

辩论

Discussion Paper

DEVELOPMENT IN THE XINJIANG UYGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION

SPATIAL TRANSFORMATION AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF DIFFERENCE IN WESTERN CHINA

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ABSTRACT

In the past two decades, China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region has been the recipient of several large-scale development projects which have occurred in conjunction with market-orientated mechanisms introduced to help foster growth. Because such measures have been introduced in conjunction with the large-scale migration of Han Chinese to this traditionally non-Han region, critics have argued that such measures merely assist a process of "internal colonialism" (Gladney 1998; Hechter 1975; c.f. Stavenhagen 1986). The territory, occupied primarily by Uyghurs, a Turkic Muslim ethnic group, has a considerable history of resistance to Beijing rule. Thus, the recent economic development of the region has been viewed by scholars, not to mention many Uyghurs, as Beijing's attempt to consolidate the Chinese presence in the region. From the Chinese government point of view, this could not be further from the truth: state largess and the fostering of private enterprise have helped achieve one of China's primary goals in the region: ethnic harmony and unity.

This paper offers an ethnographic description and analysis of a recent development project in one of the central Uyghur neighbourhoods in the regional capital of Urumqi. The research is premised upon 13 months of fieldwork in the region in 2007/8. The project, a massive Central Asian style-complex earmarked for development by the local government and constructed by a Han-Chinese joint venture, attempts to bring about stability in the region through two aims: the promotion of commerce in the region and the celebration of multi-cultural difference. As is the case of many minority groups in China, the Uyghur's ethnicity itself has become one of its most important commodities; as Han Chinese become wealthier, they have increasingly ventured out to regions such as Xinjiang to experience "local minority characteristics". While such a transition has offered an economic lift to certain elements of the Uyghur community, it has also offered opportunities for Han Chinese to profit off such potential.

Through the description of the project - but also how it relates to surrounding neighbourhood projects and the city more generally - I weight up the assertion of development's relationship to neo-colonial domination. What emerges is not a straightforward picture. While a number of negative

features of the development are highlighted (the heavy use of state and private security; the economic marginalization of the Uyghur under-classes; the over-reliance of Han design and building expertise) these are complimented with more positive aspects (careful attention to development design; a degree of acceptance of Han-style modernity by Uyghurs). Based on these various, almost contradictory capacities which such a development project actualized, the paper ends with some suggestions as to how similar, future developments - which have increased dramatically in recent years - might build upon lessons learnt in Urumqi. Key suggestions include the renunciation of covert and coercive means in order to sustain narratives of exemplary ethnic unity and the more active involvement and encouragement of Uyghur participation in such projects.

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CCS discussion papers should contribute to the academic debate on China's global rise and the consequences thereof for African development. We do therefore explicitly invite scholars from Africa, China, or elsewhere, to use this format for advanced papers that are ready for an initial publication, not least to obtain input from other colleagues in the field. Discussion papers should thus be seen as work in progress, exposed to (and ideally stimulating) policy-relevant discussion based on academic standards.

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author.

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PREFACE

This discussion paper presents development in Western China's Xinjiang Province from an anthropological perspective. It is based on the PhD thesis of the author, Ross Anthony, who has recently joined the Centre for Chinese Studies at Stellenbosch University as a research fellow.

The paper provides rich ethnographic insight in how development is understood by China's central government in relation to China's ethnic minorities and how the Uyghur minority reacts to this 'Beijing model' of development. The African reader might enjoy the rich descriptions of daily life in 'the other China' – i.e. beyond the usually portrayed coastal region – a number of elements will also ring familiar tunes for challenges within African states. The relationship between different groups is a common feature in most African states. Also interesting is the here described thriving for economic development while maintaining some – but which? – elements of local culture. Preservation and building on identities is a difficult endeavour in development processes across the planet. Western China tells a few interesting stories on how this can be done – and where mistakes have been (or are being) made.

As research fellow at the CCS, Ross will bring his knowledge of China into our analysis of China-Africa relations. This paper, however, is exclusively on China herself. Given the major differences in historical development, state structure or cultural connotations, we decided not to try and force our perception of parallels. The author deliberately did not attempt to make explicit comparisons to one or the other African situation. Rather, we are convinced that readers will find elements that are interesting and intellectually stimulating – or simply entertaining – based on their various backgrounds and personal experiences.

Sven Grimm,

Director of the Centre for Chinese Studies

Stellenbosch, June 2012

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Although China has had a sporadic presence in the Xinjiang region in various earlier dynasties¹, its rule has been consistently consolidated since the Manchu led Qing Dynasty (1644-1912). The dominant discursive trope governing Qing settlement was the notion of a civilizing mission in which enlightenment was brought to such far-flung, peripheral regions through the benevolence of the emperor (Perdue 2005). The city of Urumqi, founded in 1755, was initially named “Dihua”, literally meaning “to bring civilization”. Of course, it was not only rhetoric which the Qing brought with them to Xinjiang: the period saw the rise of military garrisons, farming colonies, penal colonies schools and the establishment of various Han Chinese new cities (Chinese: *xincheng*) within pre-existing Turkic cities². Hundreds of thousands of Han and Hui³ traders settled in Xinjiang during this time, which caused friction with local Turkic peoples⁴. While in the 18th and 19th centuries, Xinjiang was deemed to be lacking civilization, in the 20th century it was perceived to be lacking in technological advancement. Beginning in the republican period, development became increasingly dominated by a programme of self-conscious modernisation. Although political turmoil during this period prevented this new, modernist-inspired notion of development from being wide-spread⁵, the “peaceful liberation” (Chinese: *hexie jiefang*) of Xinjiang by the communists in 1949 unleashed several massive waves of material transformation in the region, including road and rail building, land reclamation, large agricultural projects and industrialisation.

The socialist concept of development within minority areas was inextricably wed to the view that Han Chinese excelled in the expertise necessary to carry out such a vast task (McMillan 1979; Kardos 2008). Thus, from the outset of the revolution, hundreds of thousands of Han personnel migrate to regions such as Xinjiang. Yeung and Shen identify several Han-centred “Go West” policies since 1949 (2004: 12). The first was the Construction and Development Corps⁶ phase from 1953-1957; the second period, from 1965-1975, in its latter phase involved the deployment of former red guards, boosting the population of Han Chinese in Xinjiang to more than half of the nearly 10 million inhabitants and making up 40 per cent of the population by 1978 (Bovingdon, 2004: 277). A reported 110,000 army troops based in Xinjiang - most of whom were Han - were demobilised and assigned tasks such as land reclamation, water conservancy, agricultural and animal husbandry production. The Lanzhou Xinjiang Railway reached Hami in 1960 and Urumqi in 1962; it significantly influenced flows of goods and people into the region. The second half of the 20th century presents an overall massive increase of Han to the region: whereas the Han population was only 6 per cent of Xinjiang’s total population in 1953, by the year 2000 it was at 40 per cent (with the Uyghur population at 45 per cent) (Toops 2004: 1).

Han migration to Xinjiang was accompanied by an ideological campaign in which, as Uradyn Bulag has argued, minorities increasingly became “symbolically central to China’s self-representation” (2010: 3). This was underpinned by a new, non-racial state discourse known as “minority unity” (*minzu tuanjie*)⁷, in which all the “peoples” of China - Han included - worked together to forward the revolution and create mutual prosperity. While Xinjiang was often considered a far-flung region, there was a great deal of enthusiasm amongst Han with regards to being sent there to help the locals⁸. This notion of inseparable ethnic prosperity has continued into the present. To take one example, a recent White Paper on Xinjiang argues that development has been successful not least due to “the concerted efforts by all peoples of

Xinjiang under the banner of solidarity of all ethnic groups, as well as to the success of China's policies on ethnic minorities” (Government of China, 2009).

Following Deng Xiaoping's rise to power in 1978, a raft of economic and social reforms were ushered in which were to have a significant effect on development within the region. The commune system was dismantled while peasants gained more control over their land and began to sell their products on the market. China's economy also opened itself to foreign trade. This broad economic shift required a more flexible labour force, leading to the easing of the household registration system (Chinese: *hukou*) and contributing toward a mass exodus from the countryside by peasants eager to make a decent living. The loosening of control led to another large increase of Han Chinese to the Xinjiang. In the 1990s, the Han population grew by almost a third - twice the 15.9 per cent growth rate of the ethnic population (Bequelin 2004: 396). While state aid was still forthcoming to the region, particularly to less developed regions such as Xinjiang⁹, this occurred in tandem a new model advocating that privatisation was the correct road to wide-spread prosperity. What marked this most recent population shift was the fact that migration to a far flung region such as Xinjiang was no longer an obligation but rather voluntary. Whereas in the earlier socialist period, scores of youth were encouraged to travel to China's most far-flung regions to help their minority brethren develop an agrarian utopia, by the 1990s Han were arriving in Xinjiang in search of making a better living and possibly of even getting rich¹⁰.

1.2 THE MINORITY TOURIST INDUSTRY

A significant new source of revenue in was the tourist industry. In addition to the region's vast agricultural, mineral and energy resources¹¹, tourism is vital to the Xinjiang economy. In 2010, 30 million tourists visited the region, generating over 30 Billion Yuan (\$4.6 Billion) in revenue (Government of China, 2011). It is significant that the vast majority of visitors were Han Chinese, mostly coming from China's more economically prosperous eastern and southern regions.

Within Urumqi itself, in 2001 the city government decided that the city could lure more tourism and investment if it marketed itself as a city which embraced “minority characteristics” (Ning 2005). This is reflective of a much broader shift within the Chinese periphery, as can be seen in cities such as Lhasa, Tibet, where contemporary architecture fashions itself on traditional Tibetan forms of domestic urbanism (Barnet 2006). In Harbin, the capital of Heilongjiang province in the far northeast, iconic Russian influences, such as the figure of the onion dome, have permeated the city. James Carter, who has written on the phenomenon within Harbin, argues that China:

“market[s] its marginality by making it central to tourism, especially as the Chinese appear more and more eager to embrace the non-Chinese as symbols of cosmopolitanism and markers of global social capitalism” (2004: 163).

The modern appropriation of minority aesthetics did not begin as a money-making enterprise; rather, they were initially incorporated into state buildings. From the mid-1980s onward¹², architects such as Wang Shiren and members of the Construction Ministry led by Zhang Qinnan, began to argue that “nationality forms” and “ethnic character” should be included in China's frontier cities (Gaubatz 1996: 299). The two central motifs embraced in Urumqi were the Central-Asian styled dome and arch¹³. In the last decade or so, with increased economic liberalisation, the state promotion of such forms has waned while their popularity within the private sphere has increased. There has been the tendency for Han Chinese construction firms within Urumqi to draw on such motifs in the development of high-rise office and apartment

blocks¹⁴; more overtly, it is evident in several privately funded Han Chinese tourist developments constructed in the Uyghur parts of the city. These newly constructed “bazaars”, embracing an almost “Disneyfied” version of Islam, have been constructed upon the foundations of earlier, more informal Turkic bazaars in the Uyghur neighbourhoods of Shanxi Hang, and Erdaoqiao (See Figure 1 in the Addendum). While these projects are privately funded, often by Chinese firms located in eastern China, local governments solicit tenders for such developments to be built in key areas of the city set aside for the promotion of minority traits (Ning 2005).

The largest of these projects is the International Grand Bazaar (Chinese: *Xinjiang Guoji Dabazha*, or *Da Bazha* for short), which was constructed in 2002 by the Xinjiang-based company, (Chinese: *Hongjing Jituan*), in conjunction with a Hong Kong based construction company (Chinese: *Xianggang Lande Gongsu*) See Figure 2 in the Addendum). The companies invested 26 million US dollars into the area opposite the old Erdaoqiao market (Liu 2006). The area was previously the location of the Erdaoqiao mosque (Uyghur: *Dong Konruk Maschit*) which was torn down¹⁵ and then re-built as part of the larger commercial complex. Across the street from the bazaar stood similar Islamic themed complex known as the Erdaoqiao Bazaar, constructed and owned by a company from Beijing.

The International Grand Bazaar has become a prominent feature within the city. It boasted a massive Central-Asian styled minaret in the central square resembling those found in Samarkand and Bukhara. Flanked on either side of the courtyard were multi-story buildings with 3000 stalls trading everything from Maoist memorabilia, jade and caterpillar fungus to Turkish evening gowns, Kazakh rugs and Russian dolls.

It also contained one of the more up-market Uyghur women’s-ware markets in the city. The northern side of the courtyard housed a U.S. fast food chain (*KFC*) and a French supermarket (*Carrefour*) shopping centre. In the courtyard outside, two Bactrian camels - one real and one made of bronze - stand in front of a miniature version of an Egyptian pyramid, where Chinese tourists from inner china, but also Uyghurs visiting Urumqi from other parts of Xinjiang, posed to have their photographs taken. representations of the International Grand Bazaar were to be found distributed throughout the city in the form of images on buses, posters, street-signs and books, marking it as one of Urumqi’s top tourist sites (See Figure 3 in the Addendum)

2. INTERVENTION WITHIN UYGHUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

While the construction of the bazaar has, in certain regards, continued the neighbourhood tradition as a major trading hub, the high rentals within the complex entailed that only a select band of traders could trade from within it. High and middle income traders were able to run their businesses from the bazaar, however many of the poorer traders could not¹⁶. Because there were no alternative spaces for petty-traders to do business, a parallel Uyghur economy flourished immediately outside the complex itself. Every day, hundreds of traders sold their wares along the streets outside the complex. Unfortunately for these low-end traders, often new migrants arriving in the city from southern Xinjiang, trading on the streets was illegal. In the early evenings and particularly on Fridays, “guerrilla markets” would spring up for a few hours

at a time on the pavements and then suddenly disappear. Shoe shiners, often young boys - some even pre-pubescent - would flit, like birds, from one part of the street to another clutching their shoe stands and polish as security guards shoed them away. They could make between 20 and 50 Yuan (around 20 to 50 ZAR; 2 to 5 EUR) per day.

Men with push-carts selling dried fruits, nuts and honey, cold noodles, naan bread and so forth would congregate on street corners: frequently you could see them in large groups, speedily pushing their carts down the street as some or other security apparatus chased after them. There was also a large and rather defiant cell phone market, in which groups of men huddled in small constellations would trade in (often stolen) cell phones, spare parts and SIM cards. The edge of the intersection where they traded constituted an invisible barrier. As soon as they spilled out over it, security guards would hound them back into their confined area. Another group which we always on the run were beggars, many of whom suffered physical impairment; one Hotanese beggar once complained to me that he was often getting caught by the police because his mangled legs prevented a speedy get-away.

The predominant nuisance of these informal traders existed in the form of security from both the private and public sector. There were the International Grand Bazaar private security guards, whose uniform combined Chinese military and Uyghur patterning; they made sure that informal traders did not spill over into their massive, pristine courtyard (See Figure 4 in the Addendum). There were the Bank of China (Chinese: *Zhongguo Yinghang*) guards, who wore more generally military-looking garb and prevented traders from coming too close to the steps of the bank; then there was the *zhian ju*, employed by the local district municipality. They were the government security officers who would chase the illegal cell phone traders back into their small segment of pavement and, from time to time, harass the beggars.

Another important branch of the apparatus were undercover government officials who would catch and fine traders. One such official, who I knew well, would take a daily cut from the trader's wares in exchange for not fining them (he assured me that he only targeted able-bodied men and left women, children and the elderly alone). Then there were municipality garbage collectors (*laji ren*), the traffic police (*jiatong jingcha*) who also kept people off the enclosed grass islands on the pavements; the *baoran ju* (public security or police), and the feared undercover police (*anquan ju*) who hardly anyone ever saw but who everyone knew were always present. Finally, there were the armed police (*wuzhuang jingcha*) who would appear during tense periods.

2.1 STATE INTERVENTION IN THE RUN-UP TO THE 2008 OLYMPIC GAMES

Such micro-events proliferated around the Erdaoqiao and International Grand Bazaar area. In the months running up to the Olympic Games in 2008, my official friend began to complain how his boss was coming down hard on him, saying he had to work harder to clear the neighbourhood around Erdaoqiao. The two pavements upon which these markets played themselves out were hemmed in by the garden fences mentioned above. But the gates and fences did not stop people from hopping over them to cross the road and there was a constant flow of people weaving in between traffic on what was one of the main roads of Urumqi.

In the run up to the Olympic Games and its preceding torch ceremonies, securitisation of the neighbourhood intensified. In early May 2008, the trading area on the east side of the road suddenly disappeared. In their place appeared a long desk with a row of chairs upon which a number of government officials sat; above them was a large red banner which read: "Resolutely prohibit seizing the walkways, optimise the urban environment" (*jianjue qudi zhandao jingying*

youhua changqu huangjin). New fences had been erected along the pavements and another large fence ran down the middle of the road, preventing people from crossing the street. People were forcibly directed to the previously neglected underground pedestrian tunnel. There was a heavy traffic police presence forcefully stopping anyone who tried to cross the road. One of the officials who was seated at the desk beneath the “resolutely prohibit” sign told me that they were there to offer advice to the public who may want to know about how to conduct trade in an orderly and legal fashion. Perhaps unsurprisingly, up until I left my field site at the end of August 2008, I never once saw a local trader - or any other member of the public for that matter - inquire at this help desk.

The clearing away of the informal cell phone market on the other side of the road occurred a month or so later. The space where the traders used to be was taken over by a government vehicle with large posters on either side of it. The posters showed aerial views of the city with large blue skies; upon the signs were written “build a harmonious society, beautify the streets environment” (Chinese: *guojian beshi shibui meihua shirong huangjing*). The vehicle was flanked on either side by groups of *zhan ju* guards who sat under umbrellas. A few days later, when wondering around one of the alleyways which ran behind Liberation Road, I was surprised to find the entire cell-phone market had re-located here. One of the traders in this cramped new location told me that the government (Chinese: *zhengfu*) had made them move here. He went on to show me - in a perverse echo of the original cell phone market in Liberation Road - that there was another “invisible line” within the alleyway. If it were crossed, the *zhian ju* would come and force them back over it (See Figures 5 and 6 in the Addendum).

In the months prior to the torch ceremony, many people believed that the torch would pass through the Uyghur neighbourhood of Erdaoqiao, as structures such as the Grand International Bazaar were important emblems of the city. However, on the day of the event, this did not occur, and in fact, the most southerly the torch came was along Renmin Lu, the road which runs along the exact same path of where the old Han city wall used to be at its southern end. I was informed by someone involved in the organising of the ceremony that this was for security reasons. On the evening of 4 August 2008, days before the beginning of the Olympic Games, there was an attack on a military base in Kashgar by Uyghur separatists. Within hours, the entire south side of Urumqi, where the majority of Uyghurs dwell, was subject to heightened control.

All shops were made to shut, traders were whisked off the streets and bands of armed police officers stood on street corners. The remainder of the city, beyond the old south wall, appeared to be functioning more or less as normal. In the following year, when the far more serious Urumqi Riots took place, in which 196 mostly Han people were killed, again, the area along which the Old Han city wall used to run, was intensely fortified, effectively separating the Uyghur neighbourhoods from the rest of the city. Soldiers manning the barricades here would only let people pass through one at a time, after thorough searches.

2.2 PERCEPTIONS OF HAN PRIVILEGE

Such punitive measures were compounded by criticisms that such a development largely excluded locals in terms of its construction. To take an anecdotal example, once while walking through the bazaar with a Uyghur friend of mine, we came across a plaque at the entrance to the centre which attributes the construction materials of the bazaar to the “Shandong Construction Company”. My friend looked at the sign and then said to me in a low voice: “You see that, it says ‘Shandong’, that’s Wang Lequan’s people, they build everything here!” On more than one occasion I heard the accusation that the then Communist Party Secretary of Xinjiang, Wang Lequan, engaged actively in securing tenders from Shandong companies - the province from

which hailed - to carry out construction projects within Xinjiang. In fact, a common saying in the region was: “Shandong’s son is Xinjiang’s thief” (Chinese: “*Shandong de erzi shi Xinjiang de wasi*?”)¹⁷. Such views were widespread. In Dawut’s analysis of the Chinese marketing of sites of Uyghur tomb pilgrimage in the village of Toyuq, near Turpan, she shows how Chinese companies literally sealed access to village by charging tourists to enter it, as well as charging to enter the local Uyghur pilgrimage site (2007: 154). In the Old city of Kashgar, I had heard from Uyghurs in the city that a Beijing firm had purchased access rights to particular areas of the old city, charging tourists to enter and not re-investing the money into the upkeep of the neighbourhoods themselves¹⁸.

It is easy to see how such a practice can assume far more sinister overtones when put into practice - or at least perceived to be put into practice - within the context of politically fragile peripheral regions of China. Because the practice of informal economic relations is often based on regional ties, (let alone larger, ethnic ties), there is a belief amongst Uyghurs that such networks largely preclude them. This fits into the broader but more widely held belief that economic development within the region was largely for the benefit of Han Chinese - a belief confirmed by research on the region (Bequelin, 2004; Bovingdon, 2004; Hopper and Webber 2010). While more recent studies by Howell and Fan (2011) and Zang (2011) have complicated the contours of this inequality¹⁹ it is nonetheless pertinent to keep in mind that this was widely assumed perception amongst Uyghur people.

The phenomenon of such political and economic connections amongst Han is, of course, not something endemic to Xinjiang but rather part of a larger process of discourses and practices embedded within the contemporary Chinese market economy, often situated under the banner of “relations” (Chinese: *guanxi*), which Yang defines as “the cultivation of personal relationships and networks of mutual dependence; and the manufacturing of obligation and indebtedness” (1994: 6). In contemporary China, this often manifests itself in a commercialized form of clientism (Wank 1999: 9), entailing the exchange of gifts, favours and banquets which cement ties between officials and businessmen (Wank 2001; Pieke 1995; Yang, 2000; Liu, 2002). Certainly, within urban development projects, such practices were alive and well. For instance, Li Zhang has argued that incentives for officials to promote the restructuring of cities were “enormous” and that “the granting of land-use rights and the promotion of development are used to strengthen the state financially and politically” (2006: 464).

2.3 STATE ANXIETIES AND UYGHUR SEPARATISM

It is feasible to assume that within such a climate, Uyghurs would develop a somewhat cynical attitude to such projects as they there were empty appropriations of Uyghur culture. Amongst certain members of the Uyghur community, there was a feeling that projects such as the bazaar were merely a hollow gesture. For instance, the Uygur businesswoman Rabiya Kadeer²⁰, who had constructed her own Turkic-style shopping mall in the city, states of the Grand Bazaar:

“The government itself later constructed its own modern bazaar built in the Turkish style. It cost many millions of yuan [...] they filled their shops with Uyghur wares, Uyghur traditional clothing, Uyghur delicacies, and Uyghur everything. Yet the local people were unshakably faithful to our stall” (2009: 212).

Echoing Kadeer, one Uyghur friend of mine, an administrator at a local school, told me that she thought the construction of the bazaar was a cynical ploy by the government to make “poor” people and “stupid” people happy with their lot. I heard similar views by several quite prominent Uyghur citizens within the city, it is tempting, based on such accounts, to write off

such a project as a form of postmodern pastiche. In this scenario, postmodernism defined as the aesthetic mode of global capitalism (Jameson 1998), seeks to appropriate cultural difference through re-producing it. Thus, the way in which “the other” is approached, is no longer to “kill it”, “vie with it” or “love it” but rather to “reproduce it” (1996: 115)²¹. Within the present context, such appropriation dovetails with state aims which promote the celebration of ethnic difference as a means of proof that stability and harmony are being achieved²².

This was compounded by the fact that Uyghurs perceived their own forms of development repressed at the expense of buildings such as the International Grand Bazaar. Another, somewhat different instance of this phenomenon could be seen in attitudes toward the “Rebiya Kadeer” building itself, built further down the same road (See Figure 7 in the Addendum). Taking advantage of Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms of the late 1970s and seizing on the Central Asian trade bonanza which flourished with the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kadeer, a Uyghur, quickly became one of the five richest people in China. Her economic fortunes were accompanied by a meteoric rise in the realm of Chinese politics.

The seven story building possessed a white tile façade - common at the time - with a large onion dome in front which towered over the Jiefang Nanlu intersection with Minzu Jie. The structure housed about 1000 traders upon opening. Kadeer’s rise in the 1980s was initially accompanied by a willing government who argued that state policies had enabled her exemplary success. However, by the late 1990s her criticism of the state became increasingly public. In August of 1999 while making her way through down-town Urumqi to meet with a United States Congressional Research Service delegation she was apprehended on charges of “leaking state secrets” and convicted in 2000 of “endangering state security”. She was sentenced to eight years in prison, two of which were spent in solitary confinement. However, five year’s into her sentence she was allowed to travel to America for medical reasons, where she now lives

Kadeer has now become a *cause célèbre* amongst many Uyghurs in Xinjiang. In her autobiography she states of her own bazaar that

“there was no building like it in Urumqi. It was the first, most modern, and most beautiful department store in our entire Uyghur nation ... it embodied my strength and my resistance against my opponents. At some level it encapsulated my existence [...] Uyghurs have grown to believe that it will bring them good luck. They recognize each other by their faces, by their language, and by their love of their homeland [...] In that building, they feel at home because outside of it they have become a minority in their own country” (2009: 211-212).

In 2008, while there were larger and more impressive Uyghur commercial buildings, the Rebiya building still commanded a disproportionate amount of attention. I once passed the building with a low-level Uyghur official who discretely whispered: “look, that is Rebiya Kadeer’s building”. This was not the first time that I had, without any asking, had the building pointed out to me. On this occasion, I asked the man why, if Rebiya Kadeer is now considered a separatist, her building still stands? Furthermore, why had they left the sign with her name on it situated at the top of the building for all to see? The official replied only that the government was very “clever” (Chinese: *conming*) and then quickly changed the topic.

The building was in a very dilapidated state, its white façade heavily fading and cables sticking out of its interior. In her book Kadeer argues that the government forbade any repairs to it as a kind of revenge for her attempts to “split the motherland”. Following the Urumqi riots of 2009, the Chinese government was quick to accuse Kadeer of master-minding the violence from the

United States. Her relatives appeared on television and publicly denounced her. On the 26th of September that year, Xinhua issued an article which begins:

“The building built and named by Rebiya Kadeer in Urumqi, capital of northwest China's Region, will be demolished as it has serious security risks, local authorities said Monday “ (9 September, 2009).

The Kadeer saga is indicative of broader state anxieties regarding Uyghur ethno-separatism in the region. Following the fall of the Soviet Union and the birth of the newly independent Central Asian Republics (CAR), there was a fear within the Chinese government that these states, four out of five which were Turkic²³, would inspire parallel demands of independence within Xinjiang's dominant (Turkic) Uyghur community. While ethnically based resistance to Han rule had not occurred since the 1960s (Dillon 2004: 52), there was a much deeper historical repository of resistance upon which Uyghurs could draw. The first signs of trouble within the contemporary context began in 1990 when a Uyghur rebellion in Baren, Akto County was brutally crushed by the police. This was followed, in 1997 by severe rioting in Yili (Millward 2007) and a series of bomb-blasts on busses in Urumqi which occurred in the same year.

While in the 1990s the government kept mum on the issue of ethno-separatism, following the Islamic attacks of September 11th 2001 in the United States, the Chinese government suddenly became very vocal about its own Islamic “War on Terror” in Xinjiang. Critics have suggested that the various episodes of ethnic violence in Xinjiang have arisen from a number of varying, localized grievances (Millward 2004) and that the Chinese state has attempted to lump all of them into the category of the “three evil forces”: “separatism” (sometimes referred to in Chinese sources as “splittism”), “extremism” and “terrorism”. The fight against ethno-separatism has loosely coincided with what has been perceived as a return to repressive measures against Uyghur culture. This has included the phasing-out of Uyghur as a medium of instruction in tertiary education, forbidding Party cadres to attend mosques, compulsory patriotic education for mullahs and the banning of certain Uyghur texts²⁴.

2.4 AN AMBIVALENT ATTITUDE TO ISLAM

The wilful neglect of the Rebiya building and the heavy promotion of the newer, Chinese built bazaars reiterate Dreyer's caution that:

“cultural development carried on by the party and government on behalf of minorities on their own behalf seems to be acceptable, whereas cultural development carried out by minorities on their own behalf is not. Ethnic minority culture under the direct control of party and government is celebrated; all other manifestations thereof are regarded with utmost suspicion. In contrast to the marked shifts between accommodationist and assimilationist minority policies that characterize the early years of the PRC, a model has evolved that is pluralist in form but assimilationist in function” (1993: 307).

This tendency was overtly evident in the states attitudes to overtly Islamic forms of cultural expression. The government was frequently at pains to point out that minorities were free to practice their religion²⁵. At the same time, due to state perception of ethno-separatism, the state has increasingly imposed restrictions on Islam. For instance, civil servants are discouraged from attending mosque, while people under 18 years of age cannot attend at all; civil servants are forbidden to fast during Ramadan (Bovingdon 2010: 69). A Uyghur friend of mine who was a state employee once phoned me the night before Eid Al-Fitr and, the day celebrating the end of

Ramadan. He suggested I go and look at the early morning prayers the next morning as the amount of people present would be very impressive. My friend, however, was nowhere to be seen. Later in the week, when I met up with him again, he told me that he did not come to the mosque that day because he was afraid that there would be undercover police keeping an eye on whether civil servants such as himself were attending festival prayers.

Such surveillance was particularly evident in mosques. While the re-constructed mosque at the International Grand Bazaar (known as the Erdaoqiao or Dong Kuwrek mosque) was fully functioning, it was nonetheless subject to disproportionate surveillance (See Figure 8 in the Addendum). For instance, once while speaking to some people outside a mosque at the bazaar, an elderly woman came up to me and whispered into my ear that there were likely to be informants (Uyghur: *jasuslar*) patrolling near the mosque and that it would be best if I stopped my conversation immediately and moved along. Despite the fact we were discussing comparative fruit prices between Kashgar and Urumqi, I decided to take her advice and left at once. In another instance, I made the acquaintance of a young Uyghur man who prided himself on showing me around the city. I used the video recording device on my digital camera to film him while he introduced this or that area or building in the city. The young man seemed to enjoy this role and expressed to me that he felt as though he were a television presenter, presenting the sights and sound of Urumqi to a foreign audience. One day I was filming him as he introduced to me the International Grand Bazaar. We were standing at the eastern end of the central courtyard of the bazaar. He was enthusiastically informing the viewer that the bazaar was an excellent place to buy all sorts of interesting things and that it has many different places selling various foods. Directly behind him stood what I later came to learn was the recently re-renovated Dong Kowrek mosque which was attached to the bazaar. I then asked him if that was a mosque behind him. Immediately switching to a more subdued tone of voice, laughing nervously he replied, “yes. That is a mosque”. I then proceeded to ask him if he went to the mosque. He immediately made a gesture with his finger running along his neck, claiming “stop the interview! Stop the interview!”. After turning the camera off, I apologized and asked what was the matter. He politely replied not to ask him any more questions about the mosque.

3. POSITIVE POTENTIALS: DEVELOPMENT AND THE FLOURISHING OF DIFFERENCE

3.1 CONTEMPORARY URBANISM AND HAN-UYGHUR OVERLAPS

While the analysis so far has focused primarily on negative aspects of the neighbourhood, it would be unjust to end the discussion here. This is because, despite the many forms of social discontent surrounding such developments, they were by no means exclusive. For instance, the Grand Bazaar fostered relations between Han and Uyghur to a certain degree. Jay Dautcher has noted that, within Yining, given the “near absence” of social interaction between Han and Uyghur, “market interactions, scarce as they were, constituted perhaps the most significant form of face-to-face Han-Uyghur interaction” (2008: 203)²⁶. Within the bazaar, there were two main groups of Han Chinese which utilized the bazaar. Firstly, there were tourists which mainly came in tour groups from inner China. Secondly, there were the Han entrepreneurs who sold their wares within the bazaar. Han traders by no means constituted the majority of the traders, however, there was a certain informal spatial segregation between Han and Muslim trading communities. As one of the main Han products of trade was jade, central parts of the bazaar were earmarked off for that trade and comprised almost solely of Han dealers. Nevertheless,

Uyghurs selling high end products, such as carpets and knives also held some of the most prominent trading spaces in the bazaar. Despite their relative segregation, I noted on several occasions, when business was slow, Han and Uyghur traders chatting with each other, playing card games and using each other to exchange money.

While it is true that certain parties felt a cynical attitude toward such projects and Han modernity in general, this was not universally the case. Significant Uyghur migration from the countryside to the city, as is the experience of so many other Han, has contributed toward new sensibilities and tastes amongst these migrant populations (See Figure 9 in the Addendum). For instance, it was noticeable amongst Urumqi's Uyghur population that there was certainly a desire, if not exclusively, for Chinese style high-rise urban modernity. Uyghurs, particularly from the countryside, were somewhat awe-struck by the "bright lights" phenomenon of the modern Chinese city. I once had a conversation with a Uyghur man in Urumqi who sold watermelons and who had recently returned from Shanghai where he had tried his luck as kebab seller. He said to me:

"I used to think Urumqi was very modern; then I went to Shanghai; in Shanghai, you should see the sky-scrapers, so tall! (Chinese: *gaogao de*). In comparison, Urumqi's are so small; Urumqi is really backward!" (Chinese: *lou hou*).

Today, frequenting sites such as the Great Middle Bridge, the Western Bridge, People's Square are photographers who, for a fee, take pictures of visitors. There exists a repertoire of backdrops against which one can have one's photograph taken, for example, the He Tan Lu Freeway with Hong Shan in the background; an ice sculpture of the Olympic rings (during the winter of 2007-2008); and the People's Square monument and with its various flower gardens. A Han photographer at People's Square once told me that of all the backdrop scenes at the square, the most popular backdrop amongst the minorities (he used the term "minzu") was the skyscrapers which surrounded the Square:

"The minorities! They love shots of the city the most, whenever I take their photos, they want the tall buildings in the background."

To back this up, he pointed to his advertising board showing photos he had previously taken: a Uyghur woman posing in front of the Hoi Tak Hotel with its flying saucer-like, disc-shaped roof; a Uyghur family in front of the blue glassed step shaped 101 building (Chinese: *101 Daxia*) which presides over the south end of the square. The desire for the city as pinnacle of modernity stems in part from the sheer degree of repetition with which this particular image of the city had stretched across Xinjiang's oases, particularly in the form of propaganda. Another reason was the kind of city projected in such images was also associated with technological advancement and improvement of infrastructure, including the introduction of hospitals, roads, parks, better transport, better schools and so on. There was also a sense that Uyghurs, now actively engaged in China's great urbanization process, needed to be more economically and technologically advanced.

3.2 THE POPULARITY OF THE INTERNATIONAL GRAND BAZAAR

More relevant to our current discussion, this enthusiasm even extended to the International Grand Bazaar itself, which was popular with many Uyghur locals. Amongst many young Uyghur people I spoke to, the bazaar was one of the prime spots for youngsters to hang out at on the weekend. Two young Uyghur women I once spoke to, who were performers attached to a military danwei, informed me that the International Grand Bazaar was the best example of

Uyghur culture in Urumqi. Uyghur visitors to the city, both rich and poor alike could often be seen having their photograph taken in front of the pyramid at the bazaars courtyard entrance. A trader I knew who illegally worked around the bazaar and who was generally hostile to the Chinese, said that although the opulence of bazaar seemed meaningless for poor people such as himself, he nonetheless had to admit that it was a beautiful building. On the weekends, the bazaar's Carrefour supermarket was packed with Uyghurs of various classes; the shopping centre's free toilet, a rarity in Urumqi, saw a steady stream of traffic at most times of day. Most Uyghurs referred to the Chinese name "Dabasa" rather than Dong Kowruk, the original Uyghur name. This was very different to places such as Kashgar, where, for instance, even state designated street names are often completely ignored²⁷.

One of the reasons for the success of the bazaar was that it showed a significant degree of cultural sensitivity by Chinese construction standards. The chief architect of the project, the Han Chinese Wang Xiaodong, travelled throughout Xinjiang and other parts of the Turkic world in order to draw inspiration for the design of the project. A Uyghur architectural consultant was brought in to help design the tower in the central courtyard. One of the main materials of construction were locally made hollow refracted bricks drawing on local patterning designs. Additionally, a famous Uyghur architect was brought on board to act as a consultant on the project. The building even won the highly respected Islamic Ismaili *Aga Khan Award for Architecture and Project Architect* in 2007, an honour bestowed on an architectural project which addresses the needs and aspirations of Islamic societies.

One only had to compare the Grand Bazaar to a similar development, the Minzujie Bazaar, located on one of the main roads bisecting Shanxi Hang, to see that the success of such developments are by no means consistent. This latter building, a vast, squat, rectangular four storied building painted bright yellow. Self-consciously modernised Islamic ornamentation made of stainless steel juts out of the façade and is interspersed with staple Chinese propaganda images of Uyghurs singing and dancing. One of the central images is a large reproduction of a very familiar Xinjiang propaganda poster which depicts a Uyghur peasant embracing Mao Zedong is a display of gratitude for the Communist liberation of Xinjiang²⁸ (See Figure 10 in the Addendum).

By 2008, the outdoor trading activity in front of this latter bazaar had been shut down. Many of the stalls within the building are vacant, with fittings falling off the walls and a thick layer of dust covering the various premises. The bottom floors are now occupied by Uyghur wholesale jade vendors and Chinese jade carvers. While a sign outside of the entrance boasts that the bazaar has been voted one of Urumqi's top tourist destinations, I hardly ever saw anyone who appeared to be tourists there. On several occasions, when mentioning the bazaar to Uyghurs, the topic was met either with dismissive gestures or embarrassed laughter.

This was made evident through the fact that the International Grand Bazaar had a significant capacity to be embraced by the locals while the Minzu Jie bazaar did not. In an analysis of how a copy of Hans Holbein's famous 1533 oil painting *The Ambassadors* was more popular with the general public than the original, Bruno Latour and Adam Lowe have argued that, rather than pose the question "Is it an original or merely a copy?" we should ask, rather : "Is it well or badly reproduced?" (2011: 4). While the buildings under discussion are not "copies" as such, but rather modern reconstructions of the Turkic Bazaar, the question of whether these spaces successfully "take" or not is pertinent. Certainly, around the International Grand Bazaar we witness much of the bazaar-oriented bargaining skill and jousting which Jay Dautcher argues is crucial to Uyghur identity, particularly for men (2008: 221). However, depending on whether these structures could ignite a bazaar like atmosphere - as witnessed in the traditional oases

bazaars of Kashgar and Hotan, or even the previously existing bazaars in Erdaoqiao and Shanxi hang - appears to be a necessary but not sufficient condition for success. This is because these structures were never built solely to function as everyday bazaars. Rather, this function has been coupled with the loftier goal of such bazaars serving as exemplary symbolic forms of Uyghur culture²⁹.

3.3 BEYOND THE HAN-MINORITY DICHOTOMY: THE ROLE OF ARCHITECTURAL MODERNIZATION

Despite the case of the Rabiya Kdaer building, it is significant to note that Han constructed Islamic-styled architecture had to contend with other forms of Uyghur urbanism. Thus, it was not the case that these new Han developments necessarily repressed all other forms of local cultural expression. Until relatively recently, state modernizing projects tended to manifest themselves in the development of government buildings and new Han residences. Thus, many of the older neighbourhoods in the Muslim quarter of Urumqi, such as Shanxi Hang and Xi Haba have maintained a significant degree of pre-revolutionary style Turkic neighbourhoods. These areas, known across Central Asia as Malhalla, comprise of vernacular-style oasis dwellings often accompanied by local neighbourhood mosques³⁰. The situation is changing, however. These neighbourhoods, which often lack running water and electricity, are increasingly giving way to more modern apartment buildings. Gaubatz notes how, even in the 1980s, Urumqi's Malhalla were difficult to see from the surrounding main boulevards, as high rise buildings along the main arteries sought to conceal the older structures behind (Gaubatz 1996: 258). There is the implication that this phenomenon attempts to mask what is perceived by authorities to be "backward", "uncivilized" urban spaces. By 2008, many of the old Uyghur houses in these neighbourhoods were slated for demolition, and, following the Urumqi Riots of 2009, the demolition process has sped up dramatically.

The Han-funded architecture also had to contend another form of Uyghur urbanism funded by a Uyghur elite who had also benefited from China's liberalization policies. As Erkin notes, the Uyghur neighbourhoods in the southern quarter of the city have become "the most desirable residential area for upper-class and upper-middle-class Uyghurs in intellectual circles, the entertainment industry and the government" (2009: 424). These elites have constructed several landmark buildings in the city, often associated with their own persons. These include the Tamarisk Hotel, owned by the famous entrepreneur Ablet Hajim and the overtly Romanesque, Diplomat Hotel (Uyghur: *Soda Sariyi*), opposite Urumqi's largest mosque, called Yang Hang. The Diplomat was funded by the celebrity tight-rope walker/acrobat from Yengisar, Adel Hoshur (See Figure 11 in the Addendum). Xinjiang's largest Uyghur grocery chain Arman, run by Redeli Abdula, has many branches in this part of town, part of a larger network of 58 stores across Xinjiang (Ma 2006: 164) Other landmark Islamic high-rises include the Abalizi Trade Building (Uyghur: Abalizi Shangmao Daxia) and the Tian Shan Hotel.

The kinds of grandeur solicited by such architecture allude to a number of regions well outside the orbit of the Tarim. A dominant trend within this new architecture is the use of Russian neo-classical design, evident in the use of faux-marble fluted columns, onion domes and chandeliered interiors. While the Soviet style was dominant within Socialist Urumqi prior to the Chinese-Soviet split, the more recent incarnation appears to draw predominantly on the Ili Regions use of this style, which has in turn drawn upon Russian influences due to their close proximity to the Soviet Union. Another popular style which is used, particularly in upper end restaurants, is ornate Central Asian style brickwork found in regions of Uzbekistan and ornate metal-work surrounding shop entrances; these business are often fronted with Fig Trees

(Uyghur: *Enjur*). These styles overlay and merge with a plethora of goods coming from the CAR, Russia, Pakistan and Turkey along with more “everyday” Uyghur pushcarts (Uyghur: *Seyyare*) selling dried fruits (*qaq*), nuts (*quak*) and cold noodles (*Soghuq ash*).

Thus, we can see here that while there were certainly many negative factors evident in the development of the neighbourhood, they were by no means exclusive. A recent body of scholarship on the phenomenon of Han Chinese appropriation of non-Han cultural forms highlights a complex social interaction which goes against the grain of a simple “minority-Han” dichotomy. Louisa Schein (2000) argues that minority cultural representations are inextricably bound up with a process of self-fashioning and minority self-marketing³¹. Uradyn Bulag states of Mongol identity in China and beyond that:

“The pluralization of actors in ethnopolitics suggests more complexities and unpredictabilities and, above all, more possibilities than a binary opposition allows. Conceptualized in this way, the life world of the Mongols is constantly shifting” (2010: 12).

Similarly, the theme of cultural hybridity regarding modern Uyghur identity is well documented in the literature. A recent volume, entitled *Situating the Uyghurs Between China and Central Asia* (2007)³², examines various forms of cross-cultural influence on the Uyghurs, coming from both Central Asia and China. In this volume, we see evidence arguing this case in terms of, amongst other things, music, food, naming practices³³. Elsewhere, Sean Roberts (2004: 216) has written on how the traditional role of the Uyghur as an economic “middle man” (*yangpungchi*) in trade circuits spanning between China and Central Asia is another manifestation of the figure of the hybrid. From this point of view, we see how the role of Chinese development, whether it is misguided or not, does not simply impose itself upon a passive, local community. Rather, local communities, in this case, a rapidly urbanizing one, is itself undergoing a number of transformations and experimenting with numerous and novel forms of identity and organization of social life.

CONCLUSION

The oasis cities of Xinjiang are, at present, undergoing radical spatial transformation as a result of government-driven development. Turkic oasis cities, some of them thousands of years old, are being demolished at an incredible (and from a cultural/conservationist’s perspective: alarming) rate, the apex of which is Kashgar, which has recently been earmarked as a special economic zone. Since 2009, vast swathes of the old Turkic city have been demolished and reconstructed with modern materials³⁴. New railway lines connecting the oasis regions of Ili and Hotan suggest a future increase in such a process. Within this context, compounded by issues of Uyghur resentment toward government development, it is crucial that the Chinese state develop policies which approach the topic of spatial transformation with careful consideration.

Based on the evidence presented on Urumqi, the most obvious suggestion would be to include greater Uyghur participation in both the construction and use of such developments. As the International Grand Bazaar shows, attention to detail and the learning of non-Han style methods of ornamentation already go some way toward ingratiating such projects into the community. Bringing more Uyghur architects, planners and designers on board will also have the knock-on effect of diluting the oft-held perception that primarily Han Chinese companies and individuals benefit from such projects.

Another important element in achieving success is a reeling in of both the state and private security apparatus. Because the bazaar did not accommodate for lower income traders, it

effectively outlawed a significant portion of the local community, thus leading to a situation in which a rowdy, informal bazaar developed in parallel to the planned one. Greater care to include these poorer traders would lessen the need for both the heavy presence of state and non-state security. More severe forms of repression, such as during periods of state ritual (the Olympics, for instance) or the treatment of the state toward Turkic mosques, are part of a much larger political problem regarding government trust toward the Uyghur community and the general surveillance of them as an ethnic group. Within the present context, it should be noted that such coercive measures assume a particularly insulting dimension as they are being carried out within a space which is celebrating both Uyghur culture and Islam. This tension is reminiscent of Lefebvre's articulation of spaces in which "The element of repression" and the "element of exaltation" can "scarcely be disentangled" (2005: 220).

Outside one of the postmodern style Islamic bazaars at Erdaoqiao today is a statue of a bridge, upon which sit a three figures, resembling both Han and Uyghur features (See Figure 12 in the Addendum). The bridge, based on an early 20th Century bridge in the neighbourhood, was, as a plaque beneath the statue states, the site of a multi-cultural bazaar where many of China's ethnic groups would mingle. This is not merely propaganda; while Urumqi has always been a predominantly Han Chinese city³⁵, its function as the economic and political centre of Xinjiang also made it the site of various bureaucratic and trade related "pilgrimages" (Anderson 2010: 14) in which Russians, Central Asians and Han Chinese from all over the empire were drawn to Urumqi for commerce. Thus, we can see how, even amongst the authorities, there exists a desire to promote historically cosmopolitan aspects of the city. The least productive way in which such an image is promoted in the contemporary city is when an idealized representation of state narratives of ethnic harmony is enforced at the expense of how such actual relations occur on the ground. A more fruitful way of fostering such cosmopolitanism³⁶ can be located in those instances discussed above in which difference and hybridity are allowed to flourish, ranging from "bottom-up" interaction between Han and Uyghur traders to the development of novel forms of Uyghur urbanism.

END NOTES

¹ China had variously controlled regions of Xinjiang intermittently since their incursions into the area during wars with the nomadic Xiong Nu group during the Han (206 BCE – 220 CE) (Chang 2007: 221). There was also a presence in the Tang Dynasty (618–907); the Mongol Yuan dynasty (1271-1368), which also exerted control over the region (Allsen 1983), is claimed by Chinese historians today to be a Chinese dynasty, hence making it part of China during this period. According to contemporary official Chinese histories, Xinjiang has been an inalienable territory of China's since the Han Dynasty (White Paper 2003).

² The Uyghur ethnic group are the only ethnic groups with a tradition of establishing large urban centres in the region. With a population of over 8 million, they are the overwhelming majority ethnic group. Other groups include Kazakhs, Tajiks and Uzbeks, amongst others.

³ The Tungan, now referred to as the Hui, are Muslims descended from Han Chinese and Muslim traders. They consider themselves very different from the Uyghurs of Xinjiang, speaking Chinese, worshipping in separate mosques (Hui often have Confucian style mosques) and eating in separate restaurants (Gladney 1996).

⁴ In addition to several violent uprisings in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one of which resulted in driving the Qing out of Xinjiang for over a decade (Kim 2004), several independent republics were declared in the first half of the 20th Century. These included the Turkish Islamic Republic of East Turkestan (TIRET) in 1933 and the East Turkestan Republic (ETR) from 1944-1949.

⁵ Even in 1948, Urumqi, for instance, was still a “mud coloured town” (Barnett 1997: 352) possessing “virtually no industrialization” (Barnett 1963: 239) and with only a handful of factories.

⁶ The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (Chinese: Xinjaing *Shengchan Jianshe Bingtuan* or simply is a semi-militarized organization set up to promote frontier development (primarily through farming) and increase borderland security. While the organization has been disbanded elsewhere in China, it is still predominant within Xinjiang where, in 1992, there were 1.12 million workers in Xinjiang; however, that number had decreased by nearly 13 percent by year 2000 (Wiemer, 2004: 179).

⁷ The term is sometimes referred to as “brotherly nationality” (Chinese: *xiongdì mínzú*) or “minority brotherly nationality” (Chinese: *shaoshu xiongdì mínzú*).

⁸ I know of one Shanghinese couple, for instance, who informed me how in the 1970s they voluntarily put their names down to go to Xinjiang. I was informed that, at that time, they were excited and very willing to go there – it was seen not only as a form of adventure but also an expression of patriotic duty regarding the development of the country. That is not to say that those who went necessarily wanted to stay forever. Millward notes how large numbers of Shanghainese sent to Aksu, vocally petitioned the government to be allowed to return to Shanghai (2007: 280). For a discussions on the complexity of Han migration to other frontier regions, see Lattimore's work on settlers in Manchuria (1962: 313-321).

⁹ A 1992 programme to “Open up the Northwest” was followed by the much larger “Great Western Development Campaign” (Chinese: *Xibu Da Kaifa*) which began in 2000. One overt aim of this latter project was to raise the living standards of people in the western regions at

large, so as to bring them up to par with the booming eastern provinces (Goodman 2003). Xinjiang continued to receive large government subsidies and during the 1990s where state companies remained the prime dealers in much cross-border trade (Millward 2007). Under the “Develop the West” programme, a number of ongoing infrastructure projects targeting water conservancy, communications, infrastructure and various other forms of industry were rolled out (White Paper 2009). More specifically, programmes targeted Uyghur cultural preservation as well the building of schools, the earthquake-proofing of houses and the organization of exchange programmes within local Uyghur communities (Liu 2010: 27).

¹⁰ The idea of the thriving Xinjiang entrepreneur is embodied in the figure of Song Guangxin. Song, a former soldier-cum-property-tycoon, runs Guanghui enterprises. Sometimes referred to as the “Bill Gates of Urumqi”, Song controlled sixty percent of Urumqi’s real-estate market by the 2000s. (Millward 2007: 363).

¹¹ These include large oil and coal deposits and natural gas.

¹² Following Party General Secretary Hu Yaobang’s 1980 trip to Tibet, in which he realized the severe damage done to Tibetan culture during the Cultural Revolution, a series of radical policy shifts were implemented promoting ethnic revival. This new approach also influenced regions such as Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang, where a regeneration in traditional architectural forms accompanied parallel trends in literature and the visual arts.

¹³ The government office building on the north-end of the People’s Square, built in 1982, had a rotating dome upon the centre of its roof and mini minarets to either side; there was also the Xinjiang Hall of the People’s Congress (Chinese: *Xinjiang Renmin Hui*), again, flanked with faux minarets and a series of Central Asian styled “jawabs”, or arches. The China Construction Bank high-rise (Chinese: *Zhongguo Jianshe Yinhang*), overlooking Hetian Lu, comprised of an ornate Islamic motif enframing several stories of blue glass.

¹⁴ This can be seen, for instance, in the *Dong Ya Yinhang* (East Asia Bank) building with its Aladdinesque onion domes towering over the west side of People’s Square.

¹⁵ This mosque had been torn down several times. In the 1950s, it was demolished in order to widen Liberation Road; it was not re-built again until 1992. It was then torn down again and rebuilt as part of the International Grand Bazaar complex in 2003.

¹⁶ The rents of the lots in the buildings varied from 600 RMB to 2000 RMB per month, depending on where the store was located; one could find Kazakh, Hui, Han, Uyghurs, Manchu and so forth all selling their wares indoors. Trading in doors allowed a much more comfortable form of business practice – particularly in the winter where temperatures dropped to thirty below zero (before the construction of the bazaar, many traders would stop business for the coldest winter months).

¹⁷ I was once told by a Uyghur man that: “every brick in Urumqi, is a Shandong brick”, followed by: “why do they have to bring in building materials from places like Shandong, there is plenty of good quality clay right here!”

¹⁸ I also heard from Han Chinese hotel owners who were second generation Kashgar dwellers, that the Karakul Lake area, home to Kyrgyz and Tajiks, had been earmarked for development by a Beijing company which promised to re-invest profits into the area. However, I was told that no such profits were forthcoming. While on a visit to the Turpan region, where I was visiting an ancient Uyghur canal system known as the Karez (and which is now a tourist attraction in the region), I witnessed a Uyghur man trying to enter the site but who was stopped by

security guards. The man refused to pay the entrance fee to enter the site and shouted at the security guards (who were Uyghur themselves) “Why should I have to pay to see what is mine? This is a Uyghur place and I am a Uyghur!” The guards then forcibly removed him.

¹⁹ Zang (2011) argues that within the state sector within Urumqi, wages are relatively equal between Han and Uyghur, while in the private sector, Han earn significantly more than Uyghurs (Zang 2011). A study by Howell and Fan argues that Uyghurs are often more economically competitive than recent, non-state sponsored, Han migrants (2011).

²⁰ Taking advantage of Deng Xiaoping’s economic reforms of the late 1970s and seizing on the Central Asian trade bonanza which flourished with the collapse of the Soviet Union, Rebiya Kadeer quickly became one of the five richest people in China. Her economic fortunes were accompanied by a meteoric rise in the realm of Chinese politics. Besides being the owner of the mighty Akida Industry and Trade Corporation, she was appointed a delegate to the eight session of the “Chinese People’s Consultative Conference” and was a United Nations representative for the Fourth World’s Woman’s Conference in Beijing. She had also held the position of vice chairwoman of the Xinjiang Autonomous Region Federation of Industry and Commerce, and vice chairwoman of the Xinjiang Association of Women Entrepreneurs.

²¹ For a more detailed discussion of “neo-liberal” and “postmodern” space, see Pemberton (1994); Auge (2005); Hertzfeld (2006).

²² Wang Xudong has argued that Chinese postmodernism is characterized “not by the dissolution of modernist ideologies but by their intensification and standardization” (2008: 2).

²³ The four newly declared Turkic states were Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Tajikistan has a strong Iranian influence.

²⁴ For instance, in 1989, the renowned Uyghur historian, Turghan Almas, published “The Uyghurs” (Uyghurlar). Drawing on 1970s archaeological finds of freeze-dried mummies in the region, which have been carbon-dated from between 2000 and 6000 years, Almas argued that the Xinjiang region was the original homeland of the Uyghur (Ruddleson and Jankowiak, 2004: 315). In April 1991, the *Xinjiang Daily* carried a seven-part, 70-000 character essay titled ‘A List of One Hundred Historical Errors in the Three Books including *Uyghurs*’ (Bovington, 2004: 367). The book was subsequently banned and since then, there remains highly minimal scope for alternative histories of the region.

²⁵ Such views were even presented at mosques themselves. For instance, Kashgar’s main mosque, the Id Kah, for instance, states at the entrance that “that all ethnic groups warmly welcome Part’s [sic – (Party’s)] religious policy”.

²⁶ Within the rest of the city, Han Chinese generally had a negative perception of this neighbourhood. Once while on a train chatting with a carriage inspector – a Han Chinese woman in her forties who had lived in Urumqi all her life – the subject of where I lived came up. When I told her that I lived in Erdaoqiao, she exclaimed to me “Why are you living in a place like that? It’s chaos! There are too many Uyghurs there!” (Chinese: *weishenme ni zhu zai na bian? Name luan! Weizhu neme duo!*). On another occasion, I told a Han that I lived in the southern region of the city. She responded that she would never go there because that is a Uyghur area.

²⁷ For instance, the section of the road where carpets are sold is referred to as *gilemchi* and where pots are sold, *qazanchi*.

²⁸ A widely known story during this period tells of Kurban Tulum, a Uyghur electrician from Yutian who, in 1958, was so thrilled at the development that Mao had brought to Xinjiang that he rode some 1500km on his donkey to Urumqi to present gifts of grapes and fruit as a symbol of his appreciation. Seizing the moment, officials then flew Kurban to Beijing where he was able to meet Mao. A famous photograph of them meeting was widely disseminated. Films from that time depict Xinjiang minorities overthrowing cruel landlords with the help of PLA soldiers who had recently themselves overthrown the shackles of feudal life.

²⁹ In certain respects, they echo the phenomenon of Chinese-built concrete yurts in Inner Mongolia, which, while appearing as vernacular, everyday entities, have been transformed to the status of myth and symbolism, or the rejection thereof (Humphrey and Evans: 2002: 192).

³⁰ Malhalla can refer to both the residential area encompassing a large-scale mosque (Uyghur: *ažna maschit* or *jamaa mashcit*) for Friday prayers as well as much smaller mosques catering to everyday prayer. One's Malhalla was defined by what mosque one attended, although there are no formal boundary lines designating this, merely an understanding that particular households would be associated with a particular mosque (Waite 2006). Thus the mosque served as the basic level of neighbourhood affiliation. In these Malhalla, one could find many dwellings built in the style of those of Altishahar and the Ili region: houses made of unbaked mud bricks (Uyghur: *pishik kish*) and wooden roof rafters embodying an often gardened courtyard (Uyghur: *boyla*) which formed the "focal point" of the house (Waite 2006). This combination of mosques which were premised on other mosques within various oases, coupled with regional architecture in the malhalla, give an indication of how various oasis styles and forms carried over into a migrants city such as Urumqi.

³¹ Similar themes of hybridity and appropriation can be found amongst Tibetans (Mackley 2007) and minorities in Guizhou (Oakes 1998). Uradayn Bulag's has argued, in his analysis of propagandistic state representations of Mongols depicted in the tale of the "Little Heroic Sisters" (2002: 202), how Mongols function at once as "resisters" and "accomplices" of their own representations.

³² Edited by Bellér Han, Cesaro, Harris and Finley Smith.

³³ For instance, Rachael Harris argues how an important Uyghur musical form known as the Muqams consist of patchwork of various musical repertoires stretching across Central Asia and drawing on Arabic terminologies (2007: 85); M. Christina Cesaro argues how certain forms of north Chinese cuisine, such as *ganpan* (dry rice) and *dapengji* (large-plate chicken) have recently been absorbed into Uyghur culinary practices (Ibid. 197). Āsād Sulayman examines how Uyghur names and surnames draw on a plethora of influences, including Arabic, Persian, Russian and Chinese derivatives (Ibid. 112).

³⁴ The first series of changes were introduced in 2003, when the government knocked down houses and the marketplace outside the famed Idkha mosque, replacing them with a more modern-style Chinese square flanked with shopping markets drawing on Central Asian style brick work, arches and spires. These changes were modest in comparison to the 2009 decision by the government to embark on what it termed a "comprehensive restoration of dilapidated homes" (Xinhua, 08.03. 2010). This has entailed the demolition of vast swathes of the old city: 28 blocks demolished and 220,000 residents either moved to modern apartments further out of the city, or new houses which will replace the older ones. In total, the government plans to renovate or reconstruct more than 5 million square meters of old homes and resettle some 45,000 households.

³⁵ As a Qing city, established in 1765, Urumqi also had a significant Manchu and Mongol population.

³⁶ For discussions on the positive aspects of cosmopolitanism and the authentic acceptance of difference, see Appiah 2007; Derrida 2001.

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ADDENDUM



Figure 1. Minorities Bazaar in Shanxi Hang

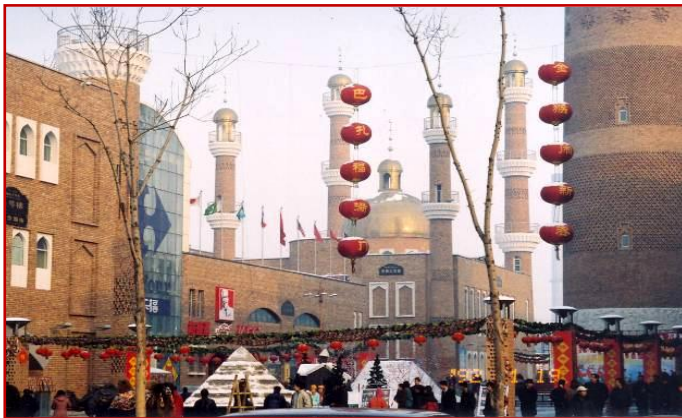


Figure 2. The International Grand



Figure 3. Souvenir ticket from viewpoint at the top of the Bazaar's central tower

Figure 4. Private security guards, International Grand Bazaar



Figure 5. Illegal mobile phone market prior to Olympic security measures



Figure 6. The same market space following clean up, replaced with government vehicle supporting posters of the city. This one reads: “build a harmonious society, beautify the streets environment.” (Chinese: *guojian beshi shihui meihua shirong huangjing*)





Figure 7. Rebiya Kadeer Building



Figure 8. Mosque, International Grand Bazaar



Figure 9. Looking south over Urumqi in 2008, the city's new tallest building, the Zhongtian Guangchang in the foreground

Figure 10. Koerban meeting Mao displayed at the entrance to the Minzu Jie Bazaar



Figure 11. The Diplomat Hotel



Figure 12. A Han tourist poses at a copy of the old Erdaoqiao bridge



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