



Undergraduate Honors Theses

2022-03-17

Motives for Repression of Chinese Ethnic Minorities: A Comparative Case Study of Xinjiang and Tibet

Haley Grizzell

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/studentpub_uht



Part of the [Political Science Commons](#)

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Grizzell, Haley, "Motives for Repression of Chinese Ethnic Minorities: A Comparative Case Study of Xinjiang and Tibet" (2022). *Undergraduate Honors Theses*. 227.
https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/studentpub_uht/227

This Honors Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Honors Thesis

MOTIVES FOR REPRESSION OF CHINESE ETHNIC MINORITIES: A COMPARATIVE
CASE STUDY OF XINJIANG AND TIBET

By Haley Grizzell

Submitted to Brigham Young University in partial fulfillment of graduation requirements
for University Honors

Political Science Department
Brigham Young University
April 2022

Advisor: Dr. Celeste Beesley
Reader: Dr. Eric Hyer
Honors Coordinator: Dr. Ethan Busby

ABSTRACT

MOTIVES FOR REPRESSION OF CHINESE ETHNIC MINORITIES: A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF XINJIANG AND TIBET

Haley Grizzell

Political Science Department

Bachelor of Arts

Abstract: While Xinjiang suffers genocide and Tibet has experienced human rights abuses for years from the Communist Party of China (CPC), government abuses in Xinjiang are far more severe, even though the regions represent similar (low) levels of separatist, terrorist violence. To understand this variation in the CPC's treatment of its western ethnic minorities, I theorize that the actions in Xinjiang must be tied to regime survival, which in China is tied to performance. The CPC's performance has been lacking in providing power for its urban population, which makes up its most important base of legitimacy. According to my theory, educated, urban Chinese have given up substantial freedoms in exchange for the government's efforts to provide them with social services and basic resources, like electricity. This kind of social contract is predicated on the performance of the CPC. If the CPC's performance in providing these services and resources is poor, the regime's legitimacy is at risk. I present a most similar case study comparing Xinjiang and Tibet to understand the possible threats the CPC might see in those regions that would justify

the costly, ongoing repression in those regions. Since the abuses in Xinjiang are far more severe and costly for the CPC to carry out, regime concerns about unrest in that region can be assumed to be higher. I analyze two different explanations for regime concerns. The first is the CPC's stated pretext for the repression—terrorism. I find that the terrorism threat in both regions is overblown, and the government is using it more as a pretext for its actions. The second explanation centers on the costs of unrest to the regime, proxied by energy resources in the regions. I find that energy resources explain the variation in repression between these two regions, while terrorism cannot. In this thesis, I argue that the CPC has pursued genocide and industrialized repression in Xinjiang because of that region's abundant and easily extractable energy resources that form an important contribution to China's energy systems, while Tibet lacks these. In addition, I find that the CPC's accounts of terrorism in Xinjiang are exaggerated to provide a convenient pretext for its treatments of the Uyghurs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis exists because of the selfless help, time, and experience that my former colleagues at the American Foreign Policy Council lent to me. I was an intern there in Winter 2021 and worked extensively with Dr. Larry Wortzel and Dr. Joshua Eisenman. I have had the privilege of working for both after my internship. These two China scholars took me under their wings and gave me opportunities to grow as a researcher and budding Sinologist. I would also like to thank Dr. Jaqueline Deal at the Long Term Strategy Group, who has been a kind mentor and boss and has encouraged my research into the resources side of this thesis. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to the former leaders of BYU's National Security Student Association. They gave me the experience and confidence to work with any previously mentioned professionals. I feel lucky to have been guided and mentored by so many people.

I am also grateful for my thesis committee: Dr. Celeste Beesley, Dr. Eric Hyer, and Dr. Ethan Busby. I have had a few classes with Dr. Beesley, and I have always appreciated her sense of humor and ability to make her students think through the literature, as well as our own opinions. She has also been a stalwart supporter of the NSSA, taking time out of her busy schedule to be our keynote speaker for our opening social in Fall 2021 and promoting NSSA events in her classes. Dr. Hyer is an area expert for China and the Coordinator for Asian Studies at BYU. After hearing so much praise about him from some of my good friends in the Washington, D.C., area, I knew that I wanted him on my thesis committee because he would provide invaluable insights. I greatly appreciate Dr. Busby's commitment to helping political science students to complete their honors theses and could not do any of this without him.

I cannot do justice to these acknowledgments without thanking my family and my roommates, also my good friends. Thank you for supporting me, believing in me, and helping me get through the more stressful times of researching and writing this thesis. Even though this topic may not be something you were personally interested in, you showed love and investment in what I was doing. That encouraged me possibly more than anything else.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title	i
Abstract	ii
Acknowledgments	iv
Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables and Figures	vii
I. Introduction	1
II. Theory	4
III. Research Design: Most Similar Case Study	7
IV. Variation in the Dependent Variable: The Xinjiang and Tibet Crackdowns	18
V. Hypothesis One: Separatist “Terrorism”	22
VI. Hypothesis Two: Abundant and Easily Extractable Energy Resources	38
VII. Conclusion	47
VIII. Works Cited	49

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE 1: Findings from the most similar case study for Xinjiang and Tibet	8
FIGURE 1: Map of Chinese territory by length of Chinese government control	18
FIGURE 2: Cartoon criticizing the new counterterrorism law's targeting of Tibetan Buddhists	37
FIGURE 3: Oil and natural gas fields in the Junggar Basin	40
FIGURE 4: Natural Gas Production from 1985-2014, by region	41
TABLE 2: Fossil Fuel Production in Xinjiang from 2005-2014	42
FIGURE 5: Potential solar power production capacity	44

I. Introduction

On January 19, 2021, the U.S. Secretary of State declared that the atrocities committed by the Chinese government in Xinjiang constituted genocide (Pompeo 2021). The Secretary of State in the following administration, Secretary Antony Blinken, agreed with this assessment on his first day in office (Pamuk and Brunnstrom 2021). These declarations have been followed up by the passage of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act and the U.S. diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, as well as similar actions from allied countries.

The basis for these declarations of genocide includes mass detention, forced sterilization, surveillance, arbitrary executions, torture, and forcing Uyghur children to attend Han Chinese-run boarding schools away from their families and communities (Boissoneault 2022). Article II of the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide in five parts:

In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such:

- a. Killing members of the group;
- b. Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- c. Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- d. Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- e. Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The situation in Xinjiang meets each part of the definition of genocide, even though “any of the following acts” would have been enough to qualify it as such (Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect 2022). Genocide, as defined by the United Nations, is distinctly

different from “cultural genocide,” which is when the “language, religion, and cultural practices” of an ethnic group are made illegal.

While Xinjiang has grabbed most of the attention in terms of headlines lately, Tibet has also suffered gross human rights violations under the CPC’s rule. These include torture of separatists, arbitrary arrest, keeping political prisoners, reprisal and harassment of overseas Tibetans, and lack of an independent judiciary in the region (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor 2020). However, while some go so far as to call the Tibet situation a “cultural genocide,” other scholars push back on that label as an exaggeration (Sautman 2006, 166). The U.S. government has condemned the human rights abuses perpetrated by the CPC in Tibet yet has stopped short of calling it either a “cultural genocide” or genocide.

Clearly, there are significant differences in how the CPC is handling ethnic minorities in Xinjiang compared to Tibet. This is puzzling because, according to the CPC, they represent a similar threat. The Central Committee of the CPC claims that both regions pose a risk of anti-regime violence. They are both viewed with suspicion because the majority populations of these regions are not Han Chinese. These regions also have many other similarities, including histories of separatist activity, strong international support, religions that are unfamiliar to Han Chinese and fall outside the mainstream, and status as border regions that have only been under Chinese control for a few hundred years. Given these similarities, what explains why there is genocide in one region and not in the other? Why such a difference in the severity of CPC policy? That is the puzzle I seek to answer in this thesis.

Nationalism or Sinification would predict a similar level of response, and both Xinjiang and Tibet are affected by these. The CPC claims terrorism is an issue in both regions yet has only pursued genocide in Xinjiang. The scale of the repression involved in genocide is costly in terms

of physical costs, risk of domestic backlash, and in international costs, so the regime must have incentives to pursue these costly policies. I lay out a theory that the difference in the crackdown in Xinjiang and Tibet is due to a question of minor national security threats versus major economic threats. While in some circumstances the costs of terrorism might be high enough to justify some repression, it would generally – and not at the levels seen in China – not be enough to justify high levels of repression. Rather, higher levels of repression must be to avoid something that is a more fundamental threat to regime stability or security. In the case of China, this fundamental threat is to the economic legitimation of the regime, in combination with the other factors.

After explaining this theory about strategic economic concerns, I present a comparative case study of Xinjiang and Tibet, examining the similarities mentioned earlier. As a part of this comparative case study, I examine important differences in treatment between Xinjiang and Tibet, and I explore the CPC's explanation for why the crackdown in Xinjiang is occurring – terrorism. I also consider the CPC's claims about terrorist separatist activity in Tibet. From this case study, I conclude, the terrorism explanation cannot account for the far more severe human rights violations in Xinjiang, so I turn to another explanation: abundant and easily extractable energy resources. Xinjiang has these, but Tibet's energy resources are fewer and too expensive to extract to be profitable.

Industrialized genocide like the one seen in Xinjiang is expensive, so there must be some incentive to spend that much money on it aside from a trumped-up national security threat from the minimal and debatable amount of terrorism present. As a rapidly growing economy and the world's largest country in terms of population, China is energy-starved, as evidenced by the frustrating blackouts experienced there last year.

Because China is having a hard time producing enough energy for its needs, it is setting up partnerships with Pakistan and Myanmar, so that they have access to energy imports in the event of disruption of the South China Sea routes China depends on for most of its energy imports (China Power Team 2020). However, both partner countries have their own vulnerabilities that could disrupt energy exports to China. Pakistan has historically been bogged down with terrorist concerns, and Myanmar is one year into a military coup that is increasingly spiraling toward civil war.

Because of the unpredictability of other countries' stability, any domestic energy production China is capable of takes on importance. Cheap and abundant energy resources are essential to the success of the Chinese state, and energy resource extraction provides sufficient reason for the CPC to carry out its repressive policies in Xinjiang. Focus on the energy resources in Xinjiang provides an explanation for the variation in government human rights violations between Xinjiang and Tibet, while the government-supplied pretext for repression – terrorism – does not.

II. Theory

Before exploring this puzzle further, it is crucial to understand authoritarian regimes' incentives and constraints when choosing to repress minority groups. I define authoritarianism in this paper as a type of regime where the power to rule is in the hands of one party or one individual, but there is still some accountability between that ruler and a group of selectors. This selectorate had a role in bringing the regime's leader to power (Siverson and Bueno de Mesquita 2017). To stay in power, the leader needs to keep the support of the "winning coalition," which is a smaller group within the selectorate that holds the most power. However, the leader also needs to continue to court the broader selectorate, as well. To keep the support of these groups, the

leader needs to give private goods to the winning coalition and public goods to the selectorate, and the leader is held accountable by those groups to provide these goods. According to multiple scholars, modern authoritarianism is characterized by having this relationship (Shirk 1993; Roeder 1993). With the narrow selectorates as their focus, authoritarian leaders cannot benefit from minority groups' support, unlike in democracies. In democracies, depending on the electoral rules and constituency composition, elected officials frequently court ethnic or religious minority groups as supporters (Posner 2004; Reilly and Reynolds 2000). In this thesis, I will be focusing more on broad legitimacy, specifically from urban Chinese and Han Chinese, in general. These are the groups that receive the most of the regime's public goods.

When resources are under strain, the regime has greater incentives to redistribute resources away from other groups to the selectorate. This creates incentives to provide justification for that unequal treatment, to try to avoid backlash because repression and inequality can lead to a destabilizing backlash. Because of this risk of backlash and the financial cost of large-scale repression, extraction and silencing should only be in proportion to the size of the threat to the regime. Some scholars believe that a "tangible connection exists between racism and authoritarianism" (Parker and Towler 2019, 503). This connection might come in the redistributing of resources away from minority groups and justification that takes on racist characteristics or involves scapegoating of certain groups. Some groups are more susceptible to being treated in racist ways or to scapegoating or are more attractive to the regime for such purposes because of ethnic or religious differences combined with plentiful and underexploited resources. This would go along with the idea that authoritarianism, at least on the micro-scale, is all about social conformity. Groups that have characteristics that make them less likely to favor the regime, especially minority groups, make easy targets for authoritarian regimes. Because

these groups do not conform to certain cultural, religious, or ethnic expectations, they can be scapegoated. Once groups are scapegoated, authoritarian regimes can start taking resources from them and distributing them to selectors and more-favored groups.

On the macro-scale, this would translate into an authoritarian regime showing a great degree of intolerance toward “deviant groups” (Feldman 2003, 45). The CPC needs to provide for people’s economic needs, but it also needs to provide security (Peng 2013; Duckett and Munro 2021). Once economic growth starts to stagnate, the regime needs to find other means of legitimacy that are perhaps less tangible – nationalism is one option. In the cases of the CPC and its relationships with Xinjiang and Tibet, this performance mindset means that the CPC will suppress any sort of separatist activity because it poses a national security risk to the rest of the country, even if that separatist activity is not violent. The very possibility that it could become violent warrants a severe response. If the national security threat gets out of hand, it could also become a regime threat. Autocracies run on a potentially fragile base of support from a small group of selectors, so if a national security threat spirals to the point of affecting the services the regime selectors expect, the regime will lose legitimacy from the selectors.

However, “deviant groups” are not the only concern of the authoritarian regime. The entire population could pose a risk to the regime’s survival. This is because although authoritarian leaders do not require a majority to attain power, they still do require some of the population to give them effective power (Wallace 2013, 637; Bueno de Mesquita, et al 2003). When basic economic needs are not met, this can cause even that pocket of the loyal population to turn against the regime. When there are concerns of losing too much selector support, the authoritarian leader starts coup-proofing by removing high-level officials (Sudduth 2017, 3). In

the CPC's case, this has been done through allegations of corruption or being too soft on ethnic minorities in the western parts of the country.

Potential regime death is always a concern for the CPC, as it has staked its legitimacy on being able to provide for the Chinese people's economic needs. For example, one of the main goals of the CPC for decades was to build a "moderately prosperous society" (小康社会). In 2021, the general secretary of the CPC, Xi Jinping, declared that China had reached this goal (State Council of the People's Republic of China 2021). A healthy middle class exists in China and now expects to stay that way.

Certainly, one of the expectations of this healthy middle class is that the government will provide reliable power to their homes and businesses. However, because of the sheer size of China, its ever-increasing demand for energy, and the government's efforts to undertake a massive restructuring of its energy system, blackouts have occurred across the country. If the CPC does not want this to be a continued concern, it will need to continue to ramp up energy production of all kinds. This energy must come from somewhere, and I argue that much of China's domestically produced energy, at least in terms of oil and natural gas, comes from Xinjiang, thus giving social control in that region an extra sense of urgency. The conjunction of the Chinese government's legitimation tactics and coup-proofing methods leads to expectations of repression in either of these threats, but points to economic concerns being perceived as more vital for regime stability than minor potential national security concerns.

III. Research Design: Most Similar Case Study

After studying Xinjiang and Tibet, I concluded they are similar in dimensions that should explain repression: they share histories of separatism, international support, religions that fall

outside the Three Doctrines (三教) culturally a part of China, and status as periphery regions not always under Chinese control. Histories of separatism might lead to repression because of regime concerns that the regions would try to break away from China. International support might lead to repression because it undermines regime control of the regions and might encourage nationalist groups. Religions that fall outside the Three Doctrines (三教) alienate Uyghurs and Tibetans from the Han Chinese majority in the country and make it easier to scapegoat and repress these minority groups. Status as periphery regions not always under Chinese control means that these regions not only have strong identities and cultures of their own, but their people also feel disconnected from the events happening in the core of China in more urban and ethnically homogenous areas. Included below is a table that shows the findings for each category.

	Xinjiang	Tibet
History of separatist activity	Pre-CPC conflict with Han Chinese, early CPC management of national identity	Independence movement in the 20 th century
Strong international support	World Uyghur Congress	World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet
Religion that falls outside the comfortable Three Doctrines	Sunni Islam, which is cast as a radical religion	Tibetan Buddhism, referred to as a cult by CPC officials
Status as periphery region	Frontier region viewed as needing economic help	Strategic periphery and buffer region in war

Table 1: Findings from the most similar case study for Xinjiang and Tibet.

IIIa. History of Separatist Activity

Xinjiang

From the beginning of history in the region, Uyghurs had an identity (Bhattacharya 2003). Even after their kingdom fell apart, “the belief in common ethnicity persisted.” This identity caused separatism and conflict between Uyghurs and Han Chinese before the 1800s (Neal 2019, 5). The CPC tried to shape this national identity to its purposes early on. Gunnar Jarring, a former Swedish diplomat, recalled a 1978 visit to scholars in Urumqi, saying that “Culture and science were represented by two Han-Chinese, three Uighur men, and one Uighur woman—all employees of the Urumchi university in different capacities. The two Chinese were responsible for history” (Dwyer 2005, 21). Controlling how people teach history is an important policy aim of the CPC in Xinjiang and Tibet.

While the CPC allowed Uyghurs to learn their language in school and maintain practices that made them distinct from the Han in the first decades of rule, the policy changed in the 1980s so that the end goal of Xinjiang minority policy was assimilation, not cultural accommodation (Dwyer 2005, x). The CPC perceived this belief in cultural identity as a threat and, according to the Uyghur diaspora, attacked books about Uyghur history starting in 1991. The CPC placed Turgun Almas and other authors under house arrest and banned their books.

The separatist activity culminated in the 1990s when the situation was difficult enough that in 1996, the Standing Committee of the CPC Politburo issued Document No. 7, which meant to address the “Xinjiang question” (Human Rights Watch 1998). The document aimed to curb separatism in Uyghurs starting from a young age and included these instructions about schools and media:

Tightly limit cultural exchange activities, such as foreign teachers teaching at Xinjiang schools.... When choosing students for study abroad, pay great attention to their attitude and their actual behavior. Do not send those without a good attitude.... Severely restrict elementary and high schools from developing cultural exchange programs with schools in foreign countries.... Tightly control the media market. Books, journals, audio, and video tapes which twist the history and inspire ethnic separatism and illegal religious ideas should be prohibited and confiscated without exception; the involved personnel have to be investigated.

Most works about Xinjiang's history are now written by ethnic Han Chinese and seek to convince readers that China has always controlled the region. After this campaign to manage how schools teach Xinjiang's history, the CPC published its own White Paper with its official account of history.

Despite these efforts to control the narrative, Chinese officials have stated that they are still concerned Uyghurs hold separatist views (Maizland 2021). This concern is one of the reasons the CPC cites for building mass internment camps, saying this is a way to eliminate threats to Chinese territorial integrity. The government has also pointed to the East Turkestan Islamic Movement as an example of the violent separatist threat from Uyghurs.

Tibet

Historical Tibet covered more than what is now considered the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) (Alling 1997, 118). Its territorial reach extended beyond the TAR into parts of Qinghai, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Gansu. The area that is now the TAR came under the control of the Nationalist Chinese government and was later a target of "liberation" from the CPC almost as soon as it took hold of power in the core of China (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China 1992). Official CPC accounts describe their actions as a peaceful liberation of the Tibetans.

Tibetan separatists hold the unusual distinction of having been backed by the United States in their earlier days (Xinhuanet 2001). In the 1940s, the United States began meeting with high-level Tibetans to express support for their independence from China. The CPC has traditionally accused the United States of igniting the conflict, denying that it could have come organically from the Tibetan people. Decades of economic underdevelopment and support for independence born out of a cohesive national Tibetan identity are the more likely culprits for continued separatist activity.

Tibetan Buddhism and the Dalai Lama have played a central role in Tibetan separatism, and for this reason the CPC is openly hostile to this brand of Buddhism, branding it the “Dalai clique” (Xinhuanet 2001). As the face of the Tibetan government in exile, the Dalai Lama has called for “genuine autonomy” for the region (Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Israel 2004). This request is unacceptable to the CPC.

Much like the situation in Xinjiang, Han Chinese have downplayed the reality that Tibet was once its own independent entity. University student Nancy Cao summed this up well by saying in an interview, “Tibet is always a part of China in our history” (Reuters Staff 2017). To the CPC, control over how a region’s history is told is an important tool in controlling separatism. If the younger generations can be taught that the region has always been a part of China, they will be much less likely to have a sense of national identity separate from China and much less likely to participate in separatist activities.

IIIb. Strong International Support

Xinjiang

As Tibetans did, Uyghurs who had fled to Western countries established a legislature in exile, the East Turkistan National Congress, in 1992 (World Uyghur Congress 2021). Following the post-9/11 invigorated crackdown on Uyghurs, the East Turkistan National Congress combined with other organizations to form the World Uyghur Congress, established in Munich, Germany (World Uyghur Congress 2022). This organization has been responsible for lobbying the United Nations and Western governments to address the Chinese government actions in Xinjiang, with some recent successes.

In 2019, 22 countries led by the West sent the United Nations a letter condemning the CPC policies in Xinjiang (Putz 2020). China spearheaded a separate coalition of 37 countries in sending a letter to the United Nations around the same time but in support of its policies in Xinjiang. Both sides repeated their actions in 2020, with the condemning side growing to 39 countries. The Chinese list of countries lost several supporters, notably several Muslim-majority countries, but it increased to 45 countries.

In the same span of years, several Western countries have also imposed sanctions on Chinese officials because of the genocide in Xinjiang. The State Department 2021 determination that the CPC actions in Xinjiang constitute genocide is another recent tool for supporting the Uyghurs. The passage and signing of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act in December 2021 followed the State Department's action.

This new legislation requires companies to prove that they did not make products from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) with forced labor (Baillie and Vandenbrink 2020). While this law and other actions taken by the United States and like-minded countries will not likely convince the CPC to end involuntary internments and forced labor in Xinjiang, they draw attention to the genocide and express support for the Uyghur people.

Tibet

In 1990, Lodi Gyari, a Tibetan politician and journalist, came to the United States and founded the International Campaign for Tibet (Gershman 2019). This organization helped create strong support for Tibet within the U.S. Congress. Together with other organizations, the International Campaign for Tibet gathered in Washington, D.C., in 1996 to promote the cause of Tibetan independence (Students for a Free Tibet-UMass 1996). One of the organizations present at the gathering, the Tibetan Nun's Project, directly supports nuns in exile who protested for Tibetan independence.

Some of these pro-Tibet organizations have had major successes. The International Campaign for Tibet's lobbying helped lead to the passage of the 2002 Tibet Policy Act and the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018, which currently guide U.S. relations with Tibet and China. In addition to the United States, Latvia and other European countries also support Tibet, with Latvia hosting the Seventh Meeting of the World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet in 2019 (Gershman 2019). The U.S. government and other like-minded governments around the world continue to condemn CPC policies in Tibet on important anniversaries of the Tibetan independence movement.

IIIc. Religion That Falls Outside the Comfortable Three Doctrines (三教)

Xinjiang

China is officially an atheist country, but some religions are more tolerated than others. Those are summed up as the Three Doctrines (三教): Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism, all of which have long histories in China and are well integrated into Chinese culture. The dominant religion of Xinjiang, Sunni Islam, falls outside the Three Doctrines and is viewed with suspicion.

Human rights groups have said that many Uyghurs are “labeled as extremists simply for practicing their religion” (Maizland 2021). This could partly be because the religion has resisted attempts at Sinicization.

Under Xi Jinping, this campaign to Sinicize religions seeks to bring them in harmony with the CPC’s atheist core doctrines, as well as the cultural practices of the Han Chinese. Sunni Islam is not alone as a target of this campaign. The CPC has closed Christian churches and removed crosses from them, and it has demolished mosques (Johnson 2019). However, Sunni Islam has been consistently linked to extremism by the CPC far more than Christianity.

Islam is one of the five state-recognized religions in China: Buddhism, Catholicism, Daoism, Islam, and Protestantism (Maizland 2021). However, the CPC has long feared that foreign influence could turn any of those religions into something radical and dangerous for the state, especially when it comes to Islam. Xinjiang is bordered by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, all majority-Muslim countries.

Tibet

Religion has long formed an essential part of Tibetan’s national identity, along with their language (Van Walt van Praag 2022). Tibetan Buddhism was not always the predominant religion of the region, though. Before Buddhism came to Tibet, the predominant religion was a native one called Bön or cho – translated as “dharma” – traditions (BBC 2004). The priests of this ancient Tibetan religious tradition were tied to the king and performed rituals for him (Powers 1995). In this way, religion and government were inseparable from early history.

When Indian Buddhist masters brought the religion with them to Tibet, the Tibetan king Lang Darma originally reacted quite violently and stamped any trace of Buddhism out. This

original reaction to Buddhism in Tibet is somewhat mirrored in the CPC's response to Tibetan Buddhism today. The CPC has restricted religious practice in Tibet severely, as well as freedom of the press, which, like in Xinjiang, means tight controls over religious texts.

Tibetan Buddhist leaders have also been forced to go into exile since the CPC took over Tibet (BBC 2004). The paramount leader of Tibetan Buddhism, the Dalai Lama, lives in India, along with some of the other top religious leaders. He is referred to as a cult leader by the CPC, and Tibetan Buddhism is derided as the "Dalai clique." While other forms of Buddhism are accepted into the mainstream of the Three Doctrines (三教), Tibetan Buddhism is not.

The teachings of Tibetan Buddhism are a fusion of Mahayana Buddhism, as well as Tantric and Shamanic Buddhism, making it doctrinally distinct from "pure" Chinese Mahayana Buddhism. In addition to being a blend of other forms of Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism also incorporates ancient Tibetan religious spirits into its canon (BBC 2004). Like other forms of Buddhism, it also teaches about Bodhisattvas who can be either helpful or hurtful. Because of this fusion of different religions, Tibetan Buddhism is viewed as strange, but it is the long-standing political connection that makes it a threat to the CPC.

III.d. Status as Periphery Region

Xinjiang

For decades, Han Chinese have migrated to Xinjiang for jobs with state-owned companies, as well as seeking their own space for entrepreneurship (Cliff 2012, 85). Some have lived out there since before the 1980s and refer to themselves as "old Xinjiang people." These people claim responsibility for developing Xinjiang from a desert. Even the name "Xinjiang" means new frontier, thus embodying the pioneer-settler narrative.

When Han Chinese settlers move to Xinjiang, they generally experience a rise in social status (Cliff 2012, 85). Even in the Mao era, military officers and bureaucrats were promoted at least one position during their time there. In the present day, settlers operating outside the system are given land packages to help them get started. If this sounds like the Wild West of U.S. history, it is like it.

Much of the work on the “new frontier” is in state-owned enterprises because the Chinese government believes this will help strengthen “the CCP’s ruling Party status” in the region (Cliff 2012, 101). As energy companies become more involved in Xinjiang, the CPC makes it more attractive to Han Chinese to move away from the core regions of China into the west. Over time, this mass migration has made the Uyghurs go from being the definite majority ethnic group of Xinjiang to now a plurality ethnic group.

As a frontier region, Xinjiang has been granted an “extraordinarily important strategic status” in China’s economic development (Tukmadiyeva 2012). Because of this status, the government has been trying to accomplish “leapfrog development” in the local economy. Cities from inside the core of China are partnered with cities in Xinjiang in “pairing assistance” to give advice and financial help to the local government. These policies to boost the economy are seen by Uyghurs as mostly benefiting the Han Chinese, though.

Tibet

Tibet has long been seen as a periphery region that is a valuable geographic buffer between China and other states, including periods of time under both Mongol and Manchu rule when Tibet had a sort of semi-independence from Chinese governments (Bhattacharya 2013, 3).

During the time of British India, this buffer region status appeared again when the British fought over borders with the Tibetans.

After this clash, the British contacted the Dalai Lama to try to figure out if they were fighting the Tibetans and the Chinese over the territory, or just the Tibetans. The British interpreted the relationship between Tibet and China as a “loose reign” and started of thinking of ways to tighten the relationship. Indeed, through the 1930s, Tibetans enjoyed a kind of political freedom from the Nationalist Chinese government, if not a complete freedom in a complete sovereignty sense (Goldstein 1994). This would change when the CPC came to power in just a decade or so later.

In 1954, India, now independent, signed an agreement with China recognizing Tibet as a part of China (Bhattacharya 2013, 5). Indian leadership apparently did not realize that it was giving away what it considered to be security and territorial concessions. With this seeming acknowledgement of the border between the two countries being, the CPC was free to carry out policy in this periphery region as it saw fit. This agreement between China and India became quite helpful in the 1962 India-China war because Tibet could act as a geographic shield for the rest of China.

In concluding this section about both Xinjiang and Tibet’s status as periphery regions, this map (see Figure 1) shared by a colleague is useful to show that these two regions were not always a part of China (Sui 2021; 2022). Despite what the government-written history courses teach university students about these regions, in the grand scheme of China’s 5,000 years of history, they have been under Chinese government control for a very short period.

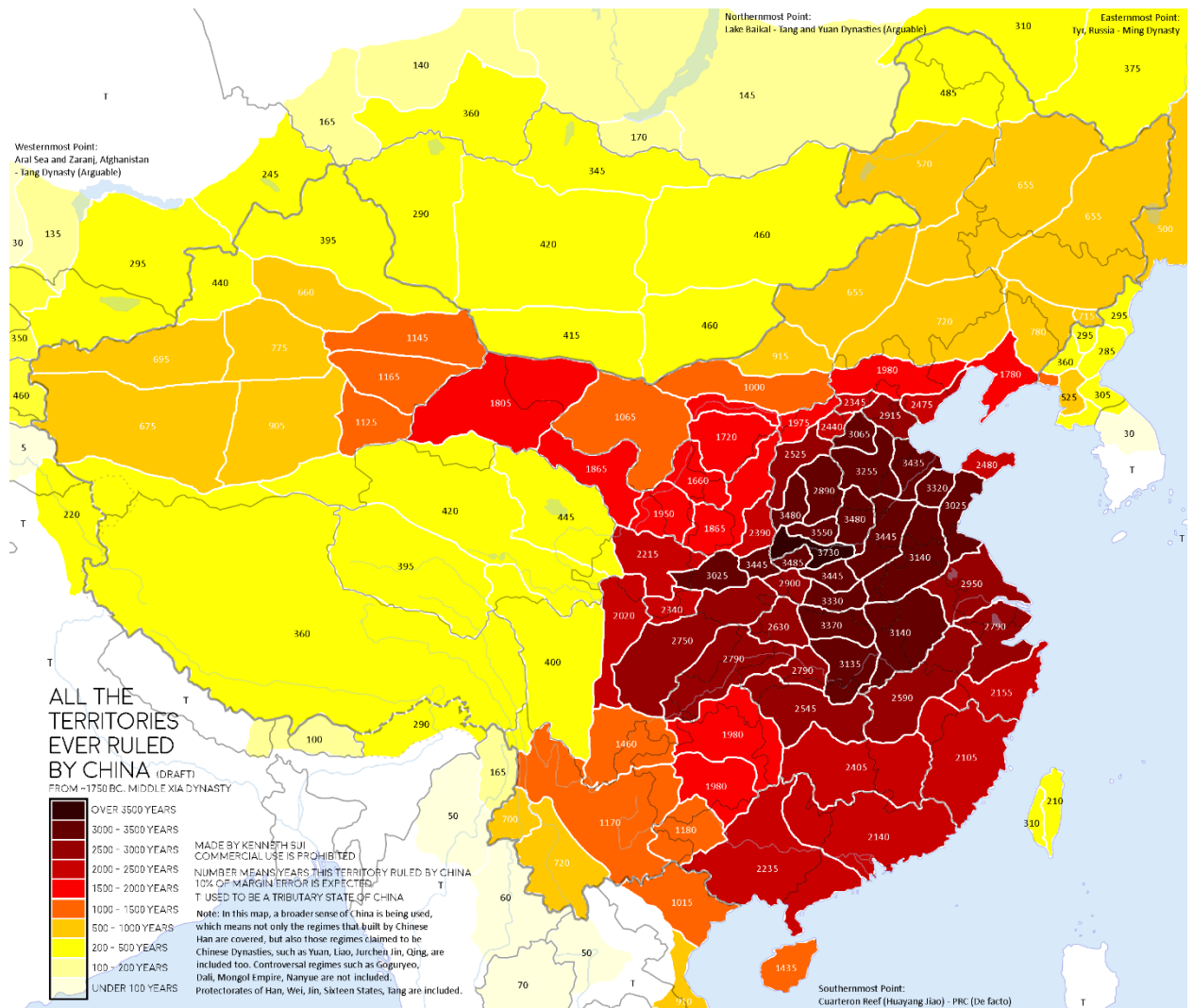


Figure 1: Map of Chinese territory by length of Chinese government control. Image credit: Kenneth Sui. Xinjiang and Tibet are located at the top left and bottom left of the map, respectively.

IV. Variation in the Dependent Variable: The Xinjiang and Tibet Crackdowns

Despite being similar in the ways listed above, the dependent variable of the severity of the CPC’s crackdown in each region varies significantly. To review, histories of separatism might lead to repression because of regime concerns that Xinjiang and Tibet would try to break away from China. International support might lead to repression because it undermines regime control of the regions and might encourage nationalist groups. Religions that fall outside the

Three Doctrines (三教) alienate Uyghurs and Tibetans from the Han Chinese majority in the country and make it easier to scapegoat and repress these minority groups. Status as periphery regions not always under Chinese control means that these regions have strong identities and cultures of their own. Their people also feel disconnected from the events happening in the core of China in more urban and ethnically homogenous areas. With all these potential factors in repression being relatively equal, one would expect the CPC's treatment of Uyghurs and Tibetans to be similar, too. However, the CPC has pursued genocide in Xinjiang, while it has not brought human rights abuses up to that level in Tibet. The following sections will provide more details on the human rights situation in each region.

Xinjiang

Anti-Uyghur rhetoric from the previous Chinese administration came quickly in the wake of 9/11. Chinese officials openly cautioned putting “human rights above security” (Ramzy and Buckley 2019). After ethnic riots broke out in Urumqi in 2009, the CPC expressed heightened concern about the stability of Xinjiang and began a crackdown. In the last thirteen years, the world has seen that the CPC has followed up on that concern with devastating consequences.

President Xi Jinping himself laid the groundwork for the genocide in speeches he gave after the 2014 stabbings in Xinjiang. In one speech, President Xi called for a “struggle against terrorism, infiltration and separatism” (Ramzy and Buckley 2019). The local government in Xinjiang initially pushed back against genocide tactics, saying that they would damage the economy. In response to this, Chen Quanguo, the party secretary for the region, purged any officials who had spoken out.

The evidence that the CPC is conducting genocide in Xinjiang is prolific, including a trove of over 400 pages of government documents detailing policies there (Ramzy and Buckley 2019). Because of these documents, Western observers can know the exact commands of Chinese officials ordering the genocide. The knowledge that local officials protested, and someone leaked these documents shows that more people disagree with the genocide than the CPC portrays.

The person responsible for leaking the documents wanted to ensure that the international community would personally hold Xi Jinping as the one who permitted the genocide (Ramzy and Buckley 2019). The leaked documents describe the founding of the mass internment camps designed to indoctrinate Uyghurs in “correct” ideology. Surveillance systems inside and outside the internment camps track people’s personal lives (Khatchadourian 2021). Uyghurs – and some Kazakhs – are relentlessly followed and coached to be perfectly compliant, controlled Chinese citizens.

When certain people become too problematic, they are disappeared, usually while traveling (Khatchadourian 2021). Observers warn the actions the CPC is taking are tackling a “phantom of instability.” According to these observers, the CPC’s tactics will self-sabotage their stated goals of preventing further instability. Killing, torturing, raping, sterilizing, and displacing people does not bring stability. As mentioned in the introduction, the Chinese government has carried out a program of genocide that includes mass detention, forced sterilization, surveillance, arbitrary executions, torture, and forcing Uyghur children to attend Han Chinese-run boarding schools away from their families and communities. These actions have affected millions of innocent people in the region, causing mass anger, pain, and grief.

Tibet

While the human rights abuses in Tibet have been less profound than those in Xinjiang, they are still appalling. The CPC directs much of the abuses at Tibetan Buddhists and specific monasteries. The Tengdro Monastery has drawn fire from the CPC, and the local government has subjected monks to horrific treatment (Richardson 2021b). It is hard to know the true extent of the human rights abuses because the CPC has cut off communications in much of Tibet, but there is information available.

Religious restrictions in Tibet started tightening dramatically in the 1990s, as was the case in Xinjiang (International Campaign for Tibet 2013, 6). The CPC gave local government officials teeth to prosecute anything deemed threatening to the CPC's control of Tibet. For example, the government labels monks who refuse to denounce the Dalai Lama as "inciting separatism" (Richardson 2021b). Tenzin Gepel and Khyenrab Nyima, two of these monks, received seventeen and fifteen years in prison for this crime.

Monks who engage in nonviolent protests against the CPC's rule are also considered criminals and receive lengthy prison sentences, frequently eighteen years. Self-immolation, a traditional method of Buddhist protest, is treated even more harshly than other forms of protest. Encouragement of self-immolation is a criminal act. In 2018, Lobsang Konchok, a Tibetan living in Sichuan, was given a death sentence for encouraging another person to self-immolate in protest (Richardson 2021b). If those who self-immolate do not die in the act, they also receive a death sentence.

Like in Xinjiang, the CPC is concerned about Tibet's border regions' interactions with neighboring countries (Richardson 2021b). Surveillance is more intense in these border areas than in areas closer to the core of China. Since the coronavirus pandemic began, the CPC has

only tightened its surveillance of Tibetans (Saunders 2020). This pandemic increase in surveillance is a pattern in Xinjiang, as well.

The border regions of Tibet are now being described by CPC officials as a “frontline” of the war against separatism (Saunders 2020). The CPC announced a new campaign of “a million police to 10 million homes.” This is just one more piece of a long-term crackdown on religious Tibetans and the idea of a distinct Tibetan nationality. While the CPC has not launched a full-scale genocide in Tibet, it has systematically invaded the privacy of Tibetans and persecuted them when they speak out.

The human rights and civil liberty violations in Tibet are less severe than the genocide in Xinjiang, and they rank about on par with some of the human rights violations carried out by the CPC in other parts of China. For example, the CPC has a decades-long practice of extracting organs from political prisoners, with one of the earliest cases happening in 1978 in Jiangxi Province, the other side of the country (Paul et al. 2017, 2). Although the CPC declared an end to the practice in 2014, it did not amend any laws regarding the practice, and scholars assume it has continued in all parts of China.

V. Hypothesis One: Separatist “Terrorism”

While there are several alternative hypotheses for the genocide in Xinjiang, including Uyghur independence movements, Xi Jinping’s push for cohesive nationalism and Sinification in China, and long-standing ethnic tension between the Uyghurs and Han Chinese, I choose to focus on the Chinese government’s stated reason for the repression in Xinjiang – terrorism. As a novel explanation, I focus on the energy capabilities of the regions because it is an underexplored explanation in the literature.

The CPC claims that it is carrying out repressive policies in Xinjiang because of a separatist terrorist threat. The CPC has also long accused Tibet of harboring terrorist activity. This section evaluates empirical evidence for that claim. From analyzing the history of terrorism in both regions, I find that neither Tibet nor Xinjiang present a strong enough objective national security threat to justify the costs of the repressive measures used. Nor does the timing of repressive measures closely track changes in the level of the terrorist threat. Further, even if the CPC interprets a national security cost that makes repression worthwhile, it still cannot account for the difference in levels of repression because the perceived “terrorist” threat is at similar levels in the two regions.

Some things to keep in mind in this discussion are the CPC’s perception of terrorist threats does not always match reality, and over the years, it has broadened its definition of terrorism. The European Parliament discussed China’s antiterrorism policies in a debate in 2015 and released a resolution that stated, “In recent years China’s anti-terrorism policy has evolved rapidly from a reactive ‘defence against terror’ approach to a proactive ‘war on terror’, along with permanent ‘crisis management’ entailing action to an unprecedented extent in affected regions and in society” (European Parliament 2015). This commentary seems especially timely, given that a sweeping new counterterrorism law would go into force the next year.

In 2016, China implemented a new counterterrorism law that would have its most drastic effects on Tibet and Xinjiang (International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH 2016). This happened despite warnings from human rights groups that it would hurt ethnic and religious groups in those regions. Under the new counterterrorism law, police could prosecute Tibetans and Uyghurs much more aggressively for non-violent protest activities or expressions of their religious and cultural traditions.

Because the CPC would not listen to the concerns of the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) or the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), the two organizations decided to host a series of dialogues in March 2016 for UN officials and representatives to discuss how the law would hurt Uyghurs and Tibetans (International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH 2016, 3). The human rights organizations especially condemned the vague definition of terrorism set in the law, which has been an important feature of government crackdowns in both Xinjiang and Tibet.

Human rights scholars also warned about the lack of an independent justice system to protect people accused of terrorism (International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH 2016, 3). “Reform through education,” something that has been a hallmark of the genocide in Xinjiang, was also flagged as a concern in the law’s text. CPC officials who have defended the law and repressive actions in both Xinjiang and Tibet have referred to “outside influences” stirring up terrorism as a pretext for their actions.

While the CPC had used this same pretext of terrorism for decades, the new counterterrorism law officially gives legal means for the government to conflate any form of protest or religious activity with terrorism (International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH 2016, 9). If these policies are intended to curb real terrorism, it is not likely to succeed because now Tibetans and Uyghurs feel unsafe practicing their religions, and they cannot live their cultures in meaningful ways.

The sham narrative of international terrorism brewing in these provinces also has the potential to delegitimize genuine counterterrorism operations by other countries (International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH 2016, 9). Because of the tools provided in this law, local government and police forces can crackdown on any dissent or religious activity as separatism and terrorism.

Xinjiang

In 1759, the Qing Dynasty annexed what is now Xinjiang; however, after the annexation, the emperor and his officials struggled to bring the population under control, and the dynasty did not have tight control over the region for more than a hundred years to come (Adams 2005, 11). Chinese lack of control was evident when the native population prevailed in 1856 during a rebellion led by Yakub Beg that resulted in a Muslim state for Uyghurs (Boehm 2009, 90). By 1884, the Qing managed to get Xinjiang firmly under control.

By the early 1900s, wary of another Uyghur uprising against the government, the Chinese began stirring up divisions among the ethnic groups in Xinjiang, hoping that none of them would grow strong enough to try to force the Chinese out (Boehm 2009, 78). This marks the beginning of preventive policies against separatism. Such policies began well before the conception of modern religious terrorism, although terrorism would become a useful pretext for the CPC's repression of the Uyghurs after it came to power.

China was roiled by strife in the decades after the 1911 revolution, an era of warlords, occupation by the Japanese, and civil war. During this time, there were two iterations of an independent Xinjiang, known as East Turkestan. The first one was a British-supported state in the 1930s, and the second was a Soviet-supported state in the 1940s (Adams 2005, 11). When the communists prevailed in 1949, the Uyghur government in the East Turkestan Republic saw the writing on the wall and began negotiations with the new government.

The negotiations never accomplished anything, though, as the airplane carrying all the Uyghur negotiators to Beijing crashed in August 1949, killing everyone on board (Adams 2005, 11). With the Uyghur leadership wiped out, the communist government of China now had a free

hand to carry out whatever policies it wished in what is now called the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

The Uyghurs did not fit the CPC's ideals for a citizen, so in the 1950s and 1960s, the government published materials denouncing them as nationalists and feudal elements holding the country back from progress (Adams 2005, 8). The government then started enacting stricter religious legislation to bring Uyghurs in line with state doctrine and values. The Eastern Turkestan People's Party (ETPP), an illegal political party with separatist ideas, protested this legislation and carried out guerilla activities against the regional police during the 1960s and 1970s (Castets 2003). After the ETPP fell apart in the 1980s due to the arrests of its leaders and the withdrawal of clandestine Soviet support, student organizations began to demonstrate and take up what the CPC today calls "terrorism."

These religious regulations were not popular with ordinary Uyghurs, and by the 1990s, Uyghurs organized large protests to express their anger (Boehm 2009, 69). In response to these protests, the government enacted further regulations aimed at controlling Uyghurs' expression. These regulations established punishments for behavior "according to the PRC management of public order dispositions" (Adams 2005, 41). This is the beginning of Uyghurs explicitly being labeled a "public order" concern.

By the mid-1990s, violence flared up, but regional authorities emphasized that these incidents were carried out by only "a handful of separatists" (Adams 2005, 16). To eradicate separatism, the Xinjiang government announced a Strike Hard campaign, which in government parlance means a surge in police activity with very little oversight, usually targeted at certain types of crime (Boehm 2009, 63). In the case of the Strike Hard campaign beginning in 1996, the

crimes the police cracked down on were related to separatism and “illegal religious activities” (Castets 2003). The campaign only lasted for a year, but it was the first of many in Xinjiang.

In February 1997, Uyghurs in Yining demonstrated against policies that restricted their freedoms and in response to the crackdown the year before (Adams 2005, 15). The police responded to put down the protests, and talk started circulating in local government circles about “terrorist” protesters, thus exemplifying the CPC’s tendency to apply the term “terrorism” to activities that would not fit any accepted academic definition. This terminology was not as common in the government in Beijing. This would change in the years to follow, as the events following the 9/11 attacks created the impetus for a global “war on terror.”

After the usage of the term terrorism by the local government, one actual terrorist event occurred in Xinjiang. One month after the protests, separatists added to the tensions by detonating bombs on three buses in Urumqi, killing nine people and wounding dozens (Adams 2005, 16). This attack set alarms off beyond Xinjiang’s government, sending the issue to the front of debates in Beijing. Though no group claimed credit for the terrorist attack, it has been attributed to the East Turkistan National Unity Alliance (Castets 2003). This cannot be confirmed, however, and the alliance only appears in documents about this particular attack and a list of ten organizations that Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao later stated were part of a "so-called East Turkestan Terrorist Force in Xinjiang [that] has all along received support from bin Laden" (United Press International 2001). All that can be confirmed is that the attack did happen in 1997.

The situation did not improve a year later when in August, a group of men attacked two prisons in Yining (Adams 2005, 16). The government assumed that the group was affiliated with separatism, though this has not been confirmed by analysts. Around this time, the Eastern

Turkestan Islamic Party of Allah (ETIP) took a major role in separatist activities (Boehm 2009, 105). This organization came to be known as the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM) in later years. The Chinese government alleged that the ETIM carried out attacks outside of China, as well, most notably two attacks in Turkey at the Chinese embassy just after the prison incidents (Xu, Fletcher, Bajoria 2014). Reports of this external attack by the ETIM have not been verified by other countries, including Turkey.

The government in Xinjiang pursued stricter punishments for people caught breaking religious laws but also from 1997-2000 dispatched “rectification of public order” squads to fight separatism, especially in Urumqi (Adams 2005, 109). While these tactics seem harsh compared to U.S. policy against individuals with extreme political beliefs, in this era in Xinjiang, Chinese government documents specified that not every activist “on the ideological front” was considered a separatist or “terrorist” (Adams 2005, 21). This perception changed in 2001 when Chinese the government saw a convenient way to frame its repressive policies in Xinjiang.

After the 9/11 attacks on the United States, Chinese officials began to use references to it in their speeches regarding Xinjiang. One official in the area warned, “Xinjiang independence elements have changed their combat tactics since the September 11 incident” (Adams 2005, 19). In response to this declaration and others like it, the Xinjiang government increased arrests and charges for terrorism. In just one set of raids in Urumqi alone, the Chinese police reported that they arrested 166 separatist “terrorists” (Chung 2002, 8). Activists have pointed to these incidents as examples of an increase in arbitrary arrests.

This push to fight separatist “terrorism” was not domestic alone. The government went before the international community in October 2001 and claimed it was “a victim of international terrorism” and requested that “efforts to fight against East Turkestan terrorist forces should

become a part of the international efforts and should also win support and understanding” (Adams 2005, 17). The international community did not agree to the Chinese government’s request as deeply as it committed to fighting terrorism in other places, but it did provide legitimacy to the campaign in other ways. According to George Washington University professor Sean R. Roberts, “Framing [Xinjiang] as a terrorist threat suddenly gave a lot of latitude to China in terms of what it could do in the eyes of the international community because, of course, the U.S. in many ways set a precedent for suspending human rights for anybody considered a ‘terrorist’” (Kine 2021). Essentially, the international community turned a blind eye to some of the human rights abuses the CPC would commit, even if it would not actively contribute military resources to the Xinjiang campaign.

President George W. Bush made sure to caution the Chinese government that “the war on terrorism must never be an excuse to persecute minorities” (Adams 2005, 22). However, he and other leaders were pleased with support in fighting terrorism. On November 12, 2001, the Chinese representatives at the UN Security Council warned that Uyghur political and separatist groups were affiliated with the Taliban (Adams 2005, 17). The UN later went on to designate the ETIM as a terrorist group, a designation it carries to this day, despite the United States delisting of the organization in 2020. The U.S. delisting of the organization is a belated acknowledgment of the CPC’s exaggeration of the terrorist threat in Xinjiang.

Meanwhile, in Xinjiang, the government amended its regulations on religion to include surveillance at mosques and religious sites (Adams 2005, 3). In January 2002, the government published a document called “East Turkestan Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity” that laid out the ETIM’s and others’ alleged terrorist activities in the past few years (Adams 2005, 17). It claimed that Uyghur terrorists caused hundreds of Han Chinese deaths in the 1990s

through 2002. The government would have incentives for exaggerating the threat, though, as the United States had just shown the international community that it was acceptable to curb civil liberties and human rights to fight terrorism. The CPC now had a pretext to carry out more brutal repression in Xinjiang against a conveniently Muslim ethnic group that engaged in separatist activities. Reports of Uyghur separatist “terrorism” continued to be inflated in the early 2000s.

However, these claims were questioned by expert James Millward, who says that from 1998 to 2005, there were no attacks that targeted civilians or qualified as terrorist attacks (Millward 2004). In addition, Millward noted some glaring issues with the 2002 document’s treatment of events in the 1990s. “While its preface claims that terrorist acts killed 162 (and injured 440) over the past decade, the document itself enumerates only 57 deaths.” Millward notes that the events that were listed were mostly incidents that resulted in one or two deaths and did not appear to have any sort of political motivations, which makes him concerned for what the unlisted events were, adding, “Though definitions of terrorism are notoriously arbitrary, it seems legitimate to question what makes the unlisted acts ‘terrorist’ or ‘separatist’ as opposed to simply criminal” (Millward 2004, 12-13). The government rhetoric did not match the data Xinjiang officials provided. This is a recurring feature of data the CPC puts forward about Uyghur terrorism. It is often fabricated or exaggerated to meet the propaganda needs of the party.

In February 2002, the Party Secretary of Xinjiang went on a speaking tour throughout the area to teach officials how to fight “separatist techniques” (Adams 2005, 20). Just a few months later, in June, Pakistani military forces are said to have eliminated ETIM leadership hiding out inside their borders, then arrested and extradited 80 other Uyghur militants (Boehm 2009, 104). This dealt a serious blow to the ETIM, one that it has arguably never recovered from. Most Xinjiang analysts believe that any version of the ETIM still in existence today is just a

propaganda tool for al-Qaeda to try to recruit Uyghurs, and there is not much evidence of success in this respect. Some grainy internet videos from the 2000s exist, supposedly from the ETIM, calling for jihad, but their influence is not calculated to be large. Left with such poor-quality displays of a terrorist threat from the ETIM, the CPC has had to fabricate dramatic accounts of ETIM terrorist attacks in state publications.

Just before the time that the Pakistani military attacked the ETIM, the U.S. State Department announced that it had “independent evidence” that ETIM was connected to al-Qaeda (Adams 2005, 22). The State Department then designated the organization an FTO, a designation it later rescinded in 2020. The “independent evidence” the State Department is thought to have used was prepared by the Chinese government, drawing closely upon the January 2002 propaganda document. These facts are relevant because they support the contention that terrorism is a pretext, and the Chinese government is exaggerating the threat. If the Chinese government is exaggerating the threat, that would mean it might be a convenient cover for another explanation for repression in Xinjiang that would be less palatable to the vast majority of urban Han Chinese, whose opinions the CPC does care about to a certain extent. The Chinese government claims a bigger terrorist threat in Xinjiang than in Tibet, but the actual evidence points to exaggeration or fabrication of “terrorist” events in both regions.

In the year following the UN’s and United States’ designations of the ETIM as a terrorist organization, tens of thousands of Uyghurs were detained as “separatists,” according to Uyghur exiles who left Xinjiang in the early 2000s (Boehm 2009, 82). Seeing this crackdown and worrying about listing another Uyghur organization too hastily, the United States government refuses to list the East Turkestan Liberation Organization (ETLO), despite the Chinese government’s request (Adams 2005, 22). The CPC had claimed in its 2002 propaganda

document that the ETLO was responsible for poisoning 23 people in Kashi City in 1998 (Xinhuanet 2002). If the group was real, and there is some debate on this, it is no longer active in the “terrorist” sense because of a declaration by its leaders in Turkey reaffirming its decision to “achieve independence by peaceful means” through political activism outside of Xinjiang (Zenn 2018). Lack of evidence for the “terrorist activities” of the ETLO is likely part of the reason why the United States declined to list it as an FTO. The U.S. government has not listed any more Uyghur groups as FTOs since then.

Besides refusing to list more Uyghur groups than just the ETIM, the U.S. government in December 2003 also began to consider releasing Uyghur detainees from Guantanamo Bay (Adams 2005, 24). Officials refused to consider repatriating them to China because of concerns that they would be executed upon returning home. Upon the discovery that none of the Uyghur men in Guantanamo Bay were affiliated with the ETIM in any way, the United States secretly resettled them in countries where it would be harder for the Chinese government to find them (U.S. Government Publishing Office 2009). This began serious U.S. scrutiny of China’s claim to fighting a just war on terror. U.S. government officials gradually became convinced that they were duped into backing repressive policies in Xinjiang because of their excitement to have China as a security partner in the war on terror when in reality, the CPC was selling them dramatic propaganda stories with very little evidence behind them.

To hear the Chinese government tell it, it was a successful war against the terrorists. Ismail Tiwaldi, one of the top government officials in Xinjiang, proudly announced in March 2005 that “there have been no terror attacks in Xinjiang in recent years” (Adams 2005, 25). This is probably true, in all reality. Over 200 Uyghurs were sentenced to death for “state security crimes” from 1997-2005, despite the Xinjiang government’s claims of stability, though, meaning

there were likely other motives for their arrests than terrorist actions (Adams 2005, 6). President Bush's worst fears seemed likely to have unfolded with moral legitimacy granted by both the UN and the United States. The arguably real terrorism that had occurred in Xinjiang was after the CPC had started repressive and restrictive religious policies and Strike Hard campaigns, not before. In addition, many of the surges in arrests and executions appear to have occurred preemptively, in periods when no terrorist attacks were happening in the region.

There were flare-ups of violence in 2008 when Uyghurs killed twenty border police officers and were suspected to have masterminded a bus bombing in Shanghai (University of Central Arkansas 2013). These incidents were followed by an ethnic riot in 2009 and another on February 28, 2012, that resulted in the deaths of twenty people, including seven Uyghurs. No one claimed credit for the 2009 violence, which occurred after a peaceful protest by Uyghurs became violent after police and protesters clashed (Trédaniel and Lee 2017, 187). After the violence, the Xinjiang government launched another Strike Hard campaign, detaining as many as 1,500 Uyghurs for supposed involvement in the riot. The local government was quick to label the riot an act of "terrorism," thus providing the impetus for another Strike Hard campaign. By 2014, the Chinese government began its campaign of mass surveillance and "re-education" for all Uyghurs, not just ones involved in separatist or riot activity, constructing internment camps for these purposes ("Secret Documents Reveal" 2019). The genocide had entered its most severe phase, the one it is currently in. Regardless of the veracity of CPC accounts of "terrorism" in Xinjiang, the mass internment, torture, and sterilization of millions of Uyghurs is not a proportional response to the instability the region has experienced.

Tibet

Historically, Tibetans have launched uprisings and riots against Han Chinese government in the region since the Chinese exerted political control over them (Tanner and Bellacqua 2016, ii). As in Xinjiang, foreign governments supported native resistance against early CPC rule, this time with the U.S. intelligence services assisting Tibetan freedom fighters after the invasion of Tibet. Law enforcement in China has referred to these events in publications as “terrorism.”

In addition, Tibet’s strong religious identity has faced significant challenges and violence since the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s (Soloshcheva 2017, 416), and the idea of peaceful coexistence between ethnic and religious minorities and the mainstream Han Chinese has only deteriorated further. Complicating the CPC’s fluid definition of terrorism, the Chinese government heavily controls information coming in and out of Tibet. Despite these limitations, international observers do know that Strike Hard campaigns have occurred in both Xinjiang and Tibet. The Strike Hard campaigns in Tibet were waged for the same reasons of terrorism and separatism as they were in Xinjiang, meaning that the CPC does sense a separatist “terrorist” threat in Tibet, even if that term has taken on a looser meaning.

In the aftermath of 9/11, Tibet was subject to the same rhetoric about separatist “terrorists” that Xinjiang was (Malik 2002, 267). As President Bush had warned the Chinese government in 2002 about the war on terror not being an excuse to persecute minorities, U.S. Ambassador Clark T. Randt expressed similar views, saying that partnership with China was not a “devil’s bargain” that gave the CPC an excuse to persecute Tibetans.

The CPC chose to ignore these warnings from the United States and began to broadly classify Tibetans as “terrorists.” Specifically, Tibetan independence advocates have been labeled as “terrorists” (Tanner and Bellacqua 2016, 30). From 2008-2009, as in Xinjiang, Tibet experienced some political unrest (Greitens, Lee, and Yazici 2020, 20). The unrest in Tibet was

kicked off by protests in the plateaus in March 2008 that resulted in violence, ending in the deaths of 200 Tibetans and the arrests of 2,000 more. Increased police spending and military involvement in both regions followed.

This unrest led Li Wei, the director of China's Counterterrorism Research Center, to list pro-independence Tibetans alongside "East Turkistan terrorists" as the top "terrorist" security threats to China in a 2009 speech. Even if the actual terrorist threat on the ground in Tibet is less than that in Xinjiang, the perception of the threat among some of China's top national security analysts is equal. This is further demonstrated that Tibet's crackdown in the 2000s appears to have served as a testing ground for Zhou Yongkang and Meng Jianzhu, two high-level CPC officials who orchestrated some of the most repressive policies in Tibet at that time and then were recycled into top positions in Xinjiang (Kine 2021). The fierce crackdown on perceived "terrorism" was not limited to Xinjiang.

Other top CPC officials echo Zhou, Meng, and analysts' sentiments that politically involved and religious Tibetans represent a national security threat. In 2011, after the Dalai Lama organized a prayer meeting on behalf of monks who had self-immolated in protest of CPC policies in Tibet, a Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman called it "terrorism in disguise" (Tanner and Bellacqua 2016, 30). Attempted self-immolation and support for that protest act are some of the most frequent reasons for "counterterrorism" arrests. Acts like this prompted the CPC to start testing counterterrorism techniques like grid management in Tibet in 2011, later expanding them to Xinjiang (Greitens, Lee, and Yazici 2020, 21). In the same year, the CPC also deployed 22,000 "village-resident cadre teams" to live in Tibet and conduct surveillance on potential separatist "terrorists".

There has been an increase in “counterterrorism” activity in Tibet because of the new 2016 law referred to in the introduction to this section, even though there is not a terrorist insurgency there in any sense (International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH 2016, 10). Because of the vague definition of terrorism in the law, though, “terrorism” and “extremism” can be linked simply to the practice of religion in both Xinjiang and Tibet. One official who innovated policies to punish the practice of religion in Tibet was Chen Quanguo, the party secretary there from 2011-2016 (Greitens, Lee, and Yazici 2020, 27). Chen later transferred to Xinjiang to hold the same position, bringing along some of the same ideas and practices he had carried out in Tibet, only with both more incentive and pretext to execute them.

Even human rights lawyers and NGOs in both regions face difficulty defending accused Tibetans and Uyghurs now because these humanitarians can be labeled a national security “threat” under the new law (International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH 2016, 10). Because the Dalai Lama lives in exile, he is viewed as another meddler in Tibet’s security and the CPC claims he incites “extremist action” and terrorism.

Because of the lack of current viable terrorist action in Tibet, the CPC has turned its attention to any kind of dissent as terrorism, expelling foreign journalists such as Ursula Gauthier for writing on the new counterterrorism law, as that could potentially inspire terrorist action in Tibet (International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH 2016, 10). To attempt to cover its tracks in foreign reporting and international organizations, the CPC has inserted references to “protection of ethnic culture” in the law, though this is clearly not being followed in practice.

The new counterterrorism law also institutionalized a tactic called “grid management,” which is grassroots surveillance of Tibetans by CPC members (International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH 2016, 14). This kind of broad surveillance for a loosely defined terrorism is not in line

with guidance from the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force, which says “any definition of terrorism linked to counter-terrorism measures (...) must be clear, precise and not overly broad so as to avoid human rights abuses resulting from the characterization as terrorism of conduct that cannot be properly considered terrorist in nature” (United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force 2014, 17). The CPC has crafted language in its legislation that is so broad, it allows its public security forces to crack down on Tibetan Buddhists’ religious expression or protests, including self-immolations.



HE WAS PROBABLY PLANNING A TERRORIST ATTACK

Figure 2: Cartoon criticizing the new counterterrorism law’s targeting of Tibetan Buddhists. Image credit: Fifi (Philippe Sadzot).

In addition to updating laws to give it more teeth in arresting Tibetans for “terrorist” crimes, the CPC has also dramatically increased its police presence in Tibet. From 2007-2016, police recruitment increased from 260 positions to about 2,500 advertised positions (Greitens, Lee, and Yazici 2020, 20). Much of this was to crack down on the estimated 150 self-immolations that occurred in Tibet from 2008-2018. However, despite this buildup in police forces, Tibet did not experience the 2017-18 escalation of policy that transformed Xinjiang’s crackdown into genocide, despite the CPC’s stated concern about perceived Tibetan separatist “terrorism.”

Despite this difference in recent policy, the CPC has deployed counterterrorism police forces to Tibet, as well as Xinjiang (Richardson 2021a). After a monk suspected of “terrorist activities,” in March 2021, a unit called the Snow Wolf Commandos came into Wonpo, a town in Sichuan that borders Tibet but has a large Tibetan population. While they were allegedly dispatched to help with poverty alleviation in the older population, they appeared to enforce laws about displaying the Dalai Lama’s picture and other separatist crimes. Most Tibetan terrorism arrests and sentences have been for peaceful protests or religious expression, making the CPC’s allegations of terrorism there exaggerated and only a pretext to crack down on dissent.

VI. Hypothesis Two: Abundant and Easily Extractable Energy Resources

This section analyzes a second hypothesis that Xinjiang’s abundant and easily extractable energy resources are the reason why the CPC is investing so much money and energy into genocide there. This is just one of many hypotheses that might explain the difference in repression between Xinjiang and Tibet. Because the Uyghurs are mistreated under the pretext of terrorism, the CPC can get them out of the way and extract the energy resources it needs. That said, Xinjiang does have a more severe terrorism threat than Tibet does, although both are

overblown and held up as severe national security threats by the CPC. The section also shows that Xinjiang plays a critical role in powering China's megacities, but that Tibet does not.

Xinjiang

Now, I turn my attention to the second hypothesis for the government's policies in Xinjiang. They are to clear the ground for extraction of oil and natural gas by displacing or intimidating the Uyghurs who inhabit Xinjiang. The CPC first discovered oil and natural gas reserves in Xinjiang in the 1950s (Rohlf 2003, 456), and it continued to use these until they ran dry, largely because the country's energy and attention was focused elsewhere on policies such as the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution.

Once China had stabilized in the 1980s, geological surveying of Xinjiang began again in earnest (Meidan 2016, 6). During this time, oil was discovered in the Northern Tarim Uplift in September 1984. This discovery and others after it were enough to prompt the CIA to publish a document on Xinjiang's resources, particularly its energy resources (Wong 2014). In Karamay, the site of the oil wells from the 1950s, there is enough untapped oil that it bubbles up from the ground on the outskirts of town.

Through the 1990s, there remained a steady rate of oil and gas discoveries, but in 2001, PetroChina made a discovery of 200 million tons of oil in the Junggar Basin of Xinjiang (United States Securities and Exchange Commission 2003). This is useful timing because after a period of lower economic output and relative energy self-sufficiency in the 1990s, China's economic growth exploded, along with its energy needs (Yu and Zhao 2021). After this discovery in the Junggar Basin, more oil and natural gas was extracted in Xinjiang. From about 2010 to this year,

the rate of oil and natural gas discovery accelerated, with Sinopec, China National Petroleum Company (CNPC), and PetroChina discovering billions of tons of oil and gas in Xinxiang.

Much of this oil and gas has been successfully extracted because of advances in drilling technologies (U.S. Energy Information Administration 2015). In the last decade, the extraction rate of oil and natural gas has gone up in the Junggar Basin (see Figure 3) and Tarim Basin.

China is also constructing more oil and natural gas storage and processing facilities in the region.

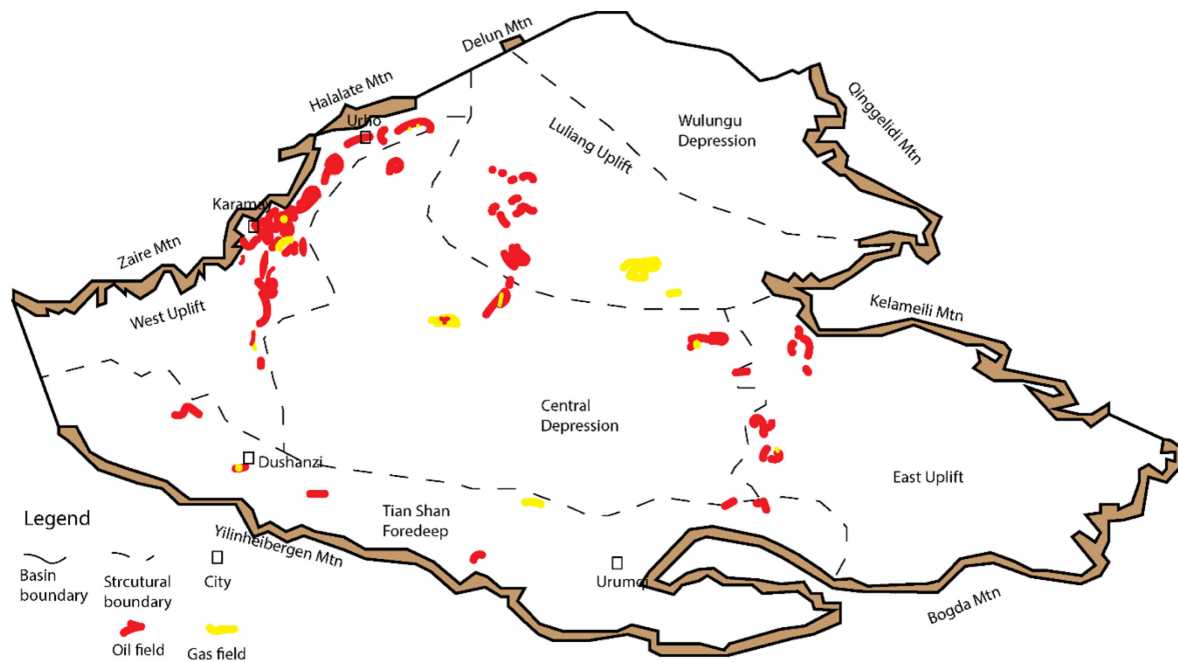


Figure 3: Oil and natural gas fields in the Junggar Basin.

This increase in oil and natural gas extraction has coincided with the plateauing of oil and natural gas extraction in northern China, according to the recent data available. Since around 2010, the natural gas extraction rate in northern China has stopped increasing as dramatically as it used to (China Energy Group 2017). Meanwhile, natural gas production in Xinjiang quadrupled, making it an important energy source for China's ever-growing energy needs.

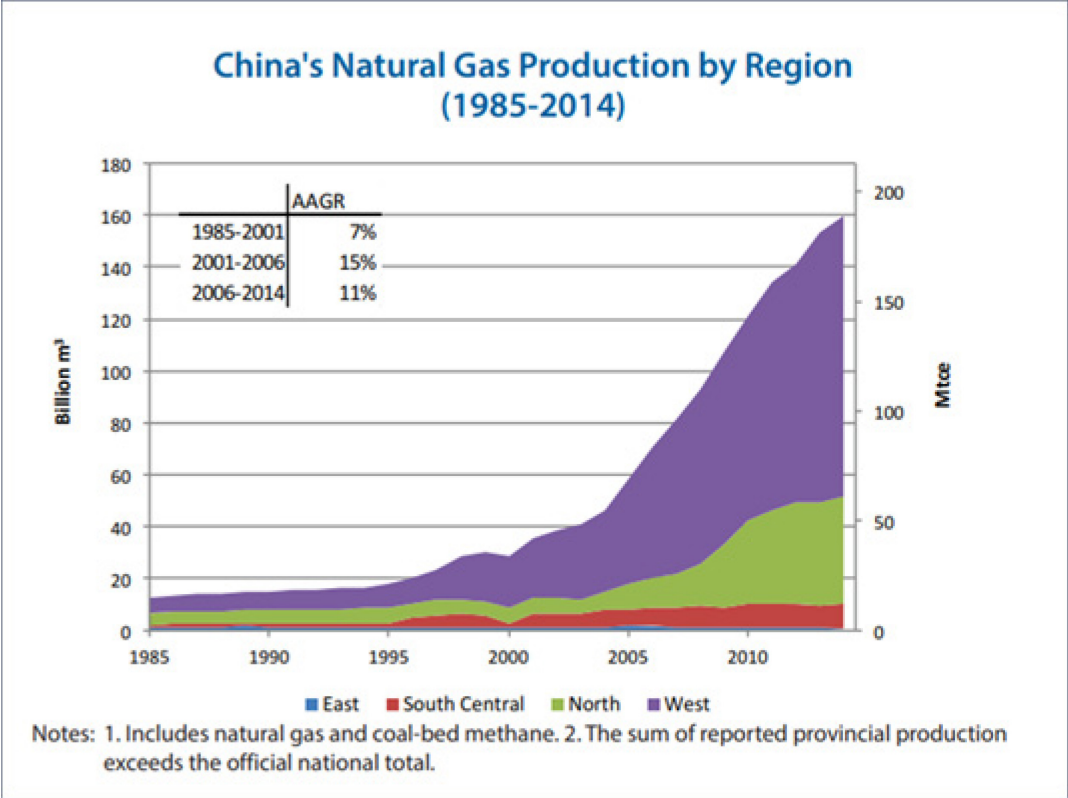


Figure 4: Natural Gas Production from 1985-2014, by region. Image credit: Key China Energy Statistics 2016. Note: “West” means Xinjiang in this context.

Figure 4 shows the increase in gas production in Xinjiang began after 2001, which is when the government announced it was a participant in the War on Terror and started the displacement of Uyghurs to work low-paying jobs in inner China. From 2010 on, though the growth rate in gas production had been going for a few years, the North’s rate slumped, meaning that Xinjiang’s gas took on greater importance for fueling China than before.

On top of dropping gas production in the North, China’s external energy dependence went from 5 percent to 18 percent from 2000-2016 (Yu and Zhao 2021). During this same period, fossil fuel production in Xinjiang soared (see Table 2). The oil and natural gas detection rate in Xinjiang remained at 18.5 percent and 11.8 percent at the end of 2014, showing that there

is massive potential for growth in production of these energy resources, given more surveys and development (Overton 2016). In the 2010s, the CPC started construction of mass internment camps and forced Uyghurs into them in a mass genocide, very convenient timing indeed for moving them off their resource-rich land. By 2019, China’s external oil dependence had ballooned to 70 percent, an alarming figure, making it important for the country to continue to boost domestic oil production and offset some of this strategic vulnerability of oil dependence.

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Coal (million t)	24.35	30.34	39.87	60.64	76.46	99.27	119.97	136.47	147.11	143.27
Oil (million t)	24.08	24.75	26.04	27.15	25.13	25.58	26.16	26.71	27.12	27.39
Natural gas (billion m3)	10.66	16.42	21.03	23.59	24.54	25.99	23.54	25.32	27.23	29.15

Table 2: Fossil Fuel Production in Xinjiang from 2005-2014. Image credit: *China Statistical Yearbook 2015*, from National Bureau of Statistics of China.

China is projected to surpass the United States’ economy in a couple years before 2030 (National Intelligence Council 2012, iv). As a part of that growth, energy demand is expected to double in China before that time. Before China has the infrastructure and ability to generate all that energy through clean sources, it will need to continue to rely on oil and gas, which western China, particularly Xinjiang, has an increasing monopoly over.

Even when the country does reach its goals of carbon neutrality and clean energy, it will still use Xinjiang as a region for carbon dioxide storage because the infrastructure has been built up there already (International Energy Agency 2021, 169). Oil and gas fields, once they have run dry, could be a part of the storage system, and some experts also think that carbon dioxide storage could begin even as oil and natural gas extraction is ongoing. In the coming decades, as China moves toward more sustainable energy sources, Xinjiang will remain at the center of the

energy system, perhaps justifying the CPC's expenses on industrial genocide to some of officials overseeing it..

In the past years, China has started this transition in Xinjiang, while boosting oil and gas production there. While in 2017 much of the renewable energy produced in Xinjiang through wind and solar power was wasted due to poor connections between it and the cities it was aiming to power, the government has installed better power lines to deliver the energy to megacities in desperate need (O'Meara 2020). It may seem like Xinjiang's significance to producing China's energy will wane as the country transitions away from fossil fuels, but Xinjiang's geography gives it an edge in producing both solar and wind power. While the sources of energy may change, where much of that energy is coming from will not change. Separatism would pose a risk to further growth in the energy sector in Xinjiang, thus posing a problem for the regime's performance in providing energy to Chinese megacities.

Tibet

Unlike Xinjiang, Tibet does not have the same amount of easily extractable energy resources, especially in terms of fossil fuels. Most of Tibet's energy is produced using renewable energy (Shan et al. 2017, 858). That energy came predominantly from hydropower plants. While that sounds impressive, it pales in comparison to the amount of energy produced in Xinjiang, which comes from a more diverse range of sources.

Tibet produced most of its energy using the one source, and it only came to 2.90 billion kWh of energy (Shan et al. 2017, 858). Xinjiang, by comparison produced 84.5 billion kWh just a few years later from solar power, which is not even its main source of energy (Global Times 2021). This ability to diversify in energy production sets Xinjiang far ahead of Tibet in terms of

future usefulness to the rest of China for powering the country. Even in terms of potential solar capacity alone, Xinjiang has greater potential for contributing to China's energy demands (see Figure 5).

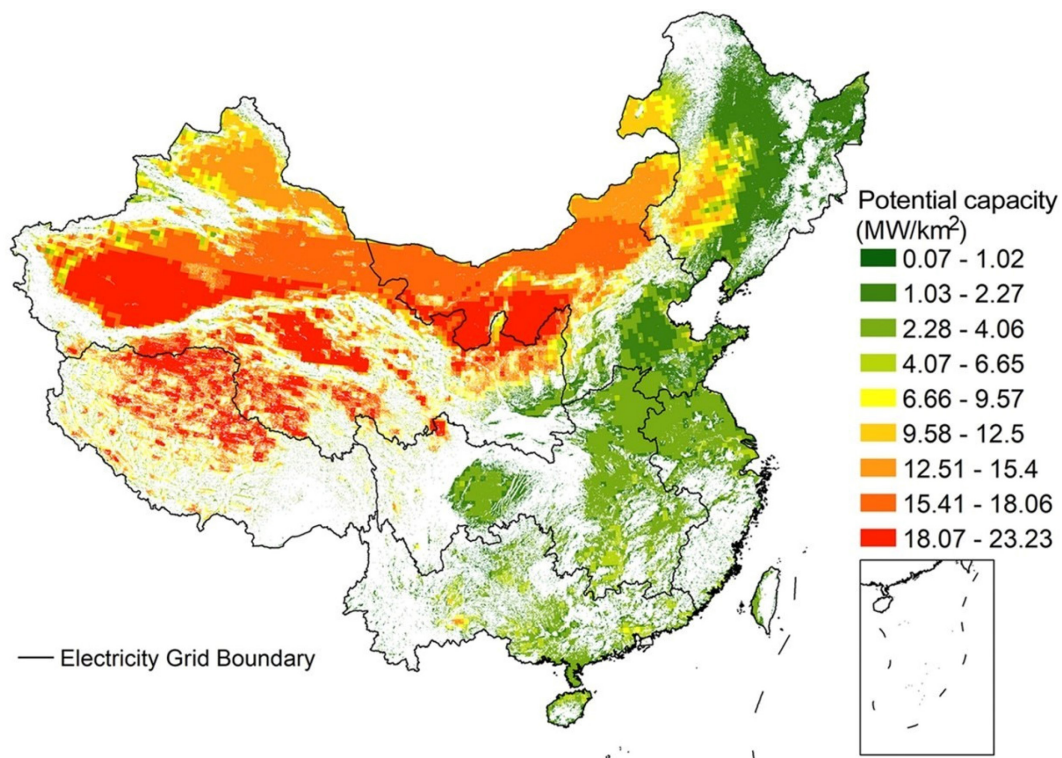


Figure 5: Potential solar power production capacity. Image credit: Lu et al. 2021 in *PNAS*.

The problem in Tibet is not just a lack of energy resources. It is also a lack of development in infrastructure. The CPC has never built up the region to produce much energy or industrialized for many other purposes (Shan et al. 2017, 861). There have been CPC talks of building up Tibet's hydropower production capabilities, but this might face difficulties as the region heats due to climate change. Indeed, climate change will be one of China's most profound strategic vulnerabilities in the next few decades (Columbia University 2022). The Chinese

government found in its *Third National Assessment Report on Climate Change* that it would face increasing threats from rising sea levels and more frequent severe weather, as well as glacial melt. Severe weather events and glacial melt sometimes work together to cause China problems, especially in Tibet.

One example was in Yarlung Tsangpo, where the government planned to build the largest hydroelectric plant in the world (Chen 2021). In 2018, a landslide brought ice down on the building site. The plans for the hydropower plant anticipate an electricity generation potential three times that of the Three Gorges Dam. However, the risk of natural disasters in Tibet is heightened because of climate change, especially landslides like the one in 2018, complicating any large power plant projects.

Because hydropower is fraught with ecological and practical challenges, Tibet must have another, less-costly form of energy production. Coal is still China's number one source of energy, and a lot of the coal mining is in the northern part of the country, so it would make sense that Tibet would contribute an amount to coal production, but this is an environmentally fraught question, too.

Whole swathes of Tibet are off-limits to coal mining by the Chinese government's science and geology department due to the catastrophic damage it would do to the remaining glaciers and the soil (Free Tibet 2020). Companies have carried out oil and natural gas surveying in Tibet, and the estimates of the size of Tibet's reserves are at ten billion tons (Free Tibet 2022), only one third the size of Xinjiang's reserves (Embassy of the People's Republic of China in India 2022). With more difficult geography than Xinjiang, Tibet is an expensive place to extract oil, so Tibetan oil might not be worth pursuing when there is more easily extractable oil available nearby.

Other options for energy resources in Tibet include solar or wind power or even geothermal sources (Liu and Lucas 2014, 35). Energy companies could use these resources because of the variation in Tibet's topography. There is potential for growth here, but it would require extensive studies and would be remarkably expensive to build up infrastructure for power generation, plus systems to deliver it back to more densely populated areas in China.

If the CPC wishes to make Tibet useful to energy production like Xinjiang, scientists have made a case that solar power is the best option in terms of environmental harm and minimizing cost (Wang, Li, and Cheng 2012, 83). Solar energy could also help upgrade the sources of power Tibetans use for their daily needs, which have not changed for centuries. Most still use biomass like firewood and animal dung. In this way, energy consumption in Tibet is as rudimentary as energy production there. Both have great need of development, which will cost significantly more than just building on to existing infrastructure in Xinjiang.

Scientists predict the cost of building long-distance power line systems in Tibet to be exorbitant and not worth the trouble if only to provide power to Tibetans (Wang, Li, and Cheng 2012, 83). If the government could build up the solar energy system enough in Tibet that it had the potential to augment the power for the rest of the country, then the CPC would be more justified in making this investment.

Generating this kind of power is not entirely out of reach because Tibet has high altitudes and long periods of sunshine (Wang, Li, and Cheng 2012, 84). The radiation intensity is an average of 7000 MJ/m². Again, even with these positives, locals would consume almost all the energy, and it would not go out to eastern cities, thus not addressing the problems that are affecting China's more "important" population to the CPC. The CPC has not shown a tremendous interest in economic development for Tibetans and is instead faced with more

pressing concerns with powering inner China, so even with all the solar power potential, it is not exactly the most attractive option for energy resources compared to Xinjiang.

Even when looking at developing solar power for Tibet's use only, even the most glowing studies of its potential are forced to make concessions when it comes to financial and energy waste considerations. "In fact, because a variety of solar energy equipment in operation may require overhauling and maintenance and because the solar energy produced may be left unused or wasted, the final effective utilization scale of solar energy in Tibet is actually less than the ideal size" (Wang, Li, and Cheng 2012, 88). Energy production is a complicated matter in Tibet, and it shows itself to be more of a drain on China's resources than a contributor when all factors are considered. Even when examining several different sources of energy in Tibet, the energy generation potential seems to be less than Xinjiang's or too small of an output combined with other sources in Tibet to compete with Xinjiang's total energy generation potential. Plus, Xinjiang is more industrially developed than Tibet currently, making it easier and cheaper to connect to the Chinese energy system and build more infrastructure than Tibet, which will have to be built up more from scratch. Xinjiang remains the much more convenient and logical alternative, explaining why the CPC is willing to spend so much money to repress the Uyghurs there. The economic benefits of extracting its energy resources are too compelling to ignore.

VII. Conclusion

Xinjiang and Tibet are undoubtedly the sites of some of the most minority suffering in China, but the situation is much direr in Xinjiang because of the ongoing genocide there. As an authoritarian regime that needs to maintain its survival, there is a reason for this that would help perpetuate the status quo, particularly the high performance of the government that the urban Han Chinese have come to expect. I find it is the expectation of adequate energy to run

megacities that drives repression in Xinjiang, in addition to the previous factors mentioned in the case study. The energy factor just pushes the threat to regime legitimacy over the edge to an extent that Tibet does not.

To test this idea, though, a most similar case study shows that Xinjiang and Tibet both share histories of separatism, international support, religions that fall outside the more culturally comfortable ones, and status as periphery regions. Given all these similarities, it is shocking that Xinjiang is experiencing genocide while Tibet is facing human rights abuses that, while horrible, are not at the same level.

There are two main reasons for this variation: the CPC's chosen reason, that there is a terrorism problem in Xinjiang, and an alternative hypothesis, that Xinjiang is rich in energy resources that China desperately needs. I find that the terrorism threat is exaggerated and used as a pretext for the genocide but that the genocide would not address terrorism if the CPC intended it for that purpose. I also find that Tibet does not have a current terrorist threat, though the CPC labels it similarly.

That leaves only the alternative hypothesis, that Xinjiang has more energy resources, and more importantly, more easily extractable ones than Tibet does. I find that while Tibet has hydropower and solar potential, both would be expensive to build up and have serious downsides. Xinjiang, by contrast, has the infrastructure built and does not require exorbitant amounts of money to extract oil and gas. Xinjiang's oil and natural gas production booms have directly preceded intense CPC repression of Uyghurs, helping to show that the necessary incentives for the crackdown were more about economics than security.

VIII. Works Cited

- Adams, Brad. *Devastating Blows: Religious Repression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang*. New York: Human Rights Watch, 2005.
- Alling, Greg. "Economic Liberalization and Separatist Nationalism: The Cases of Sri Lanka and Tibet." *Journal of International Affairs* 51, no. 1 (Summer 1997): 117-45.
- Baillie, Lauren, and Rachel Vandenbrink. "China: The International Community is Failing Xinjiang's Uyghurs." Last modified December 30, 2020. <https://www.usip.org/publications/2020/12/china-international-community-failing-xinjiangs-uyghurs>.
- BBC. "Tibetan Buddhism." Last modified January 14, 2004. https://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/buddhism/subdivisions/tibetan_1.shtml.
- Bhattacharya, Abanti. "China and its Peripheries: Strategic Significance of Tibet." Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, 2013.
- Bhattacharya, Abanti. "Conceptualizing Uyghur Separatism in Chinese Nationalism." *Strategic Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the IDSA* 27, no. 3 (July-September 2003).
- Boehm, Dana Carver. "China's Failed War on Terror: Fanning the Flames of Uyghur Separatist Violence." *Berkeley Journal Middle Eastern & Islamic Law* 2, no. 61 (2009): 67-122. <https://doi.org/10.15779/Z38BC7J>.
- Boissoneault, Lorraine. "Is China Committing Genocide Against the Uyghurs?" *Smithsonian Magazine*, February 2, 2022. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/is-china-committing-genocide-against-the-uyghurs-180979490/>.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, Alastair Smith, Randolph Siverson, and James D. Morrow. *The Logic of Political Survival*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003.
- Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. "2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: China (Includes Hong Kong, Macau, and Tibet) – Tibet." Last modified 2020. <https://www.state.gov/reports/2020-country-reports-on-human-rights-practices/china/tibet/>.
- Castets, Rémi. "The Uyghurs in Xinjiang – The Malaise Grows." *China Perspectives*, no. 49 (September-October 2003). <https://doi.org/10.4000/chinaperspectives.648>.
- Chen, Stephen. "Melting Glaciers Threaten China's Plan to Build World's Biggest Hydroelectric Dam in Tibet." *South China Morning Post*, April 28, 2021. <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/science/article/3131321/melting-glaciers-threaten-chinas-plan-build-worlds-biggest>.
- China Energy Group. *Key China Energy Statistics 2016*. Berkeley: Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, 2017.

- China Power Team. "How Will the Belt and Road Initiative Advance China's Interests?" Last modified August 26, 2020. <https://chinapower.csis.org/china-belt-and-road-initiative/>.
- Chung, Chien-Peng. "China's 'War on Terror': September 11 and Uighur Separatism." *Foreign Affairs* 81, no. 4 (July-August 2002): 8-12. <https://doi.org/20033235>.
- Cliff, Thomas. "The Partnership of Stability in Xinjiang: State-Society Interactions Following the July 2009 Unrest." *The China Journal*, no. 68 (July 2012): 79-105. <https://doi.org/10.1086/666581>.
- Columbia University. "China's Vulnerability to Climate Change." Accessed March 1, 2022. <https://chineseclimatepolicy.energypolicy.columbia.edu/en/chinas-vulnerability-climate-change>.
- Duckett, Jane, and Neil Munro. "Authoritarian Regime Legitimacy and Health Care Provision: Survey Evidence from Contemporary China." *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*, (November 2021): 1-38. <https://doi.org/10.1215/03616878-9626894>.
- Dwyer, Arienne M. *The Xinjiang Conflict: Uyghur Identity, Language Policy, and Political Discourse*. East-West Center Washington, 2005.
- Embassy of the People's Republic of China in India. "Natural Resources." Accessed February 7, 2022. <https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/cein//eng/ssygd/xbdkf/Xinjiang/t166811.htm>.
- Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Israel. "Separatist Activities Intolerable." Last modified September 21, 2004. http://il.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/xzwt/200409/t20040921_2354415.htm.
- European Parliament. "European Parliament Resolution of 16 December 2015 on EU-China Relations." Last modified December 16, 2015. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-8-2015-0458_EN.html.
- Feldman, Stanley. "Enforcing Social Conformity: A Theory of Authoritarianism." *Political Psychology* 24, no. 1 (March 2003): 41-74.
- Free Tibet. "Chinese Authorities Detain Owner of Coal Mine Operating Illegally in Tibet." Last modified August 20, 2020. <https://freetibet.org/news-media/na/chinese-authorities-detain-owner-coal-mine-operating-illegally-tibet>.
- Free Tibet. "Tibet's Environment." Accessed February 7, 2022. <https://freetibet.org/about/environment>.
- Gershman, Carl. "A Strategy for the International Defense of Tibet." Last modified May 9, 2019. <https://www.ned.org/a-strategy-for-the-international-defense-of-tibet/>.
- Global Times. "Xinjiang Region Beefs up Wind, Solar Power Generation." *Global Times*, March 14, 2021. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202103/1218265.shtml>.
- Goldstein, M.C. "Change, Conflict and Continuity among a Community of Nomadic Pastoralists—A Case Study from Western Tibet, 1950-1990." In *Resistance and Reform in Tibet*, edited by Robert Barnett and Shirin Akiner. London: Hurst & Co., 1994.

- Greitens, Sheena Chestnut, Myunghee Lee, and Emir Yazici. "Counterterrorism and Preventive Repression: China's Changing Strategy in Xinjiang." *International Security* 44, no. 3 (Winter 2019/20): 9-47. https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00368.
- Human Rights Watch. "Xinjiang, China's Restive Northwest." Last modified June 1998. https://www.hrw.org/legacy/campaigns/china-98/sj_xnj2.htm.
- Hyer, Eric. "China's Policy towards Uighur Nationalism." *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 26, no. 1 (April 2006): 75-86. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13602000600738731>.
- Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China. "Tibet-It's Ownership and Human Rights Situation." Last modified September 1992. <https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/cezanew//eng/zt/zgrq/t248763.htm>.
- International Campaign for Tibet. *Chinese Crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism*. Last modified Washington: International Campaign for Tibet, 2013.
- International Campaign for Tibet and FIDH. *China's New Counter-terrorism Law: Implications and Dangers for Tibetans and Uyghurs*. Washington: International Campaign for Tibet, 2016.
- International Energy Agency. *An Energy Sector Roadmap to Carbon Neutrality in China*. Paris: IEA, 2021.
- Johnson, Ian. "How the State Is Co-Opting Religion in China: And What It Means for the Country's Future." *Foreign Affairs*, January 7, 2019. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-01-07/how-state-co-opting-religion-china>.
- Khatchadourian, Raffi. "Surviving the Crackdown in Xinjiang." *New Yorker*, April 5, 2021. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/04/12/surviving-the-crackdown-in-xinjiang>.
- Kine, Phelim. "How China Hijacked the War on Terror." *Politico*, September 10, 2021. <https://www.politico.com/news/2021/09/09/china-hijacked-war-on-terror-511032>.
- Liu, Gang, and Mario Lucas. "Invest in Renewable Energy in Tibet." *Nature* 514, (October 2014): 35. <https://doi.org/10.1038/514035d>.
- Lu, Xi, Shi Chen, Chris P. Nielsen, Chongyu Zhang, Jiacong Li, He Xue, Ye Wu et al. "Combined Solar Power and Storage as Cost-competitive and Grid-compatible Supply for China's Future Carbon-neutral Electricity System." *PNAS* 118, no. 42 (October 2021). <https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2103471118>.
- Maizland, Lindsay. "China's Repression of Uyghurs in Xinjiang." Last modified March 1, 2021. <https://www.cfr.org/background/chinas-repression-uyghurs-xinjiang>.
- Malik, J. Mohan. "Dragon on Terrorism: Assessing China's Tactical Gains and Strategic Losses After 11 September." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 24, no. 2 (August 2002): 252-93.
- Meidan, Michal. *The Structure of China's Oil Industry: Past Trends and Future Prospects*. Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, 2016.
- Millward, James. *Violent Separatism in Xinjiang: A Critical Assessment*. Washington: East-West Center, 2004.

- National Bureau of Statistics of China. *China Statistical Yearbook 2015*. Beijing: National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2015.
- National Intelligence Council. *Global Trends 2030: Alternative Worlds*. Washington: Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 2012.
- Neal, John Wesley. "Chinese National Identity and Minority Populations: The Case of the Uighurs." Master's thesis, Appalachian State University, 2019.
- Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect. "Genocide." Accessed February 5, 2022. <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml>.
- O'Meara, Sarah. "China's Plan to Cut Coal and Boost Green Growth." *Nature*, August 26, 2020. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02464-5>.
- Overton, Thomas. "The Energy Industry in Xinjiang, China: Potential, Problems, and Solutions." *Power*, January 1, 2016. <https://www.powermag.com/energy-industry-xinjiang-china-potential-problems-solutions-web/>.
- Pamuk, Humeyra, and David Brunnstrom. "New U.S. Secretary of State Favors Cooperation with China Despite Genocide of Uighurs." *Reuters*, January 27, 2021. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-china-blinken/new-u-s-secretary-of-state-favors-cooperation-with-china-despite-genocide-of-uighurs-idUSKBN29W2RC>.
- Parker, Christopher Sebastian, and Christopher C. Towler. "Race and Authoritarianism in American Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 22, (2019): 503-19. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-050317-064519>.
- Paul, Norbert W., Arthur Caplan, Michael E. Shapiro, Charl Els, Kirk C. Allison, and Huige Li. "Human Rights Violations in Organ Procurement Practice in China." *BMC Medical Ethics* 18, no. 11 (2017): 1-9. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12910-017-0169-x>.
- Peng, Chun. "Why Chinese Obey." *The Diplomat*, July 16, 2013. <https://thediplomat.com/2013/07/why-chinese-obey/>.
- Pompeo, Michael R. "Determination of the Secretary of State on Atrocities in Xinjiang." Last modified January 19, 2021. <https://2017-2021.state.gov/determination-of-the-secretary-of-state-on-atrocities-in-xinjiang/index.html>.
- Posner, Daniel N. "Measuring Ethnic Fractionalization in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science* 48, no. 4 (October 2004): 849-63. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0092-5853.2004.00105.x>.
- Powers, John. *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 1995.
- Putz, Catherine. "2020 Edition: Which Countries Are for or Against China's Xinjiang Policies?" *The Diplomat*, October 9, 2020. <https://thediplomat.com/2020/10/2020-edition-which-countries-are-for-or-against-chinas-xinjiang-policies/>.
- Ramzy, Austin, and Chris Buckley. "'Absolutely No Mercy': Leaked Files Expose How China Organized Mass Detentions of Muslims." *New York Times*, November 16, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/11/16/world/asia/china-xinjiang-documents.html>.

- Reilly, Ben, and Andrew Reynolds. "Electoral Systems and Conflict in Divided Societies." In *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, edited by Paul C. Stern and Daniel Druckman, 420-82. Washington: The National Academies Press, 2000.
- Reuters Staff. "China Vows to Strike Against Separatism on Tibet Uprising Anniversary." *Reuters*, March 10, 2017. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-tibet/china-vows-to-strike-against-separatism-on-tibet-uprising-anniversary-idUSKBN16H0RB>.
- Richardson, Sophie. "Counterterrorism Police 'Clean Up' After Tibetan Monk's Death." Last modified April 7, 2021. <https://www.hrw.org/news/2021/04/07/counterterrorism-police-clean-after-tibetan-monks-death>.
- Richardson, Sophie. "'Prosecute Them with Awesome Power.'" Last modified July 6, 2021. <https://www.hrw.org/report/2021/07/06/prosecute-them-awesome-power/chinas-crackdown-tengdro-monastery-and-restrictions#>.
- Roeder, Philip G. *Red Sunset: The Failure of Soviet Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Rohlf, Greg. "Dreams of Oil and Fertile Fields: The Rush to Qinghai in the 1950s." *Modern China* 29, no. 4 (October 2003): 455-489. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0097700403257134>.
- Saunders, Kate. "China's Hidden Crackdown in Tibet." *The Diplomat*, April 22, 2020. <https://thediplomat.com/2020/04/chinas-hidden-crackdown-in-tibet/>.
- Sautman, Barry. "Tibet and the (Mis-) Representation of Cultural Genocide." In *Cultural Genocide and Asian State Peripheries*, edited by Barry Sautman, 165-272. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- "Secret Documents Reveal How China Mass Detention Camps Work." *Associated Press* (New York), November 25, 2019. <https://apnews.com/article/china-cables-ap-top-news-international-news-china-race-and-ethnicity-4ab0b341a4ec4e648423f2ec47ea5c47>.
- Shan, Yuli, Heran Zheng, Dabo Guan, Chongmao Li, Zhifu Mi, Jing Meng, Heike Schroeder, Jibo Ma, and Zhuguo Ma. "Energy Consumption and CO2 Emissions in Tibet and Its Cities in 2014." *Earth's Future* 5, no. 8 (August 2017): 854-64. <https://doi.org/10.1002/2017EF000571>.
- Shirk, Susan L. *The Political Logic of Economic Reform in China*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993.
- Siverson, Randolph M., and Bruce Bueno de Mesquita. "The Selectorate Theory and International Politics." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Soloshcheva, Maria A. "The Uyghur Terrorism: Phenomenon and Genesis." *Iran & the Caucasus* 21, no. 4 (2017): 415-30. <https://doi.org/10.1163/1573384X-20170408>.
- State Council of the People's Republic of China. "Xi Declares China a Moderately Prosperous Society in All Respects." Last modified July 1, 2021. http://english.www.gov.cn/news/topnews/202107/01/content_WS60ddd47ec6d0df57f98dc472.html.

- Students for a Free Tibet-UMass. "Some Things You Can Do." Last modified 1996. <https://www.umass.edu/rso/fretibet/do.html>.
- Sudduth, Jun Koga. "Coup Risk, Coup-proofing and Leader Survival." *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 1 (January 2017): 3-15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343316676885>.
- Sui, Kenneth. "KennethSui Overview." Last modified February 15, 2022. <https://www.reddit.com/user/KennethSui/>.
- Sui, Kenneth. "Zhaoxu Sui's Portfolio of Maps." Last modified December 15, 2021. <https://zhaoxusui.github.io/archives/>.
- Tanner, Murray Scot, and James Bellacqua. *China's Response to Terrorism*. Washington: United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission, 2016.
- Trédaniel, Marie, and Pak K. Lee. "Explaining the Chinese Framing of the 'Terrorist' Violence in Xinjiang: Insights from Securitization Theory." *Nationalities Papers* 46, no. 1 (2017): 177-195. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00905992.2017.1351427>.
- Tukmadiyeva, Malika. "Xinjiang in China's Foreign Policy toward Central Asia." *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 12, no. 3 (2013): 87-108. <http://dx.doi.org/10.11610/Connections.12.3.05>.
- United Nations Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. *Basic Human Rights Reference Guide: Conformity of National Counter-Terrorism Legislation with International Human Rights Law*. New York: United Nations, 2014.
- United Press International. "UPI Hears ..." Last modified November 19, 2001. <https://www.upi.com/Defense-News/2001/11/19/UPI-Hears/96411006191988/>.
- United States Securities and Exchange Commission. "Form 20-F Annual Report Pursuant to Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 for the Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2002, Commission File Number 1-15006 PetroChina Company Limited." Last modified 2003. <https://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1108329/000114554903000742/u98519e20vf.htm>.
- University of Central Arkansas. "33. China/Uighurs (1949-present)." Last modified 2013. <https://uca.edu/politicalscience/dadm-project/asiapacific-region/chinauighurs-1949-present/>.
- U.S. Energy Information Administration. "China: International Analysis." Last modified May 14, 2015. https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2016/04/f30/China_International_Analysis_US.pdf.
- U.S. Government Publishing Office. "Exploring the Nature of Uighur Nationalism: Freedom Fighters or Terrorists? - Hearing Before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight of the Committee on Foreign Affairs House of Representatives One Hundred Eleventh Congress First Session." Last modified June 16, 2009. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-111hhr50504/html/CHRG-111hhr50504.htm>.

- Van Walt van Praag, Michael C. "Learn a Little about Tibet." Accessed February 5, 2022. <https://www.umass.edu/rso/fretibet/education.html>.
- Wallace, Jeremy. "Cities, Redistribution, and Authoritarian Regime Survival." *The Journal of Politics* 75, no. 3 (June 2013): 632-45. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0022381613000340>.
- Wang, Limao, Li Hongqiang, and Cheng Shengkui. "A Study of the Ecological Effects of Solar Energy Development in Tibet." *Mountain Research and Development* 32, no. 1 (February 2012): 83-91.
- Wong, Edward. "China Invests in Region Rich in Oil, Coal and Also Strife." *New York Times*, December 20, 2014. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/21/world/asia/china-invests-in-xinjiang-region-rich-in-oil-coal-and-also-strife.html>.
- World Uyghur Congress. "Who We Are." Accessed February 26, 2022. <https://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/introducing-the-world-uyghur-congress/>.
- World Uyghur Congress. "World Uyghur Congress 7th General Assembly Adopts Resolution on the Situation in East Turkistan." Last modified November 16, 2021. <https://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/world-uyghur-congress-7th-general-assembly-adopts-resolution-on-the-situation-in-east-turkistan/>.
- Xinhuanet. "Article Blasts U.S. for Backing Dalai's Separatist Activities." Last updated May 25, 2001. <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/cegv/eng/premade/13640/report7.htm>.
- Xinhuanet. "'East Turkistan' Terrorist Forces Cannot Get Away with Impunity." Last updated January 21, 2002. <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/cetur/eng/xwdt/t160708.htm>.
- Xu, Beina, Holly Fletcher, and Jayshree Bajoria. "The East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM)." Last updated September 4, 2014. <https://www.cfr.org/background/east-turkestan-islamic-movement-etim>.
- Yu, Lulu, and Li Zhao. "Research on China's Energy External Dependence and Energy." *E3S Web of Conferences* 245 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202124501047>.
- Zenn, Jacob. "The Turkistan Islamic Party in Double-Exile: Geographic and Organizational Divisions in Uighur Jihadism." *The Jamestown Foundation Terrorism Monitor* 16, no. 17 (September 2018).