trade relations with Tajikistan. Although Turkmenistan pursues policy of neutrality and not a member of SCO, China has a natural gas agreement and some investments in Turkmenistan. The economies of Central Asia and China are highly

²¹⁰ S. Hunter, *ibid*, p. 128

²¹¹ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, pp. 317

²¹² Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, pp. 317-318

complementary, and thus the potential for expanded economic and trade relations is quite substantial.²¹³

While trying to increase mutual trade, China awards a loan to Central Asian states for making them to purchase Chinese goods. Chinese investments and trade in arms are other aspects of trade between China and Central Asia. China is selling arms in return to get petrol from Central Asia. In sum, China is implementing extensive and well targeted economic program through Central Asia which will bring success to China.²¹⁴ On the other hand The Central Asian states are also aware of the costs and benefits of having relations with China. Although they benefited from the trade with China, China is also potential economic and demographic threat.²¹⁵

4.2.4. Security Issues

China acknowledge that Central Asia is re-emerging as a strategic region and is vital to China's national security which provide China an opportunity to establish Chinese influence in the region. Central Asia is also creating a potential challenge to Beijing's hegemony over Xinjiang.²¹⁶

²¹³ Ibid, p. 128; A.Andican, *ibid*, p.16

²¹⁴ A.Andican, *ibid*, p. 19; Stephen Blank, "The Arming of Central Asia", *Asia Times*, 24/08/2002, http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/DH24Df02.html

²¹⁵ With its large territory and natural resources Kazakhstan is a place for China to covet. In 1989, estimated 40.000 people crossed the border between Xinjiang and Central Asia. In 2008 there are an estimated 500.000 Chinese living in the region... See in Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p.82

²¹⁶ Lillian Craig Harris, "Xinjiang, Central Asia and the Implications for China's Policy in the Islamic World", *The China Quarterly*, No 133, March 1993, pp.111-129

The dissolution of the USSR, the civil war in Tajikistan, and the rise of Islamic unrest in western China created an unstable situation in the region and this worried Chinese leaders. “Militant attacks in Xinjiang were related to the rise of Islamic extremism in Central Asia and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.”²¹⁷ Rising militant activism directed against China and other SCO governments led them to come together against the threat of militant Islam.²¹⁸ “The Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) has forged close links with al-Qaeda, and used Tajikistan as a conduit for operations that focused on Uzbekistan but spilled into Kyrgyzstan.”²¹⁹

Although China has concerns about pan-Turkic nationalism and Islamic extremism, there is also realization that it may not be as threatening as Chinese thought. Local nationalism and Russian resistance toward pan-Turkic nationalism reduces its threat to China. However some Chinese believe that the US is encouraging pan-Turkic nationalism for destabilizing western China.²²⁰

When we look at their cultural, linguistic and historical roots of Pan-Turkic nationalism, the independence of Central Asian states has great impact in ethnic nationalism in Xinjiang. The main sensitive issues between Central Asian states and China are pan-Turkic nationalism, support for the Xinjiang separatist movements, and efforts to re-establish “Eastern Turkestan”.

²¹⁷ Robert Sutter, Chinese Foreign Policy, p. 317

²¹⁸ Robert Sutter, *ibid*, pp. 316-317

²¹⁹ Rajan Menon, “The New Great Game in Central Asia”, *Survival*, vol 45, no 2, Summer 2003, p.189

²²⁰ Eric Hyer, *ibid*, pp. 81-82

4.3. THE ROLE OF XINJIAN PROBLEM IN CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH CENTRAL ASIAN STATES

One of the difficulties in Sino-Central Asian relations are caused by the significant numbers of Uyghurs living in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.²²¹ Beside this, number of Kazakhs live in Xinjiang province. Xinjiang has borders with Central Asian states. The region is a passage between Central Asia and China.²²² During the late 1980s and 1990s the Uyghurs of Central Asia demanded autonomy for Xinjiang and greater religious and cultural freedoms for China's Uighur population. The Central Asian countries have tried to reassure the Chinese that they will not use the Uyghurs to destabilize China. Yet for some Central Asian countries, especially Uzbekistan, the Uyghur populations remain a card that they can play against China.²²³

On the other side the presence of Kazakhs in the Kazakh Autonomous District of Xinjiang is potentially more destabilizing. These Kazakhs complain about Chinese restrictions that prevent them from immigrating into Kazakhstan.²²⁴

In the past Central Asian states neighbouring China encouraged Uyghur separatism. Central Asia states including Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan hosting

²²¹ There were 120.000 Uyghurs in Kazakhstan and 50.000 in Kyrgyzstan... David Kerr, "Central Asian and Russian Perspectives on China's Strategic Emergence", *International Affairs*, vol 86, no 1, 2010, p. 141

²²² Kulbhushan Warikoo, "Ethnic Religious Resurgence in Xinjiang", in Touraj Atabaki & John O'Kane (eds), *Post-Soviet Central Asia*, London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1998, pp. 269-270

²²³ S.Hunter, *ibid*, p. 12

²²⁴ S. Hunter, *ibid*, p. 127; Graham E. Fuller & S. Frederick Star, "The Xinjiang Problem", Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, London, 2003, pp. 16-30

large number of Uyghurs. They made commitment and agreed to not support any separatist movements. By this way several separatist movement have moved from Kazakhstan to Turkey, and Kyrgyzstan has prevented the organizing of an ethnic Uyghur political party. However Kazakhstan tried to prevent these actions, some separatist organizations were continue to operate in 1995, which remains major issue in Sino-Kazakh relations.²²⁵

“After the September 11, China shaped its strategy on Uyghur issues in Central Asia on 3 bases. 1- the people supporting and moving for providing independence for East Turkestan defines as “terrorist” and get support in the framework of joint action against terrorism. 2- Prevent the people who act for independence of East Turkestan to have base in Central Asia. 3- Prevent the works of Uighur organizations in Central Asia by claiming that they are in connect with terrorists. China also made pressure Central Asian states through declaration that if they support East Turkestan movements their political and economic relations with China would fail.”²²⁶

With the affect of September 11 and Afghan operation of US, China gained support of international powers against East Turkestan. Improving relations with US after 9/11, China has also sought to achieve cooperation of the Central Asian states, both individually through the bilateral agreements and collectively through the mechanism of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In this regard China succeeded in undertaking a number of joint military exercises with anti-terrorism focus under SCO and establishing a “Regional Anti-Terrorism” unit in Tashkent in 2004.²²⁷

²²⁵ Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p. 81; Nicolas Becquelin, “A New Xinjiang for a new Central Asia”, *China Perspectives*, No.15, January/February 1998, pp. 13-14; Dru Gladney, “The Muslim Face of China”, *Current History*, September 1993, pp. 275-280

²²⁶ A.Andican, *ibid*, p. 15

²²⁷ Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, p. 338

China has in cooperation with Central Asian states especially with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan about the acknowledging China's security concerns in Xinjiang. They also cooperated on the issues of arresting and extraditing Uyghur separatists and "terrorists" back to China.²²⁸ Despite the pledge by the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to not support the Xinjiang separatist movement, supporters of the movement openly operate from these countries. Uyghurs living in Turkey also support the movement.²²⁹

In conclusion Central Asia is very important for China not only because of its economic capacity and energy reserves but also its potential to causing security issues. As a result of security threat comes from the Islamic extremism and destabilization in Central Asia, China pays attention to provide cooperation especially security issues with Central Asia through the SCO. The Xinjiang issue has big impact on the relations between the China and Central Asian states especially because of China's security concerns and the possibility of Central Asian states support of the Uyghurs as their share of same religion, same historic and Turkic natures.

²²⁸ Michael Clarke, *Great Western Development*, p. 338

²²⁹ Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p. 80

CHAPTER-5

CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The bilateral relations between Russia and China are very important for the future of regional balances as well as the global economic and political developments. It is known that the USSR and the People's Republic of China entered into a "Communist Cold War" within the Cold War itself. Stemming from the ideological differences about how to achieve "real communism", this power struggle prevented these two countries to make up a strong front against the United States. This ideological rivalry turned into a geostrategic and regional hegemonic struggle. During the period from the collapse of USSR until today, there has been a regional Russian-Chinese competition which has ups-and-downs and which sometimes concentrated on different issues.

In this chapter the development of Sino-Soviet relations, main issues between Soviet Union and China and finally the role of Xinjiang problem on the Sino-Soviet relations will be examined.

5.1. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

Following the end of the Second World War the international relations turned out to be an issue of superpower rivalry which identified itself within the ideological confrontation between the communist Soviet Union and the capitalist United States. Winning over the fascist Nazi Germany in Europe and the militarist

Japan in the Far East, two allies started to share world. Two years after the Second World War, the Iron Curtain was installed in the middle of Europe in 1947. As the politics in Europe became frozen the attention turned to the heavily populated Far East, especially to China in which the civil war almost came to an end.

When the Chinese Civil War ended with the victory of Chinese communists led by Mao Tsedong, international community had predicted a significant cooperation between the leader of Communist World, the Soviet Union and the world's most populous country into which communism was newly introduced, the People's Republic of China.²³⁰ With the establishment of People's Republic of China in 1949 diplomatic relations also established with Russia and lasted until the emergence of the common border disputes in the late of 1950s. Soviet design, equipment and skilled labour were set out to help industrialize and modernize the PRC.

However the death of Stalin changed the course of Sino-Soviet relations. Although Soviet aids were still flowing into China, policies of Khrushchev and his de-Stalinization program were not supported by Mao himself. The year of 1956 became the breaking point of Sino-Soviet relations and two communist countries entered into their own Cold War. Khrushchev's rise to power as the successor of Stalin and his de-Stalinization program ideologically created differences between the Soviet Union and China. Between the years of 1956 and 1961 Chinese Communist Party started secretly diverging from the Soviet Union

²³⁰ North, Robert C., "The Sino Soviet Alliance", *The China Quarterly*, No.1 (Jan.-Mar.1960), Cambridge University Press on behalf of the School of Oriental and African Studies, p. 54

in ideological terms. The new political concept of Khrushchev, “peaceful coexistence”, was not only against Stalin’s ideology but also opposed to Mao’s foreign policy of “lean to one-side”. Khrushchev’s meeting with the President of the United States in 1959 contributed more to the deepening of the split between two countries. For Mao, Khrushchev was too conciliatory. Soviet aid was cut off in 1960. This split between the two was accompanied by the border disputes. In 1969 Soviet Union threatened China to attack its nuclear installations. The start of Sino-Soviet talks on border issues in October 1969 continued with attempts of US President Nixon.²³¹

Following the death of Mao in 1976, China reduced the importance of ideological disputes between China and Soviet Union. So the Sino-Soviet relations normalized. Besides, communist system of the PRC had been gradually integrated with the international system through the pro-market economic reforms realized with the initiative of Deng Xiaoping.²³²

On the other hand, the relations between two countries once again deteriorated in the end of 1970s. In 1980s there were three events which affected the relations between China and Russia. One is withdraw of Russia from Afghanistan, second is cutting the Soviet support of Vietnam. And third is decreasing the military power of 80% in the China-Soviet border. By the mid 1980s when Sino-Soviet tensions began to ease, the volume of Sino-Soviet trade

²³¹ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Policy*, pp. 327-328

²³² Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Policy*, p. 328

also significantly increased. Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Beijing in May 1989 removed other barriers to improved relations between China and Central Asia.²³³

China was ambivalent about the impact of the Soviet Union's dissolution on its security and other interests. Although the collapse of the Soviet Colossus was viewed as improving China's security environment, China worried about the increased risk of nuclear proliferation on its neighborhood and feared ethnic tensions in Xinjiang, Tibet and inner Mongolia would intensify.²³⁴

Relations between Moscow and Beijing during the Yeltsin era (1991-1999) underwent consistent improvement. Russian foreign policy moved towards a more 'geographically balanced' approach of 'equal partnership' with US. Russia retained a fundamentally Western-centric world-view, but began to appreciate the utility of mutual beneficial relations with China. After the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1992 Boris Yeltsin's visit to China initiated relations again. Yeltsin regarded good relations with China to counterweight American hegemonism and unipolarity. In September 1994 Jiang Zemin visited Russia and they established a "constructive partnership" through a joint statement. At the summit meeting in

²³³ Avery Goldstein, "China and the Major Powers", *Rising to the Challenge: China's Grand Strategy and international Security*, California: Stanford University Press, 2005, p. 136

²³⁴ Shireen T. Hunter, *Central Asia Since Independence*, London: The Washington Papers, 1996, p. 125

Beijing in 1996 they labeled their relationship as “strategic cooperative partnership”.²³⁵

Under Putin, the personal politics of summitry have been accompanied by substantive progress in several key areas. In 2005 with finalizing of border issues, a new level of trust between two governments emerged. “China and Russia are committed to demonstrating their like-mindedness on a broad range of political and security issues, domestic, regional and international. The focus in the first place is on priorities viewed by either side as matters of vital national interest. For Russia this means Chechnya; for China, Taiwan, East Turkestan and Tibet.”²³⁶

With September 11 US entrance into the region constitutes a turning point for Russian-Chinese relations. For balancing US, the two competing power began to cooperate although the competition continues in different areas such as energy security and military presence in the region. Bothe countries’ foreign policies affected by the policies of US.²³⁷

5.2. MAIN ISSUES BETWEEN CHINA AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

²³⁵ Avery Goldstein, “China and the Major Powers”, *Rising to the Challenge: China’s Grand Strategy and international Security*, California: Stanford University Press, 2005, p. 136; Robert Sutter, *China’s Foreign Relations*, p. 328

²³⁶ B.Lo, *ibid*, pp.132-135; M.S.Erol, *ibid*, p. 91; Gerald Segal, *Chinese Politics and Foreign Policy Reform*, London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1990, p. 161

²³⁷ A. Whiting, *ibid*, p. 329

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, relations with Russia have dramatically improved, both countries found common interests and a common free market orientation, and related to these, a common rival: the United States.

As the border dispute was settled, the conflictual territories were negotiated. The Russian government agreed to transfer Tarabarov Island as well as one half of Bolshoy Ussuriysky Island to China in 2004²³⁸, ending a long-standing border dispute between Russia and China. Both islands are found at the confluence of the Amur and Ussuri Rivers, and were until then administered by Russia and claimed by China. The event was meant to foster feelings of reconciliation and cooperation between the two countries by their leaders. The transfer has been ratified by both the Chinese National People's Congress and the Russian State Duma. The official transfer ceremony was held on-site 14 October 2008.²³⁹ The settlement of the border disputes was important for China to provide the security of middle and East Asia.²⁴⁰

The settlement of disputes was strengthened through cooperation agreements and initiatives. China is currently a major Russian customer of imports needed to modernize the People's Liberation Army, and the foremost benefactor of the under construction Russian Eastern Siberia – Pacific Ocean oil

²³⁸ "China, Russia: An End to an Island Dispute", July 2008, http://www.stratfor.com/memberships/120065/analysis/china_russia_end_island_dispute

²³⁹ "China, Russia solve all border disputes". Xinhua. June 2, 2005. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2005-06/02/content_3037975.htm; "China, Russia complete border survey, determination". Xinhua. July 21, 2008. http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-07/21/content_8739941.htm.

²⁴⁰ Mehmet Sami Denker, *2000'li Yillarda Asya-Pasifik Bölgesinin Güvenliği*, Ankara: Avrasya Stratejik Araştırmalar Merkezi Yayınları, 2000, p. 40

pipeline. After the arms embargo imposed after the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 by the European Community, China became a significant client for Russian military exports. More recently there has been a pro-China shift in the trade balance. There has been a dramatic fall in the Chinese purchase of Russian weapons and military technology. This can be linked to the fact that Russia is only willing to send Soviet-era technology and refuses to sell its advanced technology. The reason of this refusal is the fear that China would use Russian imports to improve its own military exports and undercut Russia in other foreign markets.²⁴¹

In the eyes of Russians, Chinese military is numerically massive but low tech. Russia has a superiority complex that it regards itself as a sophisticated western civilization. During the Stalin-Mao era, although Moscow and Beijing speak of ‘equal partnership’, there is a sense that China is increasingly the senior partner. In these days Beijing’s main interest is in Russia’s natural resources, principally oil and gas.²⁴²

China’s energy needs and Russia’s desire to increase oil and gas exports point to growth in economic ties between them. The current international environment appears to offer opportunities for Sino-Russian cooperation in countering American hegemonic ambitions. There is also speculation that strategic partnership may evolve into a formal political-military alliance.²⁴³ But there are also challenges to this speculation through mutual perceptions that:

²⁴¹ Avery Goldstein, *ibid*, pp.140-141; Alan Hunter & John Sexton, *ibid*, p. 193

²⁴² B.Lo, *ibid*, pp.129-130; Mehmet Seyfettin Erol, İlyas Kamalov “Rusya-Çin: Mişka ve Dragon’un ‘Enerjik Aşkı’”, *Stratejik Analiz*, n.74, June 2006, p. 90

²⁴³ Kutay Karaca, *ibid*, pp. 162-163

firstly, Russia concerns about China's rapid rise as next global superpower; secondly, Russia-Chinese relationship is still relatively small compared to the two countries' ties with the west; thirdly, both sides are suspicious of each other. Although they retain many interests in common, Russia and China view their relationship from very different perspectives and in very different ways.²⁴⁴ Russia views China "as 'strategic partner' whose rise challenges western assumptions of strategic, economic and normative superiority. On the other hand, China represents to many Russians the most serious long-term threat to national security. For them the question is not 'if' but 'when' Beijing will move against Russian interests."²⁴⁵

As we know that both countries sensitive on their security issues. With the effect of colored revolutions in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, US and western powers support for these movements, western powers' critics of Russia as anti-democratic and criticizing its Chechnya policy, Moscow turned its face to China. After the September 11, Putin turned Russian foreign policy towards the US. The highlighting of terrorism as the greatest threat confronting civilization helped legitimize a hard-line approach towards separatism, radicalism and extremism. They have growing interest in Asian multilateral forums, active participation in SCO and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. These organizations are concerned

²⁴⁴ Bobo Lo, "China and Russia: Common Interests, Contrasting Perceptions", *Insight Turkey*, v. 9, n. 2, 2006, p. 128

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 129

with the same issues of counter terrorism, regional economic integration and energy security.²⁴⁶

Although Russia is not as ambitious as China about SCO, it also regards SCO as an opportunity against NATO enlargement. Through SCO Russia would oppose against west at least regional level, and tries to be an alternative power.²⁴⁷ Although member states emphasize that SCO is not improving against a third power, it is obvious that SCO is aiming to be an alternative to NATO and diminish US hegemony in the region.

At the 2001 summit in Shanghai, all the members pledged a collective response in defense of a government attacked by militants. In one sense, this agreement created basis for China to project power abroad through a multilateral mechanism. This was followed by an agreement at the 2002 SCO foreign ministers' meeting that endorsed Chinese actions fighting the "East Turkestan terrorists" along with Russian suppression of terrorists in Chechnya.²⁴⁸

Until 2005, SCO had been an instrument for regional security in terms of fighting against terrorism, separatism and extremism. The main objective was the ultimate goal of China with regards to the conflictual Tibet and Xinjiang regions. However, the Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003, the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2005, which were pro-American and pro-Western movements and the

²⁴⁶ B.Lo, *ibid*, p.p. 135-136

²⁴⁷ Şangay Ekseni, pp. 12-13

²⁴⁸ Robert Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 317

criticism by West of Andican events of 2005 in Uzbekistan brought China and Russia together as their zone of influence was being threatened by American hegemony. The year of 2005 was the year that both Chinese and Russian presidents in a joint statement pointed out that they established a strategic partnership which desired to counter Euro-Atlantic structures to be dominant in world affairs.²⁴⁹ This was accompanied by a radical change in the SCO itself. Through the SCO, both countries launched a joint military exercise in August 2005, which had been the first military cooperation between them after 40 years, following agreements that settled the long standing border disputes in the same year.²⁵⁰ This military exercise called “Peace Mission 2005” was the starting point of a series of continuing exercises. The natures of the exercises were aimed at mobilizing all military services except for nuclear forces, as in the case of a conventional warfare. Thus this was a clear message from Russia and China to the United States and pro-American countries, to show that neither ex-Soviet territory nor Chinese claims over Taiwan have been left to any other actor to discuss.²⁵¹

Apart from the SCO, China and Russia has been deepening their strategic partnership by 2009. This year marked the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between China and Russia. The ambivalence in the political relationship is mirrored in the economic sphere. China has become Russia’s second-largest trading partner after the EU. Russia is increasingly becoming an exporter of raw

²⁴⁹ Marcel de Haas, “Russia-China Security Cooperation”, *PINR Power and Interest News Reporti*, 27 November 2006, p.1, www.gees.org/documentos/Documen-01900.pdf

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Ibid

materials and an importer of industrial and manufacturing goods. Energy deliveries now account for the largest share of Russia's exports to China. The tension between the desire for expanded economic cooperation and the fear of China-dependence is evident in three areas in particular: interregional trade, Russia's attempts at economic integration into the wider Asia-Pacific region, and the energy relationship.²⁵²

Although trade volume between two countries declined due to the global economic crisis, economic cooperation continued in a wider scope with energy in the core.²⁵³ According to the agreement signed in 2009 with regards to the exchange of loans for oil, China will create a financial source for the Russian oil company Rosneft and for the Russian oil transportation company Transneft, while Russia will repay this loans through 300 million tons of oil from 2011 to 2030.²⁵⁴

In addition Russia and China initiated an international economic grouping with other big economies of the world, which are Brazil and India. This initiative, called BRIC, widened the scope of intergovernmental cooperation launched by Russia and China, from the grounds of security as it was the case in the SCO to the basis of economy.²⁵⁵ This also showed that Russia and China are willing to sustain the course of goodly relations. The acceleration of relations through

²⁵² B.Lo, *ibid*, pp. 137-140

²⁵³ Zhao Huasheng, "Sino-Russian Relations 2009 to 2010: A Perspective from China", *Russian Analytical Digest*, No.73, 23 February 2010, p.6, kms1.isn.ethz.ch/.../Russian_Analytical_Digest_73.pdf

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

²⁵⁵ Vladimir Portyakov, "Russian-Chinese Relations,; Current Trends and Future Prospects", *Russian Analytical Digest*, No.73, 23 February 2010, p.3, kms1.isn.ethz.ch/.../Russian_Analytical_Digest_73.pdf

political and economic spheres is bringing Russia and China to the same side of the table and strengthening the diplomatic links between them.

For energy relation Russia's national energy strategy envisages that by 2020 the share of total oil exports to Asia will rise to 30% from the current 3%. It anticipates that China will account for by far the largest proportion of this. China has consolidated its position as Russia's leading energy customer in Asia, widening gap between itself and other Asian markets. Russia is sensitive to the potential risks of overdependence on China as a primary market for Russian oil and gas. Russia seeks a fully diversified Asian energy market.²⁵⁶

Another competitive issue is energy routes. Russia aiming to have monopoly on energy was discomfort about the Baku-Tiflis-Ceyhan pipeline. Another project is planning to transport Caspian and Central Asia petrol and gas to Pacific via China. By this way China will become an alternative allocation center which disturbs Russia.²⁵⁷

In terms of Central Asia, Russia with regarding the region through 'near abroad' policy, aims at;

“- Controlling China's activity in the region and prevent to possession economically by increasing economic relations and making China dependent to Russia in defense and energy sectors,

- Beginning energy export to Asia in return to European efforts to establishing alternative energy corridors for diminishing dependency of Russia,

- Being effective in Asia outside of CIS geography,

²⁵⁶ B.Lo, *ibid*, pp. 137-140

²⁵⁷ Barış Adıbelli, *Çin'in Avrasya Stratejisi*, İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2007, p. 182

- Marketing the Russian industrial goods to China beside the weapon and energy.”²⁵⁸

In considering the regions importance for both powers we can see that although they have contrasting interests, their vital interest in the region requires making cooperation against the hegemony of US.

5.3. THE ROLE OF XINJIANG PROBLEM ON SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

Through the course of history Xinjiang has been geopolitically significant piece of land that started the relations between Russian and Chinese people. In fact Xinjiang has played a dual role in the region; first as point of conflict and second as an interacting place for harmony. In the early period of Russian-Chinese relations it is possible to say that it was a place of economic interaction. The Chinese Empire established its control over Xinjiang in the 1750s, and the Russian Empire expanded into Kazakhstan in the early and mid-19th century. The 1851 Treaty of Kulja legalized trade between the two countries in this region. However, as Stalin was eager to establish satellite Soviet states around the Soviet Union and enlarge the Union itself, Xinjiang became the zone of political conflict. The region was administered by local leader Sheng Shih-ts'ai as a satellite from 1933 to 1942, while Ili rebels created an independence Republic of East Turkestan with the support of Soviet Union from 1944 to 1949.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁸ K. Karaca, *ibid*, p. 18

²⁵⁹ Allen S. Whiting, “Sinkiang and Sino-Soviet Relations”, *The China Quarterly*, No.3 (Jul. Sep., 1960), Cambridge University Press on behalf of Oriental and African Studies, p. 38.

During the reign of Sheng Shih-ts'ai, Soviet influence in Xinjiang experienced the peak of its strength; as he was both a desired communist following Soviet policies and an opponent of Japanese imperialism, whose overt political actions were there in order to take control of the region.²⁶⁰ On the other hand, as in 1942 Soviet Union seemed almost ran over by German troops, he preferred to turn his face to nationalist Chang Kai-Shek, bringing main Chinese control over the region, which clearly launched the elimination of Soviet political ambitions towards Xinjiang.²⁶¹

Following the proclamation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Xinjiang came under the rule of Communist Chinese rule and Soviet political desires ended on the region. Stalin's policy of exploitation of mineral resources of Xinjiang was not a new one, but it was the legacy of Tsarist Russia, although it was formally renounced in 1917.²⁶² Especially after the Sino-Soviet split beginning with the 1960s, as the relations between the two parties were frozen, Xinjiang became the part of the conflict with limited ties between two countries. Until the end of the Cold War and increasing volume of cooperation between China and Russia in early 2000s, Xinjiang had remained as a significant contact point.

²⁶⁰ Geoffrey Wheeler, "Sinkiang and the Soviet Union", *The China Quarterly*, No.16, (Oct. Dec. 1963), Cambridge University Press on behalf of Oriental and African Studies, p. 58

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Oleh S.Fedysyhn, "Soviet Retreat in Sinkiang? Sino Soviet Rivalry and Cooperaiton, 1950-1955", *American Slavic and East European Review*, Vol.16, No.2, (Apr. 1957), The American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, p. 127.

However, as the two countries have been experiencing a period of rapprochement, Xinjiang region has been the nucleus of cooperation especially in security matters through SCO. Through the norms of this initiative Russian Foreign Ministry's statement about the events in Xinjiang in July 2009 is important to show the level of cooperation between two countries. In this statement it was underlined that:

"We would like to emphasize that Russia considers Xinjiang as an inseparable part of China and believes that what is going on there is exclusively an internal affair for China... We hope that the steps the Chinese authorities are taking legitimately to maintain public order in XUAR will help normalize the situation in that region in the near future..."²⁶³

With this statement it was stressed that Russia and China are strongly executing the deepening process of the SCO through mutual understanding and the basic principles drawn. Which also shows that the two countries cooperated on Xinjiang issue through the SCO and also bilaterally with regarding the issue as security matter for both of them.

Following the riots in Xinjiang on 5 July, China and Russia made five day military exercise called "Peace Mission 2009". According to China, they aimed to show the ability of both sides to combat terrorists, separatist and extremists. During the atmosphere where all powers criticized the actions of China through the Uyghurs, the involvement of Russia to the military exercises was important for China. Russia also benefited from the exercises because of separatist movements in its Chechen republic.²⁶⁴

²⁶³ http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-07/08/content_11674723.html.

²⁶⁴ Zhang Quanyi, "Aims of sino-Russian military Exercises", *Global Survey*, July 23, 2009, http://www.upiasia.com/Security/2009/07/23/aims_of_sino-russian_military_exercises/8829/

Both country desires to provide stability in Central Asian region. Both fears the ethnic separatism supported by Islamic fundamentalist movements in Central Asia. While China worried about Uyghur separatism, Russia deals with instability in northern Caucasus, particularly Chechnya and neighboring Dagestan.²⁶⁵ Because both have their own “separatist” movements, Russia have to support China for the Uyghurs, claiming independence from China. The cooperation against “separatist” movements has crucial importance for both countries’ security concerns. Through SCO China gets Russia support against Uyghur dissidents. Although at the beginning relations on Xinjiang issue have mostly economic dimension, after the riots in Xinjiang on 5 July strategic partnership on security issues gained importance and economically based relations turned into security and military relations.

²⁶⁵ Richard Weitz, “China-Russia Security Relations: Strategic parallelism Without Partnership or Passion?”, August 2008, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub868.pdf>

CHAPTER-6

CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

As is known, the United States is the single heavyweight player who has a decisive role in today's complex international relations system. As a matter of fact, China's foreign policy is very much influenced by U.S. policies in the region. Hence, despite tensions between China and U.S. from time to time, China does wish challenge the U.S. but rather opt to work with it unless its core national interests are in danger. On the other hand, the U.S. has also realized the fact that China is becoming increasingly important in economic, political, security and transnational areas and it is in its interests to build up good relations with China.

In this chapter the relations between U.S. and China analyzed by examining the development of the relations between two powers, major issues between China and U.S. and lastly the role of Xinjiang issue on their relations.

6.1. THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHINA-US RELATIONS

In history "a closed and xenophobic China was regarded as evil, so each administration since Nixon's has been working to open, evolve and change

China”²⁶⁶. In the post-Cold War period, the U.S. was the world’s dominant economy, the sole superpower and a major Chinese trading partner. The crisis in U.S.-China relations caused by the Tiananmen crackdown of 1989, the collapse of Soviet bloc regimes and emergence of democracy on Taiwan destroyed the basis for the Sino-American collaboration.²⁶⁷ President Nixon made his icebreaking journey to China in February 1972 thus opened a brand new page for Sino-American relations. The two countries, which have been hostile to each other ever since 1949, finally realized that collaboration was better than confrontation²⁶⁸.

After the Tiananmen Square Incident US sanctions, imposed upon China since 1989, were broken at 1993 Seattle APEC meeting and the United States and China resumed contact since the end of the Cold War.²⁶⁹ Relations stabilized in the second term of Clinton administration (1997-2001), but there were also several debates and crises.²⁷⁰ Since the Clinton administration the US has claimed that a “prosperous, stable and strong China meets the American interest.”²⁷¹ Opening China’s market and integrating it into the international system is the goal of the US. Deng Xiaoping’s reform effort catered to the American strategy. But some

²⁶⁶ Li Qingsi, “The International Conditions of China’s Peaceful Rise: Challenges and Opportunities”, in Sujian Guo (Ed) , *China’s Peaceful Rise in the 21st Century*, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006, pp.153-154

²⁶⁷ Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, pp. 55-56

²⁶⁸ Harry Harding, *Fragile Relationship: The United States & China since 1972*, Washington, DC, U.S.A.: Brookings Institution Press. 1992,

²⁶⁹ Sino-US Relations: Develop in Twists and Turns, *Beijing Review* December 24, 2001, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/2001/Dec/24146.htm>

²⁷⁰ Robert G. Sutter, *Chinese Foreign Relations*, p. 56

²⁷¹ Li Qingsi, *ibid*, pp.153-154

Americans believe that China has become a challenger, which needs to be contained.²⁷²

After US President George W. Bush took up his duty in Oval Office, he chose to consider China as “strategic competitive rival” rather than a potential “strategic partner” as envisaged by Clinton. The tragic air collision took place on April 1, 2001²⁷³ strangled the relation between China and the United States.

Following the air collision incident, the US began to land pressure on China in a number of issues such as Taiwan issue, human rights and nuclear-proliferation. To respond the domestic anti-China feelings, Bush promised to whatever he can to build up Taiwan’s self-defense, if China’s mainland tried to invade Taiwan through military means. Concerning human rights, the Bush Administration condemned China’s religion policy and appointed a “special coordinator for Tibet issues,” whose rank was raised from Assistant Secretary of State to Deputy Secretary of State. In addition, Bush showed his strong support to Tibet issue by approving the Dalai Lama’s US visit, even receiving him at the White House. On the issue of security, US Department of Defense reoriented its military strategic position from Europe to Asia, thus demonstrating its serious intention to contain China. Besides, the Bush Administration demonstrated its

²⁷² Li Qingsi, *ibid*, pp.153-154

²⁷³ On April 1, 2001, a mid-air collision between a United States Navy EP-3E ARIES II signals surveillance aircraft and a People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) J-8II interceptor fighter jet resulted in an international dispute between the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC) called the Hainan Island incident. A US spy plane rammed into a Chinese fighter, causing it to crash into the South China Sea, killing the pilot. The US EP-3 electronic reconnaissance plane, together with its 22 crew members, then entered into Chinese airspace without permission and landed on south China's Hainan Island... http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hainan_Island_incident

desire to develop the National Missile Defense (NMD) system, and tried to integrate Taiwan into the program.²⁷⁴ Also the adjustment of U.S. military strategy in the Western Pacific aimed at containing China's increasing military power. According to Xuetang Guo, the choice of U.S. military strategy is vital to China's rise, to the overall China-U.S. relations and the East Asia security environment. An unstable China-U.S. military relationship might damage the peace and stability in East Asia.²⁷⁵

However, the September 11 terrorist attacks on World Trade Tower changed the mindset of the US government who began to consider international terrorism as a main threat to its national security. Thus this new situation gave a new opportunity for Sino-US relations as the US Government came to the conclusion that cooperation with other big players is needed in combating international terrorism. As a consequence, both nations strengthened bilateral ties in anti-terrorism and other issues involving international security, thus defining bilateral relations as "constructive cooperative relations."²⁷⁶ It also could accept as a proof that when security problems come into the agenda, economic issues take a backseat. Both power acted with realistic thinking that national security comes first.

Following September 11, 2001, US entered into new understandings with every government in Central Asia. The US decided to transform Afghanistan and

²⁷⁴ Sino-US Relations: Develop in Twists and Turns, *ibid.*

²⁷⁵ Xuetang Guo, "Maintaining an Asymmetric but Stable China-U.S. Military Relationship", in Sujian Guo (Ed), *China's "Peaceful Rise" in the 21st Century*, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006, p. 159

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

the entire region into a zone of secure sovereignties sharing viable market economies, enjoying secular and open systems of government, and maintaining positive relations with the US. The means to achieve this goal will be the establishment of a Greater Central Asia Partnership for Cooperation and Development (GCAP), a region wide forum for the planning, coordination and implementation of an array of US programs.²⁷⁷ Russia and China perceive that the GCAP signified a longer-term US interest and presence in the region. For China's view point strengthened border regimes would help reduce separatist activities in Xinjiang. The improvement of transportation infrastructure would open China's Xinjiang to the south.²⁷⁸

This new phase of rapprochement were also reflected when President Jiang Zemin and President Bush came together for the first time at the Ninth APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Shanghai, where they held talks on bilateral ties, anti-terrorism and world stability. Since this meeting, the US government has begun to follow a more pragmatic, rational and active policy towards China. It can be also said that the Obama Administration began its term committed to working closely with Beijing on a range of issues,²⁷⁹ which may include global warming, Nuclear Program of Iran, Situation of Korean Peninsula, etc. China has welcomed US President Barack Obama's expression Mar 29 2010 of "determination to

²⁷⁷ Frederick S. Starr, "A partnership for Central Asia", *Foreign Affairs*, vol 84, Issue 4, Jul/August 2005, p.1

²⁷⁸ Frederick S. Starr, *ibid*, pp. 5-6

²⁷⁹ Wenran Jiang, "U.S.-China Relations: Vision Needed", *BusinessWeek Online*, 4/20/2010, see in http://www.businessweek.com/globalbiz/content/apr2010/gb20100419_966478.htm

further develop a positive relationship with China", saying this "serves the fundamental interest of the two countries and their people,"²⁸⁰ stressing that the "appropriate" handling of issues related to Taiwan and Tibet were key to stable development of ties.²⁸¹

6.2. MAIN ISSUES BETWEEN CHINA AND THE US

The United States has the advantages admired by the other great powers throughout history simply because it is surrounded by two oceans and two friendly neighbors. Whereas China has several major powerful neighboring states that would be willing to help US to balance an emerging China. However, if China chooses to develop peaceful environment, these states would not fall into the position to join anti-China alliance with the US, as a weakened China would not serve their own interests either. Therefore, cooperation is the only way for China and the US if they wish to develop their economies.²⁸²

However, it can be said that the US and China are rivals due to many reasons. While the US considers China as a big threat to its dominance in world arena, China sees the US as the major obstacle to its aspiration of becoming a world power. According to Bradley Thayer, China and the US are economically complementary to each other. The US is China's third largest trade partner after

²⁸⁰ Tibetan Review, May 2010, p. 31, www.tibetanreview.net

²⁸¹ Tibetan Review, May 2010, p. 30, www.tibetanreview.net

²⁸² Li Qingsi, *ibid*, p. 147

Japan and Taiwan. As a result of its fast economic growth rate, China is increasingly dependent on oil imports.²⁸³

In the meantime as, i mentioned before, there were serious breakdowns between China and U.S. This situation gave rise to intensification of some already thorny issue such as Taiwan issue, Trade dispute and Tibet issue.

6.2.1. Taiwan Issue

Taiwan is the most sensitive issue in the Sino-American relationship. In addition, the U.S.-Taiwan defense relationship is probably the thorniest part of the relationship between the United States and China. Since 1949, after the Nationalist Kuomintang fled to Taiwan, Beijing has begun to treat Taiwan as a renegade province and has threatened to attack if Taipei ever attempts to announce formal independence. Washington had supported the Kuomintang government until 1972 when it reached a rapprochement with China. However, the agreement was always full of contradictions: the US recognized Beijing's one-China policy, including Taiwan, but is against any forcible reunification and continued to sell arms to Taiwan despite China's strong reactions.²⁸⁴

The Bush Administration's policy toward Taiwan has been strikingly different from that of the Clinton Administration. On defense issues, President

²⁸³ Bradley A. Thayer, "Confronting China: An Evaluation of Options for the United States", *Comparative Strategy*, no 24, 2005, pp.71-98

²⁸⁴ John Chan, A dangerous rise in US-China tensions, February 5, 2010, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2010/feb2010/pers-f05.shtml>; Xuetao Guo, "Maintaining an Asymmetric but Stable China-U.S. Military Relationship", in Sujian Guo (Ed), *China's "Peaceful Rise" in the 21st Century*, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2006, pp. 174-175

Bush's Taiwan policy has shifted markedly from one of "strategic ambiguity"²⁸⁵ to one of greater "strategic clarity."²⁸⁶ On ABC's Good Morning America television show on April 25, 2001, the President clearly stated that if China attacked Taiwan, the U.S. would have the duty to defend the Taiwanese.²⁸⁷ Therefore, it is quite apparent that although Sino-US relations have apparently improved in late 2001, other points of conflict such as the Taiwan issue, as well as issues of human rights and security remained the same. The Obama Administration's decision of arms sale to Taiwan has aroused strong reaction from China and brought about tensions between the two countries. Both sides were determined to take a tougher position intensified an open rift in diplomatic and political relations.²⁸⁸

For US, the decision to announce the arms sale was a tactic move aimed to curb Beijing's growing global economic and political influence. By announcing the arms package, the US had "leveled a direct strike at the heart of the most sensitive diplomatic issue that has existed between the two countries since America affirmed the one-China policy in 1972".²⁸⁹ Beijing showed its displeasure by testing its anti-ballistic missile system, destroying a missile sent

²⁸⁵ Peter Brookes, US-Taiwan Defence Relation in the Bush Administration, Nov.14, 2003, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Lecture/US-Taiwan-Defense-Relations-in-the-Bush-Administration>

²⁸⁶ Peter Brookes, US-Taiwan Defence Relation in the Bush Administration, Nov.14, 2003, <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Lecture/US-Taiwan-Defense-Relations-in-the-Bush-Administration>

²⁸⁷ Ibid.

²⁸⁸ John Chan, A dangerous rise in US-China tensions, February 5, 2010, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2010/feb2010/pers-f05.shtml>

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

into outer space.²⁹⁰ According to the *New York Times*, the sale was “doubly infuriating to Beijing, coming so soon after President Bush announced a similar arms deal with Taiwan in 2008, and right as Beijing and Taiwan are in the middle of a détente of sorts in their own relations”²⁹¹. The announcement was made on the same day when US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton openly criticized Beijing’s unwillingness to impose new penalties against Iran over its nuclear programs.²⁹² The reason why China is highly sensitive over Taiwan’s any move toward independence for fear that this may trigger similar movements in other parts of China—including Tibet and among the Uighur population of Xinjiang province.²⁹³

According to Thayer, the U.S. should not let Taiwan unite with the mainland because it is an important economic power to be reckoned with in Southeast Asia and a leading producer of microprocessors and computer software. If China takes in Taiwan, China’s economy will be greatly boosted. Although China economically benefited from Taiwan, considering the national security issues the strictly committed to its one-China policy.

6.2.2. Trade Dispute

²⁹⁰ <http://www.defence.pk/forums/wmd-missiles/43955-china-tests-anti-missile-defense-system.html>

²⁹¹ Helene Cooper, “U.S. Arms for Taiwan Send Beijing a Message”, *The New York Times*, Jan 31, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/01/world/asia/01china.html>

²⁹² John Chan, A dangerous rise in US-China tensions, February 5, 2010, <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2010/feb2010/pers-f05.shtml>

²⁹³ Ibid.

The bilateral trade imbalance has been one of the main reasons of tensions between China and the United States in recent years. While China blames the trade protectionism of the US has been growing ever since the outbreak of the global financial crisis, the U.S. leaders continue to put pressure on China to appreciate its currency which is believed to be undervalued, thus rescuing American exports which are disadvantaged.²⁹⁴

While Americans worries over American jobs taken away by Chinese goods, Chinese believe that cheap products made in China have reduced America's pressure from inflation, which further benefits the consumers, enriches the import/export merchants, wholesale and retail business circles. From Chinese perspective, it is the American business who to blame for this unbalanced trade because with an increasing number of American businesses going to China, China is becoming the general assembly base for these American companies' products. Thus, a significant portion of the profits generated from the products made in China but sold in the U.S. have been taken by American businesses.²⁹⁵

There is a huge bilateral trade volume between US and China, which means that US actually benefited from China's economic prosperity. It is natural for China to have a trade surplus because China exports low-value added product while US exporting high-value added goods. During his meeting with President

²⁹⁴ Michael Pettis, U.S.-China Trade Relations—The Next Dispute?, Feb.17, 2010, <http://carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=30975>

²⁹⁵ Ding Gang, *Global Times*, 2 December 2003, http://www.uscc.gov/researchpapers/2004/04_3_29whatwrongwithsino-ustraderelation.htm; Robert Sutter, *ibid*, pp. 180-184

Bush on September 13, 20005, in New York, President Hu Jintao said a healthy, stable and developing Sino-US relationship is beneficial to both countries.²⁹⁶

It is believed that there great potential exists for further developments in the Sino-U.S. economic and trade relation. In the long term, despite the exchange rate dispute, the volume of Sino-U.S. bilateral trade will follow the upward trend given the complementarity of bilateral trade. Nevertheless, the differences in their political and economic systems would continue cause trade disputes between the US and China.²⁹⁷

6.2.3. Tibet Issue

The rise to prominence of Tibet as a question in U.S.-China relations contrasts with the earlier on-and-off nature of the issue. From the mid-1950s to the early 1970s, the U.S. trained and armed Tibetan rebels. From the early 1970s to the mid-1980s, Tibet largely faded from the U.S. agenda during a period of U.S.-China quasi-alliance against the former USSR. By the mid-1980s, however, U.S.-China amity had begun to erode with Congress's excoriation of China on issues such as abortion, arms proliferation and the trade balance. Tibetan exile hopes that China would negotiate independence were dashed, but at the same time loosened controls.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁶ Li Qingsi, *ibid*, p 155

²⁹⁷ Ding Gang, *ibid*; Peter Samuel Shahinian, "Global Corporate Finance, Case Study: U.S. – China Trade Relations" May 2009, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/39544593/Case-1-USA-China-Trade-Relations>

²⁹⁸ A. Tom Grunfeld, "Toward a New Foreign Policy" *Foreign Policy in Focus*, vol 5 no 9, April 3, 2000, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/2272481/Tibet-Research>.

The Tibet Question is a difficult issue in U.S.-China relations because it is one of the world's most intractable conflicts. It is a long-running ethnic dispute that has persisted into the post-Cold War era of rising nationalism. Neither China's rulers nor the Tibetan exiles have escaped the nationalist trend. Under the most favorable circumstances, ethnic conflicts are hard to resolve because they are subject to "ethnic outbidding".²⁹⁹ Outbidding escalated the post-communist world's ethnic conflicts and makes it difficult for ethnic leaders locked in potentially secessionist conflicts to advance compromise proposals. Whether the U.S. administration still regards itself as too politically constrained to play a constructive role, if called upon to do so, remains to be seen.³⁰⁰

Tibet is really a serious source of headache for the Chinese. Tibetans enjoy significant international support and attract strong interest in their cause. Demographics are key to China's plan to "Sinify" Tibet. In China, there are about 5 million Tibetans who mainly live in Tibet. But they have become minority in their homeland because about 7.5 million Chinese now live in Tibet, and the policy of the Chinese government is to increase the numbers of Chinese in Tibet. While there has been significant resistance to Chinese rule in Tibet since 1950 and most seriously in 1959— China's grip has slowly strengthened. Before 1972, the U.S. provided significant aid to the Tibetan independence movement. However, given the reality of Chinese rule on the ground, and an ever-increasing Chinese

²⁹⁹ Ibid

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

population, there is little hope that Tibet will regain its independence short of the collapse of central authority in China.³⁰¹

6.3. THE ROLE OF XINJIANG PROBLEM IN CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.

“In the wake of the September 11th terrorist attacks in the United States, the U.S. has given China much greater freedom of action to suppress the Uyghurs.”³⁰² The PRC State Council Information Office declared a paper called “Eastern Turkestan” in January 2002 which includes the new approach of Chinese government against Uyghurs. In this paper China used the terms of “East Turkestan” and “terrorism” which were not mentioned before. It also started to regard Uyghur secessionists as “Eastern Turkestan terrorists” and it connect them to the international terrorist groups such as Osama Bin Laden and al-Qaeda.³⁰³

Chinese scholar Wu Shibo claims that Beijing took a low profile on this issue before September 11, never internationally publicizing the threat or openly calling for international cooperation in fighting the “East Turkistan terrorists.”³⁰⁴ In September 2002, the U.S. government placed a group operating in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) on its Foreign Terrorist Organization list. This acknowledges the Chinese claim since

³⁰¹ Bradley A. Thayer, *ibid*, p.85

³⁰² Bradley A. Thayer, *ibid.*, p. 84

³⁰³ James Millward, *A History of Xinjiang*, New York: Columbia University, 2007, p. 339

³⁰⁴ Wu Shibo, “The Promise and Limitations of a Sino-U.S. Partnership”, *The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 2004, p.116

September 11, 2001, that East Turkestan terrorist forces are part of al Qaeda and thus legitimizes a crackdown on Uyghur freedom movements. Indeed, U.S. forces in Afghanistan captured number of Chinese nationals fighting alongside Taliban and al Qaeda forces. Hasan Mahsum, the leader of the ETIM, stated in an interview given to Radio Free Asia Uyghur Service on January 22, 2002, that the “East Turkestan Islamic Party hasn’t received any financial assistance from Us-ama bin Laden or his al Qaeda organization. We don’t have any kind of organizational links with al Qaeda or the Taliban”³⁰⁵ although he notes that some Uyghur individuals had links with the Taliban.³⁰⁶

According to Chinese view, the East Turkistan terrorist threat is the product of a movement launched by Islamic fundamentalists in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China in the 1980s, and the East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM), one important group of the East Turkistan forces, is supported and directed by Osama bin Laden. Since the 1990s, bin Laden has schemed with the heads of Central and West Asian terrorist organizations many times to help the East Turkistan forces launch a holy war in Xinjiang, with the aim of establishing a theocratic Islamic state in the region.³⁰⁷

In time, perhaps given success in the war on terrorism against al Qaeda, the U.S. will reverse course and strengthen ties to the Uyghur separatist movement.

³⁰⁵ Erkin Dolat, “Washington Betrays China’s Uyghurs”, *Asia Time online*, September 5 2002, <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/China/DI05Ad03.html>

³⁰⁶ Bradley A. Thayer, *Confronting China: An Evaluation of Options for the United States*, Southwest Missouri State University Springfield, MO, U.S., p. 84

³⁰⁷ Wu Shibo, *The Promise and Limitations of a Sino-U.S. Partnership*, *The Washington Quarterly* Autumn 2004, p.116

The goal of the West, leading by America, to divide western China and use “Xinjiang to establish a political buffer between China and the oil producing countries of Central Asia and the Middle East.”³⁰⁸

According to some Chinese scholars, the US is not encouraging the Uyghur independence too much, because of the dilemma this would create. Which is that: an independent Xinjiang would separate China from the oil producing states of Central Asia on the one hand, but on the other hand it could encourage the spread of Islamic fundamentalism or create a political vacuum that Russia may attempt to fill.³⁰⁹ According to B.A.Thayer;

“There is little chance that the ethnic separatist movement active in Tibet and Xinjiang will be successful short of the collapse of Communist Party rule or civil war in China. Nonetheless, the separatist movements in Tibet and Xinjiang may be used to hinder China. The U.S. should deepen covert support for them, as well as religious and democratic political movements in order to maximize internal dissent within China in an effort to weaken it.”³¹⁰

To sum up, the escalating tensions between the US and China are an expression of deep-going changes in geopolitics. The US faces growing economic and strategic challenges from rising China. The US is aggressively attempting to consolidate its neo-colonial occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq in an effort to secure a hegemonic position in the key energy-rich regions of the Middle East and Central Asia. China is trying to consolidate its own alliances to keep the US out of Central Asian and to guarantee vital oil and gas supplies.

³⁰⁸ Zhang Wemnu, “America’s oil geostrategy and the security of Tibet and Xinjiang: considering new trends in US foreign policy toward south and Central Asia”, *Zhanlue yu guanli* (Strategy and Management), no 2, 1998, pp. 100-101, cited in Eric Hyer, *ibid*, p. 83

³⁰⁹ Eric Hyer, *Ibid*, p. 83

³¹⁰ Bradley A. Thayer, *ibid*, p. 84

The perceptions play important role in determining Chinese foreign policy. In China's viewpoint; on one hand the U.S. supremacy in the region has played a balancing role in maintaining stability and U.S. has helped China to integrate into the international system and the world economy. On the other hand, China has troubles with uncontrolled U.S. superpower that could threaten China's core national interests, particularly territorial integrity, and contain China's rise.

CHAPTER - 7

CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH TURKEY

This chapter deals with China's relations with Turkey with examining the development of relations and mentioning the major issues between Turkey and China which are Cyprus, PKK and Uyghur problem.

7.1. DEVELOPMENT OF TURKEY AND CHINA RELATIONS

The roots of Turk and Chinese relations go back to 3000 years before. In modern history Turkey and Chinese relations goes to the 1925. In return for Turkey's opening its first diplomatic mission in Nanking China in 1929, China applied for opening the consulate in Istanbul in 1930.³¹¹ After the Second World War, the People's Republic of China, established by supporters of communist regime in 1949, did not recognized by West and by Turkey because of sharing same ideology with Soviet Union.³¹² At the end of the 1960s the world's attitude against China began to change with the effect of U.S.

Turkey established diplomatic relations with China on 5 August 1971 and recognized People's Republic of China as the only legal representative of China. However, the bilateral relations had been in low level during the 1970s and 1980s. The dissolution of the former Eastern Bloc and the emergence of newly

³¹¹ Kutay Karaca, *ibid*, p. 189

³¹² Kutay Karaca, *ibid*, pp. 189-190

independent Turkic states in 1991, prompted Turkish decision makers to seek closed relations with Turkic groups living in the Russian Federation and Xinjiang region of China. As a matter of fact, this was perceived by Russia and China as a threat to their vested interests in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Therefore, since mid-1990s, Turkey has started to adopt more cautious diplomatic policy toward Central Asia instead of an assertive policy, and tried to build up close ties with Russia and China.³¹³

Turkish officials became more aware of the Chinese authority's sensitive stance on Xinjiang from 1997, when Ankara decided to take a new approach to improve relations with China. Turkey aimed to enter growing Chinese market, purchase weapons and missile systems that Turkey could not acquire from the West and gain Chinese support on Cyprus issue. In 1998, then Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit visited China where he discussed many world issues including Cyprus with Chinese leaders.³¹⁴ High level exchange visits continued in this period. In January 2004, Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited China in his capacity as the Head of AKP and announced his full support to international efforts against terrorism. The most recent high level visit to China was paid by President Abdullah Gül in June 2009, and became the first Turkish president in the history to visit Urumqi, the capital city of Uygur Autonomous Region.³¹⁵

³¹³ Arturas Jurgelevicius, "Friendship of Interests: Turkey and China", http://www.bilgesam.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=282:friendship-of-interests-turkey-and-china&catid=107:analizler-cin&Itemid=134

³¹⁴ <http://www.byegm.gov.tr/YAYINLARIMIZ/CHR/ING98/06/98X06X02.HTM>

³¹⁵ http://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkey_s-political-relations-with-china.en.mfa

Nevertheless, July 5th Urumqi Riot left Turkey in a difficult situation. Although it is in Turkey's interest to improve her ties with China, at the same time, she felt the need to condemn Chinese authorities' harsh treatment of the demonstrators and show its solidarity with the Uyghurs, who are Turkey's ethnic, linguistic and religious relatives. Facing the mounting pressure from the public opinion and domestic political circles, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan felt obliged to take a tough position against China by accusing it of having committed "almost genocide."³¹⁶ Some top officials even called for boycotting Chinese products.³¹⁷ The public reaction has been very strong that there erupted many organized country-wide protests against China. In the meantime, the Foreign Minister Mr. Davutoğlu has maintained a more constructive attitude and called for those responsible for the events to be caught.

To conclude, there are many factors which led to Turkey's reaction to the July 5th Incident, among which i) growing trade deficit on the expense of Turkey, ii) China's not labeling the PKK as a terrorist organization iii) China's reluctance to stand by Turkey's side in the Cyprus issue and iv) not achieving the desired partnership in military technology with China, can be listed as some of the main reasons that has blocked the improvement of the bilateral relations.

7.2. MAIN ISSUES BETWEEN TURKEY AND CHINA

³¹⁶ Erdogan 'Adeta soykırım' dedi, 11/07/2009, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalHaberDetay&Date=11.07.2009&ArticleID=944578>

³¹⁷ Türkiye-Çin ilişkileri geriliyor, 10/07/2009, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalHaberDetay&Date=10.7.2009&ArticleID=944429>

This chapter will mention the major issues between Turkey and China. I will examine the Cyprus issue, which has similarities with Taiwan problem, PKK issue and the Xinjiang problem's role in the Sino-Turk relations.

7.2.1. The Cyprus Issue

As is known, Turkey needs international support in the solution of the Cyprus issue. Therefore, as China is one of the five standing members of the UN Security Council, Turkey could not ignore China's role in the Cyprus issue. "The characteristic of Chinese nation policy of "not to be side of international disputes" can be seen in the Cyprus issue that China repeats the idea of solving the problem of Cyprus in front of the United Nations decisions"³¹⁸.

China has been supporting Southern Cyprus Regime for long time. China established its first diplomatic relations with Southern Cyprus regime right after the Cyprus Peace Movement of Turkey in 1974.³¹⁹ In June 2000, the president of Southern Cyprus Mr. Klerides paid an official visit to China, and received a warm welcome by his Chinese counterpart, Jiang Zemin who vowed to support Southern Cyprus claim of territory integrity and independence and contribute to the solution of the Cyprus issue in international platform by all means.³²⁰ Then until the 2006 the relations between China and the Southern Cyprus developed the areas of trade, science, technology and military. In 2007 the president of China, Hu Jintao, and

³¹⁸ Kutay Karaca, *ibid*, p. 200

³¹⁹ Kutay Karaca, *ibid*, p.200

³²⁰ Nuraniye Hidayet Ekrem, *Turkiye-Cin Iliskisinde Dogu Turkistan*, 07 Ocak 2005. <http://www.turksam.org/tr/a35.html>.

the leader of Southern Cyprus regime, Tassos Papadopoulos met in Pekin and decided to improve the relations between the two states.³²¹

For Turks, it is not unusual for the Chinese to take such stance because since China established diplomatic relations with the Southern Cyprus, it has been keen on developing relations with it and took the side of the Southern Cyprus concerning the Cyprus issue. One of the reasons behind the China's moves in favor of Southern Cyprus regime and not recognition of the Northern Cyprus that its worries about the recognition of Northern Cyprus being an example for Taiwan issue. There are also arguments on the implementing Taiwan model on the Cyprus issue which therefore has similarities and dissimilarities in essence.³²²

7.2.2. The PKK Issue

The PKK issue is Turkey's wound for many years and subject to outside influence, especially those countries who do not wish to see the emergence of Turkey as a powerful regional country. When we look at China's Kurd and PKK policy, we should mention that Iraq and Kurdish groups in Iraq has special importance for China because of their posses of petroleum reserves. In 2003 president of Iraq Celal Talabani visited China and Chinese foreign minister stated the desire of China to join the reconstruction projects of Iraq. After the 2005 elections Kurds got the majority in Iraq parliament and China decided to be closer

³²¹ Kutay Karaca, *ibid*, p. 201

³²² Barış Adıbelli, "The Tiwan Model and China's Cyprus Policy", *Eurasia Critics*, August 2008, <http://www.eurasiacritic.com/articles/taiwan-model-and-china%E2%80%99s-cyprus-policy>; Yüksel Söylemez, "The Question of Cyprus and the Question of Taiwan: A Comparison" *Foreign Policy*, issue 1-4, 1999, pp.78-84, on www.ceeol.com.

to the Kurds. “In 2007 Celal Talabani visited China as the President of Iraq and welcomed by military ceremony by Hu Jintao”³²³. As a result of these meetings they signed treaties on economic and technical cooperation; also they decided to put into force again the petroleum treaties which signed in Saddam Husain period.³²⁴

China pursues policies not only Kurdish groups in Iraq but also separatist groups which interested Turkey’s domestic politics. Although China is not in support of PKK’s claim against Turkish government, in its research studies, PKK is never labeled as a terrorist group, but rather it is treated as an anti-government force. First of all China aims to gain advantage against Uyghurs by having relations with PKK. China regards PKK problem of Turkey same as Uyghur problem of itself. So China gives message for Turkey that if Turkey supports Uyghurs, China would support Kurdish separatists. On this subject, PRC older president Jiang Zemin stated in 2000 both Turkey and China have problems on national unity, territorial integrity, terrorism, separatism and fundamentalism.³²⁵

Besides, in Chinese official publications, Turkish government is portrayed as a ruthless regime who is suppressing Kurds. Chinese academician Wang Zhijuan accused the US in his article in Chinese official People’s Daily newspaper for turning a blind eye to ‘Turkish oppression against the Kurds while supporting

³²³ Kutay Karaca *ibid*, p. 212

³²⁴ Kutay Karaca *ibid*, pp. 212-214

³²⁵ Yitzhak Shichor, “China’s Kurdish Policy”, *China Brief*, The Jamestown Foundation Publishing, January 2003, vol 6, no 1, p. 5

the Kosova Albanians to tear Yugoslavia apart³²⁶. While some Chinese scholars went so far as to accuse the Turks ‘is conducting genocide against the Kurds’, some others even called upon its government to support the PKK so as to counter-balance Turkey’s alleged support to the Uyghur’s separatist movement.³²⁷

However, the Kurdish state means to division of Iraq that against the Chinese anti-separatism thesis about Taiwan, Tibet and East Turkestan. When Turkish Prime Minister reacted strongly to the Chinese ruthless handling of the July 5th Urumqi Riot, a Chinese newspaper even threatened that China would support the PKK issue to retaliate should Turkey continues its hard stance.

7.3. THE ROLE OF XINJIANG PROBLEM IN CHINA’S RELATIONS WITH TURKEY

In history Turkey inspired Uyghur nationalism ideologically; open its doors for Uyghur immigrations, material and moral supported East Turkestan movements, organizations. The roots of this support go back to the end of 19th century when Ottoman Empire and China fight for controlling the Xinjiang region. After the collapse of Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, Turkey remained as guarantor power for Uyghurs. As a result the bilateral relations between China and Turkey damaged. Since 1950s Turkey has hosted Uyghur leaders and immigrants. Most of Uyghurs have come to

³²⁶ There are articles by Minzu Yicong “Nonsolvency Situation of Kurds” (1984), “Turkey’s Kurd Problem” (1985), “Kurdistan: History without Geography” (1990), “Kurds” (1994), “The problems of Kurds in Turkey” (1995)... see in Nuraniye Hidayet Ekrem, *ibid*.

³²⁷ Nuraniye Hidayet Ekrem, *Ibid*.

Turkey from India, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in 1952.³²⁸ Most of these Uyghurs live in Nigde, Kayseri, Konya and Salihli. The Secretary General of the government of East Turkestan state which was established in 1944, Isa Yusuf Alptekin has come to Turkey in 1952 and worked against China till his death in 1995.³²⁹

The Uyghurs settled in Turkey established East Turkestan Immigrants association in 1960 in Istanbul. In 1980s East Turkestan Foundation in Istanbul and in Kayseri the Association of East Turkestan Culture and Solidarity were established. Beside these institutions Uyghur tried to effect Turkish public opinion through the publications such as The Voice of East Turkestan, Gokbayrak and Turkestan.³³⁰ The Uyghur show activities through many institutions and associations. As a result of these activities, for China, Turkey is a sensitive state where dissidents live. According to the decision of Chinese Communist Party Central Committee the center of separatists in Xinjiang was Turkey, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.³³¹

In comparison to the Uyghur activities in Turkey, Beijing oppressed Turkey for lessen the activities of Uyghurs'. Until the late 1990 Turkey

³²⁸ In 1960s approximately 400 Uyghur have come Turkey from Afghanistan, in 1980s more than 100 Uyghur migrated to Turkey. Selçuk Çolakoğlu, “Doğu Türkistan Sorunu ve Türkiye”, *Anayurttan Atayurda Türk Dünyası*, (the magazine of the Ministry of Culture&Tourism of Turkey), 1998, p. 24

³²⁹ Selçuk Çolakoğlu, *ibid*, p.25

³³⁰ Selçuk Çolakoğlu, *ibid*, p. 25; Erkin Alptekin, “Doğu Türkistan’dan Hicretimizin 40 Yılı”, *Kayseri Erciyes Dergisi*, Doğu Türkistan Yayınları, 1990, pp. 24-27

³³¹ Selçuk Çolakoğlu, *ibid*, p.25

challenged the pressures of China because of the Turkish ethnicity and the desire to create a Turkish community after the collapse of Soviet Union which China interpreted as “pan-Turkism”. In spite of all efforts of Turkey, it had to compromise with China. Furthermore, the East Turkestan activities in Turkey were restrained so Uyghur were not comfortable in Turkey as in the past because of Beijing used Kurdish and Cyprus issues of Turkey.³³²

Between the years 1990 and 1995 with the efforts of İsa Yusuf Alptekin East Turkestan problem came to the agenda often. He met with the General Secretary of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), during the Islamic Foreign Ministers' meeting held in Istanbul,³³³ in November 1991 İsa Yusuf Alptekin met newly elected Turkish Prime Minister Suleiman Demirel, Deputy Prime Minister Erdal Inonu, head of the Motherland Party Mesut Yılmaz, head of the Salvation Party Necmettin Erbakan, head of the Nationalist Working Party Alparslan Türkeş and other parliamentarians, in an effort to inform them on the recent developments in Xinjiang. During the briefing Alptekin explained the leaders the assimilation policies which Uyghur faced in Xinjiang. Prime Minister Suleiman Demirel, Deputy Prime Minister Inonu and other party leaders and parliamentarians pledged support and said that they would "not allow the Chinese

³³² Erkin Ekrem, "Doğu Türkistan Sorunu ve Türkiye-Çin İlişkileri", *Türkiye Günlüğü*, no 77, summer 2004, p. 47

³³³ ETIB (East Turkestan Information Bulletin) "İsa Yusuf Alptekin Meets OIC General Secretary" vol 1, no 3, September 1991 in http://caccp.freedomsherald.org/et/etib/etib1_3.html#3

to assimilate their ethnic brothers in Eastern Turkestan," and would "take the matter to the UN and other international institutions".³³⁴

The second support for the Uyghur cause had come from Turgut Ozal. According to Eastern Turkestani leader Isa Yusuf Alptekin, Turgut Ozal had said,

"I declare that I have taken delivery of the Eastern Turkestani cause. The Turkic republics formerly under Soviet rule have all declared independence. Now it is the turn of Eastern Turkestan. It is our desire to see the ancient homeland of the Turkic peoples a free country."³³⁵

which caused disturbance and criticisms on the Chinese side. Although in an article published in official newspaper in China threatened Turkey with the words of "if Turkey continues the policy of supporting separatist forces, China use every moves to defend herself."³³⁶

In June 1994, Eastern Turkestani leader Isa Yusuf Alptekin, met with Mesut Yilmaz, chairman of the main opposition Motherland Party, Necmettin Erbakan, chairman of the Welfare Party and Bulent Ecevit, chairman of the Democratic Social Party. Alptekin, called on Turkey together with the newly independent Turkic republics to adopt a common strategy on the question of Eastern Turkestan.

The political leaders admitted that several factors had caused Turkey to neglect its

³³⁴ ETIB (East Turkestan Information Bulletin) "Isa Yusuf Alptekin meets Turkish Prime Minister and Party Leaders" vol 1, no 4, November 1991 in http://caccp.freedomsherald.org/et/etib/etib1_4.html#2

³³⁵ ETIB (East Turkestan Information Bulletin), "Isa Yusuf Alptekin Honors Ozal", vol 4, no 2, June 1994, http://caccp.freedomsherald.org/et/etib/etib4_2.html

³³⁶ Ibid

Eastern Turkestan policy but it was now time to take a fresh look at the problems of the Turkic peoples of Eastern Turkestan.³³⁷

During this period the support for Uyghur cause given by political leaders also continued with local governors. A new park in the Sultanahmet (Blue Mosque) section of Istanbul was given the Name "Isa Yusuf Alptekin" in a ceremony on July 28 1995. At the same time a memorial was erected in Isa Yusuf Alptekin park in remembrance of the Eastern Turkestani martyrs who lost their lives in the struggle for independence.

Recep Tayip Erdogan, Istanbul's mayor, spoke on the occasion:

"In order to express our deep gratitude to the great leader of Eastern Turkestan we have decided to name this park after Isa Yusuf Alptekin. Now almost 95 years old, Isa Yusuf Alptekin has spent his life working for the cause not only of Eastern Turkestan, but of the entire Turkic world. With his tireless struggle Isa Yusuf Alptekin not only inspired us, at the same time he became a symbol of independence, justice and peace in the Turkic world...Unfortunately, until now his work has not been recognized in the world. This humble park, which has been given this great leader's name, should always remind us of his great task. Eastern Turkestan is not only the home of the Turkic peoples, but it is also the cradle of Turkic history, civilization and culture. To forget that would lead to the ignorance of our own history, civilization, and culture...The martyrs of Eastern Turkestan are our own martyrs. In order to perpetuate their memory and merry their souls we have set up this memorial to the Martyrs of Eastern Turkestan. May their struggle always be remembered...Today, the culture of the people of Eastern Turkestan is being systematically sinocized..."³³⁸

Meanwhile in Ankara, the Chinese Ambassador Wu Koming, has protested the opening of the park and the Eastern Turkestan Martyrs Memorial saying that it was interference in the internal affairs of China. The Turkish Foreign Ministry replied that Turkey as a democratic country, that city

³³⁷ ETIB (East Turkestan Information Bulletin), "Political Meeting in Ankara", vol 4, no 3, August 1994, http://caccp.freedomsherald.org/et/etib/etib4_3.html#4

³³⁸ ETIB (East Turkestan Information Bulletin), "Istanbul Names Park for Isa Yusuf Alptekin", vol 5, no 4, August 1995, http://caccp.freedomsherald.org/et/etib/etib5_4.html#4

governments were elected directly by people and that the Turkish government had no authority or influence in changing decisions taken by city governments.³³⁹

In 1995, the East Turkestani European Union Chairman Erkin Alptekin was invited as Eastern Turkestani representative to the Third World Turkic Congress of Friendship, Brotherhood and Cooperation held in Izmir September 30 through October 2. The Congress, sponsored by Turkish president Suleyman Demirel, was organized by the Turkic World Foundation. Opening the Congress President Demirel said,

"It is an historical fact that between the Great Wall of China and the Balkans live almost 200 million Turkic-speaking people. For centuries Turkic peoples who share a common history, language and culture have been kept away from each other. Some of them have now gained independence, some are semi-independent and some still live under foreign domination."³⁴⁰

Beginning from the early 1996, Turkey's East Turkestan policy began to change. With the effect of heavy diplomatic pressure from China, Turkey's Foreign Ministry to request that the Isa Yusuf Alptekin Park in Istanbul be closed, the Eastern Turkestan flag be removed and the Eastern Turkestan Martyrs' Memorial be dismantled. China has also sought to stop all Eastern Turkestani activities in Turkey, to bring about the deportation from Turkey of some Uyghurs and to prevent others from acquiring Turkish citizenship.³⁴¹

³³⁹ ETIB (East Turkestan Information Bulletin), "Istanbul Names Park for Isa Yusuf Alptekin", vol 5, no 4, August 1995, http://caccp.freedomsherald.org/et/etib/etib5_4.html#4

³⁴⁰ ETIB (East Turkestan Information Bulletin), "ETUE Attends World Turkic Conference", vol 5, no no 5-6, October-December 1995, http://caccp.freedomsherald.org/et/etib/etib5_5.html#16

³⁴¹ ETIB (East Turkestan Information Bulletin), "China Pressures Turkey on Isa Yusuf Alptekin park", vol 6, no 1-2, February 1996, http://caccp.freedomsherald.org/et/etib/etib6_1.html#2

Although Turkish government has been in support of Uyghur movement for a long time, it finally realized that it is in need of Chinese support in various issues, therefore, since 1998, due to strategic considerations, Turkish government has started to mend fences with China, and this policy remained the same with the current government. In 1998 Turkish prime Ministry published a circular order in 1998 which restrained the activities of Uyghur in Turkey.³⁴²

China, on the other side, has always considered Turkey as a strong supporter of Uyghur people's struggle of independence. According to an official research by Chinese Academy of Social Science undertaken between 1990-1994, Turkey's support of Uyghur movement can be traced back to the late Ottoman period when Sultan Abdulhamid II. under the banner of Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism. The research even claimed that all the separatist Uyghur movement from the late 19th century and the mid-20th century was encouraged by the Turks behind the curtain.³⁴³ Furthermore, China suspected from Turkey because of pan-Turkic ideologies pursued on newly independent Central Asian states during the first half of the 1990s. But since 1996, Turkey tried to have good relations with China.³⁴⁴

After the events in XUAR on 5th July 2009 the thoughts against China increased in Turkey especially after the media reports. Prime Minister ERDOĞAN described the events as "almost homicide" and emphasized that he would bring this issue to the United Nations Security council. Actually Turkey

³⁴² Mehmet RızaBekin, "Türkiye-Çin İlişkilerinde Doğu Türkistan'ın Yeri", *Gökbayrak*, vol 17, no 93, Jan-Feb 2010, p. 4

³⁴³ Nuraniye, *ibid.*

³⁴⁴ Selçuk Çolakoğlu, "Doğu Türkistan Sorunu ve Türkiye", p. 30

made the harshest critics in the world. However, China responded by saying this is strictly China's internal affairs, thus made its covert threat against Turkey. Indeed, it would be for Turkey to overcome China at the UN Security Council because Russia has already declared its support for China. On the other hand, it is hard for Turkey to effectively oppose China at the UN Security Council, as Turkey's non-permanent membership will cease at end-2010.³⁴⁵

Against this background, Turkish-China relations have been uneasy for a long time. However, recent visit of Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jia Bao to Turkey gave a new momentum to bilateral relations. The Uyghur problem remained unsolved between the two powers.

Turkey and China both are important countries in its own region as well as in the world. Therefore, it is in their interests to cooperate rather than confrontation. For Turkey, China is a big power that can contain the US by the year 2030. China's standing membership of the UN Security Council gives it enormous power in world affairs, thus may help Turkey to voice its legal rights regarding the Cyprus issue as well as to lend its support to Turkey in combating the PKK within international context. And finally, Turkey would get its share from huge Chinese market. For China, Turkey occupies an important place in its strategies to get into Western market. China needs Turkey to tame the Uyghur

³⁴⁵ Barış Adıbelli, "Can the Uyghurs serve as a Bridge in the Future of Turkey-China Relations?", August, 2009.
<http://www.eurasiacritic.com/articles/can-uyghurs-serve-bridge-future-turkey-china-relations>;
<http://www.radikal.com.tr/Radikal.aspx?aType=RadikalHaberDetay&Date=11.07.2009&ArticleID=944578>; Fatih Şen, "Çin'in Sincan-Doğu Türkistan Sorunu:Dünü, Bugünü, Geleceği", *Gökbayrak*, vol 17, no 93, Jan-Feb 2010, p.p. 18-20

separatist movement because China believes that Turkey is a devout supporter of the Uyghur cause.

For the mutual benefits, necessary steps should be taken to build cooperative mechanisms between the two countries to the solution of the Uyghur issue. Turkey is crucial for the peaceful resolution of the Uyghur problem. Support lent to Beijing in this area will have the function of a springboard in improving bilateral relations. Turkey needs to tell the Chinese government that preservation of Uyghur cultural rights is the key to final solution.

On other hand, the contents of the anti-terror cooperation agreement declared by Chinese Head of State Jiang Zemin and Süleyman Demirel in April 2000 should be made public that it is strictly limited to combating international terrorists rather than targeting a single community. Mechanisms based on this understanding will have a positive impact on the process. Meanwhile, Turkey, bearing in mind of the sensitivities of its nature, explains in detail to both the Uyghur Diaspora and the Turkish public the great importance of the cooperation with China, and be careful not to alienate the Uyghur community.

CHAPTER-8

CONCLUSION

Main hypothesis of this thesis is that Chinese foreign policy towards Central Asia has been determined by its sense of insecurity related to the Xinjiang Problem; in contrast to the views of scholars who argues that the China's policy towards Central Asia has been guided by energy related economic concerns.

In this framework this thesis tried to analyse the importance of Xinjiang region for China with examining the evaluation of the problem throughout history in the first chapter. Xinjiang problem, which has direct affect on China's territorial integrity, state security and energy security, has strategic importance for China. The importance of Xinjiang region for China is based on six main considerations. Firstly, the region is target of China's policies of assimilation; secondly, there is petrol, coal, natural gas, gold and uranium reserves in Xinjiang, which is vital for China's energy security; thirdly, most of Chinese trade is being made via this region including energy pipelines; fourthly to let Uyghur independence means the collapse of "One China" ideology and led Tibetan and Mongolian movements; fifthly, the fear of the spread of drug trafficking, fundamental Islamic flows, illegal immigration and weapon trade through Xinjiang and lastly preventing Uyghur Diaspora in Central Asian states. This chapter shows the importance of Xinjiang for China both internal and external

dimensions and demonstrates the China's policies towards Uyghurs which are mostly security bases.

In the second chapter the evolution of Chinese foreign policy understanding analyzed with emphasizing the basic principles of China as territorial integrity, regional stability and non-intervention in domestic policies. This chapter shows the main components of China's foreign policy actions guided by its security considerations.

In the following chapters China's foreign relations with Central Asian states, Russian Federation, the U.S. and Turkey analyzed with mentioning the development of relations, main issues between China and these states, and lastly the role of Xinjiang Problem on these relations.

The XUAR region connected China to Central Asia on one hand. On the other hand although the people living in XUAR are politically under the governance of China, they share common culture, history, religion and life style with the Central Asian countries. Any unstable movement in Central Asia directly affects Xinjiang. The region also has importance for China on transferring the energy resources of Central Asia and the Caspian Sea to China.

In accordance with the importance of the region for Chinese strategic and economic interests, Beijing has to provide stability of Central Asia for providing stability of Xinjiang. China needs to cooperate with strategic actors that have common interests with herself for stabilizing Central Asia. Establishing Shanghai Five and SCO is another side of China's policy of stabilizing Central Asia. China,

aiming the providing of stability of the Central Asian region, tries to have cooperative relations with the neighbouring states through bilateral relations as well as through establishing international organisations on one side. On the other side China has always been sensitive to the Xinjiang problem and its human rights abuses which can easily be used by other states easily against China.

After the events of 9/11, the relations between the U.S. and China improved and China could easily deal with the problem of Uyghur secessionism with the same methods employed by the Bush administration. Thus, Chinese government has justified severe measures in its anti-separatist campaign and continuous crackdown not only on religion, but also on other aspects of life for the Uyghurs. After 9/11 China tried to use this new international situation in advantage of her. Although the war in Afghanistan played an important role in eliminating the Taliban and guerilla camps that were training Uyghur separatists, it also placed the U.S. military power in the range of Chinese influence. Chinese authorities decided to concentrate on Uyghur problem, having the chance to turn the official Chinese government position on Uyghur secessionism on its head. However the US is financially supporting the World Uyghur Congress activities through National Development of Democracy Organization (NED). In 2002, the US accepted East Turkestan Islamic Movement Party as a terrorist organization.

The major proposition of the thesis is that there is a connection between China's policies in Xinjiang and the conduct of China's foreign relations. The purpose of the thesis is that the China's policy on Xinjiang problem and its relations with other states based mostly upon its security concerns. It is clear that

China is attempting to enhance its security in a volatile region by keeping a lid on Uyghur unrest and developing relations with Central Asian states. By this way China aims to prevent Russia reasserting its power in the region, to limit the development of pan-Turkic nationalism and to prevent the spread of radical Islamic movements which will threaten stability in Xinjiang. According to Eric Hyer Chinese foreign policy has focused on three objectives: “to safeguard stability along the frontiers, to expand its sphere of influence in the Central Asian region and to find new markets for Chinese products.”³⁴⁶To accomplish these aims China has concluded military agreements, has taken firm measures against any “separatist” movements and has developed economic relations that bind Central Asia to China.

Considering that this thesis is based on the neo-realist approach of international relations, it can be concluded that Chinese foreign relations with Central Asian states, Turkey, Russia and the U.S. on the Xinjiang problem mainly focuses on Chinese security considerations. In this perspective, it is seen that China, with the aim of accomplishing its vital objective of providing security of its country, has been using all the measures that includes establishing bilateral relations with regional powers, making military and strategic cooperation, establishing international organisations such as SCO and improving economic relations with Central Asian state. It can be said that China has been using its

³⁴⁶Eric Hyer, “China’s Policy towards Uighur Nationalism”, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, vol 26, no 1, April 2006, p. 83

economic power and relations as an ‘instrument’ for the realization of its ‘end’ of providing stability and security in its country.

To sum up, it can be asserted that as long as the separatism, religious extremism and terrorism regarded as “three evils” by China, it is very likely that China will continue to its harsh policies against Uyghurs. At the same time, with secondary importance against security considerations, China will make broader cooperation with Central Asian countries in order to realize its long-term strategic and economic interests.

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