

A young boy in a white and blue striped polo shirt is holding a flag on a wooden pole. He is looking upwards and to the right. In the background, many other flags on poles are visible against a clear blue sky. The scene appears to be outdoors, possibly at a public event or rally.

Nowhere to Run:

The Risk Facing Uyghurs in Xinjiang, China

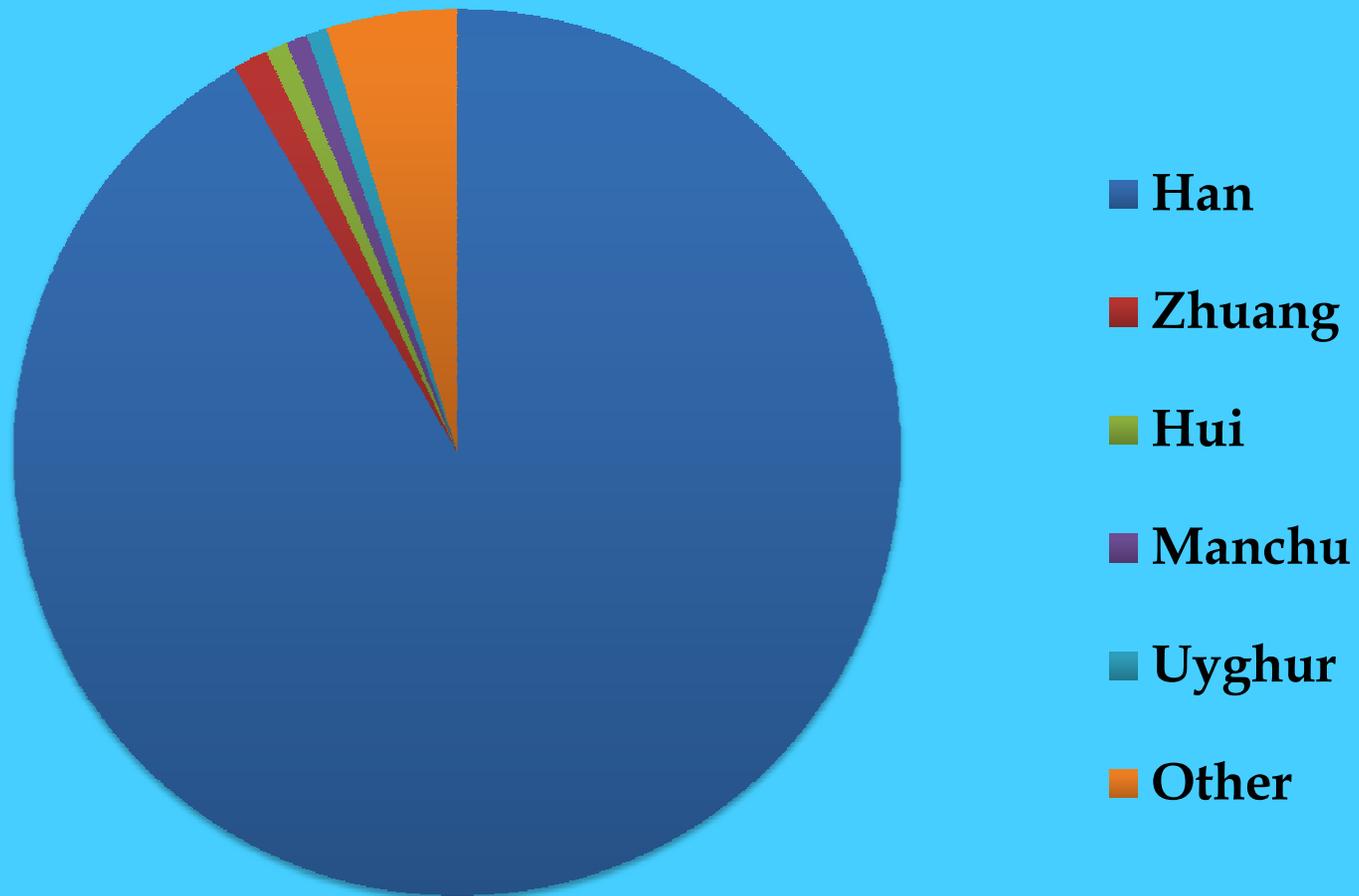
*Mathieu Belanger, Jason D'Amour and Jordan Ray
Presentation for INAF 5439, Ethnic Conflict
Professor David Carment*

Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR)



Image source: <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/>

Ethnic Distribution of China



Political Organization

- Chinese Communist Party (CCP)
- The smaller parties are not even considered to be an opposition to the CCP
- Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law (1984)



Xingjiang CCP Secretary Zhang Chunxian (Photo: Reuters)

XUAR

- Uyghur considered indigenous to Xinjiang region (MAR Project)
- Land rich in reserves of natural gas and oil, coal, gold, nonferrous metals, and uranium. Good land for cultivation of cotton.
- Very large territory, which can be a partial solution to overcrowding in China proper.

Heidaigou coal mine in Xinjiang. Photo: Corbis. Courtesy: The Guardian

Education and Language

- Article 4 of the Constitution of the PRC:
 - *All ethnic groups have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages.*
- Article 36 of the China's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law:
 - *Schools and other educational organizations recruiting mostly ethnic minority students should, whenever possible, use textbooks in their own languages and use these languages as the media of instructions.*

Religion

Constitution of PRC, Article 36:

Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief. No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or not to believe in, any religion; nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe in, or do not believe in, any religion.

The state protects normal religious activities. No one may make use of religion to engage in activities that disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or interfere with the educational system of the state. Religious bodies and religious affairs are not subject to any foreign domination.

Photo credit: Reuters

Causes: Theoretical Implications

Geographic (Duffy Toft)

- Territorial Competition
 - Chinese view as ancient part of territory
 - Indivisible
 - Uyghur view as Homeland
 - Necessary for survival
- Territory has strategic worth

Inequalities (Stewart)

- Cultural differences coincide with Economic and Political differences
- Political inclusion (to a degree)
- Clear economic grievances
- Clear social grievances
- Culture as superficial?

Photo: Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization

Religion (Fox)

- Major factor, but not primary?
- Religion is not necessarily salient, but discrimination increases salience
- Is religion an aspect of ethnicity?



Relative Deprivation (Gurr)

- Ties into Autonomous status
- Power contention
- 'Civilizational fault lines'
- Material inequalities



Consequences and Impact

Diaspora

- Largest numbers in Kazakhstan (223,000)*
- Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan
- Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey
- Germany, United States

- *Агентство Республики Казахстан по статистике (Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan)
http://www.stat.kz/news/Pages/pr_04_02_10.aspx.

International Actors

- Rebiya Kadeer, Washington
- Turkey and Trade vs. Kin
 - In 2009, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan described the violence as a “genocide”*
- Global War on Terror

*“China tells PM Erdoğan to withdraw Uighur genocide remark.”
http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=180954



Photo: The Uyghur American Association

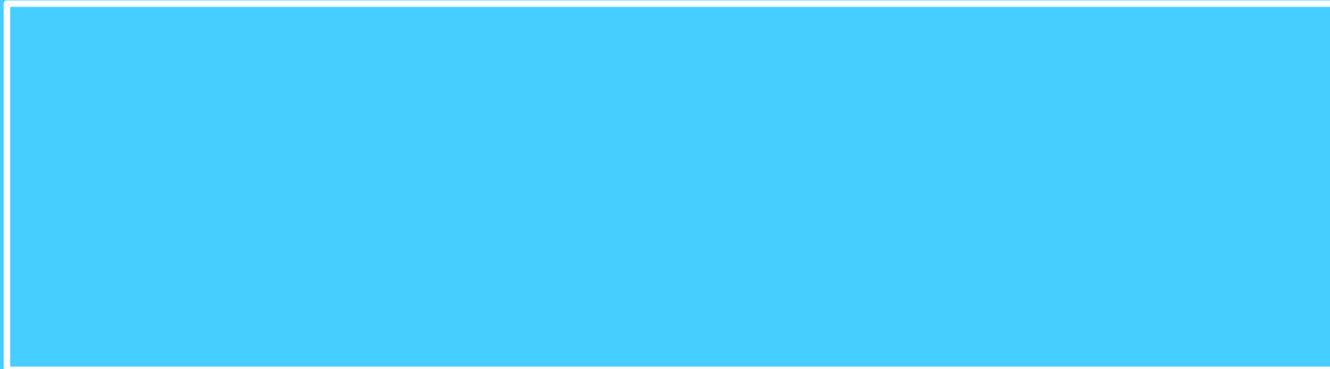
Regional Situation

- Possible spillover effects
- Central Asia as stabiliser and destabiliser
 - Afghanistan withdrawal
 - It's the economy, stupid.
- Shanghai Cooperation



Photo: Wikipedia

Risk Assessment



Scope of Threat

- Uyghur threatened with slow genocide and crimes against humanity
- Social, economic and cultural policies combine with de facto military occupation



Photo: AFP (from BBC News)

Protecting the Frontier

- Politically motivated nationalistic rhetoric creates security imperative (Greve)
- Economic development and ethnic Han migration used to “stabilize” region (*The Economist*)



Photo: Centre for Research on Globalization

Intentional Consequences

- Social, cultural and economic policy coercively assimilates Uyghur through:
 - Dilution of population (Hastings)
 - Suppression of religious practice (Greve)
 - “Sinification” through education

Policy side effects

- Development and migration exacerbate tensions and reinforce security imperative (Cliff, *The Economist*, Greve)



Photo: Turkish Radio and Television Corp.

Nowhere to Run



Mountainous region



- Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Creation of the “Other”

Thomas Cliff writes this anecdote:

“A Xinjiang-born Han businessman related to me the story of ‘a little Uyghur girl whose role was to pick up a brick and smash the skulls of Han people lying beaten on the ground – to make sure that their brains were splattered’. He continues, his voice breaking with anger and disgust, ‘What do you say? A little 13-year-old girl! This whole ethnicity is animal! They’re animals.’”

High Risk Continues

- Increasing incentives for CCP to continue sinification of Xinjiang
- Resistance by Uyghur rebels will only result in harsher crackdowns
- Slow genocide
 - Assimilation of language in education
 - Oppression of Islam
 - Population dilution through Han migration

Why should Canada get involved?



Trade

- Canada gets 10.8% of its imports from China (CIA World Factbook)
- Pivot to Asia as a secondary market for Canadian goods (DFAIT)
- Recent agreements (FIPPA, Nexen purchase) increase Sino-Canadian integration

A photograph of two men in suits shaking hands, overlaid with a blue semi-transparent box containing text. The man on the left is wearing a red tie and glasses, while the man on the right is wearing a dark tie. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be a formal setting with wood paneling.

Canada's Position of Human Rights Violations in China

- Harper's recent trip to China
- Dalai Lama's Honorary Citizenship
- Canada mentioned human rights violations in Tibet in the past, even if it could create tensions with China. It could do it again in the case of the Uyghurs.

Uyghur Groups in Canada and NGOs

- Amnesty International
- Uyghur Canadian Society
 - Has briefed Thomas Mulcair, DFAIT
- Uyghur Human Rights Project
- Human Rights Watch

Recommendations

- Take a strong stance and classify the large-scale human rights abuse against the Uyghur in XUAR as crimes against humanity that could lead to genocide
- Lobby the government of Canada to make public statements in favor of human rights and against the documented crimes against humanity
- Promote research on the Uyghurs in Canadian universities

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