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Awakened Land: Uyghur Ideas of Nation and Nationalism, 1880 – 1949

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List of Acronyms

AH	<i>Anno Hijra</i> , year of <i>hijra</i>
AR	<i>Anno Respublica</i> , year of Chinese Republic
AUP	<i>Abdukhalig Uyghur - Poems</i>
CC Clique	Center Club Clique, a pressure group within the KMT
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CUP	Committee for Unity and Progress (Young Turks), late Ottoman Empire and early Turkish Republic
ETIA	East Turkestan Independence Association, 1933-1934
ETIR	East Turkestan Republic, 1933-1934
ETR	East Turkestan Republic, 1944-1949
ETRYO	East Turkestan Revolutionary Youth Organization, 1944-1949
F	<i>Freedom</i> , provincial newspaper, 1947-1949
I	<i>Independence</i> , newspaper of the ETIR, 1933-1934
INA	Ili National Army, military of the ETR
KMT	Nationalist Party, the Kuomintang
LET	<i>Life of East Turkestan</i> and <i>Free Turkestan</i> , newspapers of the ETIR, 1933-1934
MEP	<i>Memtili Ependi - Poems</i>
MTAC	Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission
NL	<i>New Life</i> , newspaper 1934-1937
PFK	<i>Prints from Kashgar</i>
PRC	People's Republic of China
RET	<i>Revolutionary East Turkestan</i> , newspaper of the ETR, 1947-1949
ROC	Republic of China
RS	Religious Supervision, organ of the ETR
TCA	Turkestanian Compatriot Association,
UEA	Uyghur Enlightenment Association, from 1934
USPDX	Union for Support of Peace and Democracy in Xinjiang, 1948-1949

VCT	<i>Voice of Chinese Turkestan</i> , newspaper of central KMT government, from 1934
XTPNLC	Xinjiang Turkic People's National Liberation Committee, 1943-1944

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Introduction

'Knowledge is strength.'

Uyghur proverb

In past twenty years, numerous trends emerged in some parts of our world that could be acting towards disappearance of political borders and boundaries between nations. Indeed, the fall of the Iron Curtain in Central and Eastern Europe, economic and political integration of Western Europe in the form of the European Union, end of the apartheid in South Africa, globalization, multiculturalism, boom of the internet and social networks and other phenomena often do eliminate multiple barriers among both peoples and states, and act toward *trans-nationalization* of contemporary society. In many contexts, the world really seemed to find itself at the *end of history* as posited by Francis Fukuyama (Fukuyama 1992).

On the other hand, instead for the national identities to lose their appeal and for the world to become *post-national*, often the opposite is happening: ethnic and national identities persist. Sometimes, these identities are reactive to trans-nationalization trends and are even gaining intensity or experiencing revival, as exemplified by the disintegration of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union into nation-states, skeptical attitudes of Czech public towards European integration or resurgence of some minority cultural and economic identities in southern and southwestern China. Revival of ethnicities results also in increased popular interest in the phenomenon of ethnicity, as embodied by the boom of tourism into 'ethnic' or 'tribal' areas, popularity of 'ethnic' cuisine, of 'ethnic' art or of 'world' music. Occasionally, politicized nationality issues even result in nationalist tensions or armed conflicts, such as in the cases of Northern Ireland, Basque Country or Corsican ethnic unrest, violent disintegration of Yugoslavia or recent armed ethnic conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh between Armenians and Azeris, in Rwanda between the Hutu and the Tutsi or in Sri Lanka between the Tamils and the state. Obviously, ethnic identity and nationalism are phenomena which continue to powerfully shape our lives in an extent which does not seem to be decreasing.

It has been pointed out that both nation and nationalism are relatively shallow intellectual concepts (Anderson 5) that can hardly function as a single ideology unmixed with other political theories (Denitch 31, 142). Nevertheless, theoreticians of ethnicity and nationalism continue to seek answers to several recurring questions, such as 'What is a nation?', 'At which moment does it form?', 'For what reasons does it emerge?', 'What are the stages of this process?' or 'What are the stimuli and obstacles to its birth?' These queries have engaged minds of several generations of scholars from multiple disciplines since the very beginning of modernity. In fact, it can be said that modernity as such is to a large degree defined by answers to these questions. But even at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the discourse of nation and nationalism is not losing its complexity and a rich debate rages on about even the most basic terms and approaches. This is of course reflected in the sizeable amount of studies that have been until now written about nation and nationalism.

This dissertation strives to contribute to discussion of nation and nationalism by submitting a case study of emergence of modern national consciousness and nationalist ideology on the example of Uyghurs, a Turkic Muslim nation today numbering approximately ten million and inhabiting the vast Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in

northwestern People's Republic of China (PRC). In particular, the research examines the perceptions of community and its interests as expressed by Uyghur intellectuals and activists in the period 1884-1949, the context in which these perceptions came into being and what were the factors that contributed to their emergence. The research also reconstructs the process, in which the concept of communal identity evolved into early modern Uyghur national consciousness and the course of politicization of this consciousness into national and nationalist movement. In short, this dissertation seeks to make a contribution to study of Uyghur intellectual history by attempting to relate the process of Uyghur national awakening as perceived and expressed by Uyghur enlighteners in early modern era between founding of the Xinjiang province in 1884 and the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949.

Apart from contributing to general debate about emergence of modern nations, the dissertation also adds to research of Xinjiang. Due to its position along ancient set of trade routes commonly known as the Silk Road, Xinjiang is still romanticized by many as a mysterious, wild and remote periphery of both China and Turko-Islamic world. This image, which underlines the remoteness and marginality of Xinjiang, is augmented by the seeming decline of the once thriving Silk Road during Middle Ages after the East-West trade routes shifted to the seas of South Asia. In this fashion, Xinjiang continues to be orientalized as a land with glorious past but dismal and little known present. Even on the eve of modernity one hundred years ago, Xinjiang indeed was considered one of the most remote and backward places of Eurasia. Such perception is indeed to a certain degree confirmed by the insufficient amount of research in contemporary Xinjiang history, politics and culture. Although the number of research volumes and articles on Xinjiang and Uyghurs has grown over recent years, numerous events and phenomena of both past and present still are a true *terra incognita* within the academic realm. Intellectual history and history of ideas of modern Uyghurs in early modern era 1884-1949 belongs to one of the least clarified phenomena in the history of Xinjiang. This dissertation hopes to contribute to the currently insufficiently researched and understood phenomenon of emergence of modern Uyghur national identity.

Besides the romantic cloud of mystery and timelessness, Xinjiang is equally notorious as a place ripped by ethnic conflict where the strained relations between autochthonous Uyghurs and Chinese state result in bloody clashes and uprisings. Indeed, since the founding of the PRC in 1949, Uyghur discontent with party-state policies vis-à-vis their motherland has posed a formidable challenge to the efforts of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) strategists at winning Uyghur loyalty and integrating them into the 'nation of China' (中华民族 *Zhōnghuá mínzú*). As a result, Xinjiang regional ethnic affairs have a strong influence on stability of the whole country. The confrontation of Uyghurs with the state has been gaining intensity since late 1980s. So far the most tragic events occurred in the regional capital Urumchi in July 2009, when clashes of Uyghurs with security forces, as well ordinary Hans, brought about several hundred deaths of ordinary citizens. Primarily, this dreadful incident repeatedly underscored the serious dysfunction in the PRC's ethnic policy towards, but not only, Uyghurs. At the same time, it is also clear that the roots of present ethno-political tension in Xinjiang must be sought in the past. Contemporary situation in Xinjiang is indeed a continuation of Uyghurs' negotiation of their status within the Chinese state which has been lasting since the pre-modern incorporation of their land into the empire of China. For this reason, formation of Uyghur national identity in 1884-1949 is one the most crucial phenomena directly influencing today's Xinjiang ethnic affairs and social stability of the world's most populous state.

Political situation and ethnic affairs in Xinjiang are an integral component of social context of not only the People's Republic, but also of Central Asia. In both past and present,

Uyghurs have been an inseparable part of Islamic cultural sphere with close cultural, political and economic ties to their Turkic relatives in western part of Central Asia and present-day Turkey, as well as their fellow Muslim believers in Asia and Africa. Throughout the twentieth century, developments in Russia/Soviet-administered western Turkestan and Chinese-administered eastern Turkestan have born a number of traits that are shared by the two regions, which have not been severed even by the two decades of Sino-Soviet split in 1960s and 1970s. Many of these bonds naturally continue to exist after the five Soviet Central Asian republics attained their independence in 1991. As illustrated by the tragic anti-Uzbek pogroms in Kyrgyzstan in 2010, Central Asian ethnic issues are far from solved. Obviously, political system in the five Central Asian republics, interaction of their authorities with ethnic and religious sentiment of their citizens and emergence of modern Central Asian Turkic national identities are some of the many intriguing issues relevant for the region. In this context, birth of modern Uyghur national consciousness in Xinjiang is necessary for comprehending modern reality of Central Asia and ethnicity of Turkic nations in general.

Due to the fact that Uyghurs and Xinjiang have been since distant past closely integrated with Central Asia, China has also accordingly been aware of the area's enormous geopolitical importance in both regional and global politics. Since ancient times, it was along the fabled Silk Road through where goods and ideologies streamed in all four cardinal directions, making today Xinjiang's territory a gate to Central Asia and the West for China, and to China for the West. This significance has carried over to modern era. Although Owen Lattimore, one of the doyens of Xinjiang studies, was not the first to point to re-emerging geopolitical significance in modern times, it was him who aptly expressed this trend in the first sentence of his excellent study of Xinjiang, *Pivot of Asia: 'A NEW CENTER of gravity is forming in the world.'* (Lattimore 1950: 3) Since the onset of the twentieth century, Xinjiang has been the focus of comprehensively designed policy of the Chinese empire aiming to retain and consolidate control over this strategically priceless region. During the World War II., Xinjiang became one of the vitally important strategic rears of China (Norins 1944). After founding of the PRC, Xinjiang turned into a hotbed of open military conflict with India in 1962 and with the USSR in 1969. It also played major role in proxy or unconventional conflicts, such as when China was involved in the Afghan war by training Uyghur *mujaheddin* in Xinjiang and dispatching them onto the Afghanistan battlefield in 1980s, or during concurrent arrival of radical Islamist ideology from Pakistan into Xinjiang. Recent tensions in the Kashmir region in September 2010 suggest that even today Xinjiang does not lose its potential of turning into a stage of armed conflict between nuclear superpowers.

Another aspect of Xinjiang's central position in Chinese geopolitics is related to energy security. The region is currently China's top domestic supplier of oil and a significant supplier of other raw materials, such as coal, natural gas, non-ferrous metals, uranium, gold and other precious commodities. At the same time, the region is a vital point of transit through which enormous oil reserves are brought into the PRC, currently from Central Asia through Kazakhstan and in future also from Africa and Middle East through the Gwadar port in Pakistan. All these characteristics make Xinjiang one of the most important geopolitical hubs of Asia over which the PRC administration can under no circumstances afford to lose or loosen its control. The problematic interaction of Uyghur ethnic identity with central government could have disastrous implications for China, and potentially also for the whole East Asian region and the entire world. An intense scrutiny of Xinjiang ethnic issues is therefore one of undisputed global security priorities.

Insufficiency of Research in Early Modern Uyghur National Consciousness

The insufficiency of research in emergence of modern Uyghur national consciousness and nationalism in early modern era (1884-1949) is related to somewhat ‘natural’ scarcity of primary historical sources, caused mainly by the fact that there were a relatively low number of newspapers, magazines, propaganda leaflets and other printed matter produced in Xinjiang before 1949. However, another agent behind the paucity of available sources is tied to current political agenda of the Chinese Communist Party. One of the basic premises of Chinese Communist nationality theory and practice is the assertion that all ‘minority nationalities’ (少数民族 *shǎoshù mínzú*) of today’s PRC have since antiquity strived to form an ‘ethnic unity’ (民族团结 *mínzú tuánjié*) with the culturally, materially and politically superior Hans in order to form the ‘great family of Chinese nationalities’ (中华民族大家庭 *Zhōnghuá mínzú dà jiātíng*), eventually also a supra-ethnic ‘nation of China’ (中华民族 *Zhōnghuá mínzú*; Zhao 2004; Bovington 2004). In this context, a probe into subjects such as emergence of national awareness and nationalist ideology is not permitted by the state in the case of many ethnic groups of China. This is even more the case for the Uyghurs, who are virtually the *enfant terrible* Turkic Muslim ethnic group that has historically more than loose cultural and political ties with China proper-based powers and currently is more than skeptical towards People’s Republic of China’s administration. Early modern Uyghur demands for increased political autonomy and proclamation of an independent East Turkestan Republic (*Sherqiy Türkistan Jumhuriyiti*) two times during early modern times naturally constitute issues, which directly challenge Chinese communist historical and ethnopolitical ideology.

The very phenomenon of rise of early modern Uyghur national consciousness and nationalist thinking therefore refutes CCP’s assertions of harmonious unity of all nationalities of China and thus also challenges the overall legitimacy of the CCP rule. Communist Chinese party-state hopes for this uncomfortable feature of Uyghur intellectual and political history to utterly disappear. For this reason, an enormous amount of Uyghur pre-1949 printed materials have been deliberately destroyed during violent Communist campaigns such as against so-called ‘local nationalism’ (地方民族主义 *dìfāng mínzú zhǔyì*) or ‘Four Olds’ (四旧 *Sìjiù*), which from 1950s through 1970s targeted non-Han and non-proletarian aspects of minority cultures. Many Uyghurs voluntarily destroyed valuable cultural artifacts, including pre-1949 manuscripts and newspapers, in order to avoid being harassed or killed over their possession. Also for this reason, the existing PRC research on early modern Xinjiang history is conceived from the perspective which supports government’s ethnopolitical stance. Even in early twenty-first century, independent scholarship in early modern Uyghur intellectual history is curtailed by covert, yet firm, state barriers. The scarce Uyghur writings, which survived until today and are kept in Xinjiang archives, are inaccessible to scholars unaffiliated with Communist authorities. Mere possession of any material related to pre-1949 Uyghur nationalism, let alone to one of the East Turkestan Republics, is punishable by several years of prison on the charges of separatism and subversion of state. Research and publishing about history of national awakening is extremely difficult, if not outright impossible, for today’s Uyghur historians and intellectuals. Notorious cases of persecution of Uyghur historians on the grounds of their academic arguments include the ban on works and almost ten-year house arrest of Turghun Almas in 1990s, or the eleven-year sentence for Tokhti Tunyaz in 2000. For Uyghurs in today’s Xinjiang, the freedom of academic expression is as non-existent as the freedom of civic religious and political expression.

Consequently, due to the scarcity of accessible sources, modern Uyghur nation-formation process is also more susceptible to zealous manipulation by both Han chauvinists and Uyghur nationalists. The two groups strive to relate this phenomenon in ways that support their respective political agenda. Along these lines, Communist propaganda and state affiliated scholarship portray the first East Turkestan Republic (1933-1934) as a ‘bogus’ state proclaimed by a handful of pan-Turkic ‘splittists’ (e.g. Chen and Chen 1999), whereas Uyghur nationalists tend to view it as a full-fledged country. Analogously, the second East Turkestan Republic (or so-called Three Districts’ Revolution; 三区革命 *Sānqū gé mìng*; *Üch wilayet inqilabi*; 1944-1949) is claimed by Chinese propaganda to be a component part of Communist revolution of the nation of China (e.g. Xu 1998), whereas Uyghur protagonists see it as an acceleration of national liberation struggle. These conflicting interpretations of the emergence of modern Uyghur national consciousness and nationalism thus show how today’s politicized interpretation of past events is detrimental to independent research and should have no place in academic arenas.

Review of Previous Scholarship and Its Main Arguments

Until now, a decent amount of research has been carried out in the topic of general political history of Xinjiang province in early modern era (1884-1949). Primary sources for this research can be roughly divided into two categories. The first is material authored by Xinjiang governments between 1884 and 1949. These are documents related to late Qing (清) governance of Xinjiang (清, 1878-1911) and to the Yang Zengxin (楊增新, 1911-1928), Jin Shuren (金 屬 仁, 1928-1933), Sheng Shicai (盛 世 才, 1933-1944) and Nationalist (Kuomintang 國民黨, 1944-1949) administration of the province. In particular, this type of sources consists of government proclamations, communications, investigative reports and assessments, memoirs by officials working in Xinjiang etc. A wide range of such documents is openly available in archives of Taiwan and to a certain degree also in the archives in the People’s Republic of China.

The second category is sources authored by foreign agencies active in the region during early modern era. A major part of these sources was assembled by mainly Russian/Soviet, British and United States’ consulates that existed in the cities of Kashgar, Urumchi, Ghulja, Chochek and Sharasume in early modern era. Other sources of this kind are investigative reports by travelers, who journeyed in early modern Xinjiang on scientific, journalistic, intelligence or other (or combination of the above) missions. Many of these works have been published while some, especially consular and intelligence reports, remain in archives in the respective countries, where they are relatively well available. Another valuable body of foreign-authored materials was gathered by Christian missionaries active in the region during the period, namely the Swedish Mission Society in southeastern Xinjiang and China Inland Mission in Urumchi. The missionary materials are today also relatively easily accessible, mainly in Sweden and Great Britain.

These two categories of sources enable research in Xinjiang early modern history from two main angles. One can be perhaps named the *administration perspective* – its major theme is the management of Xinjiang by Han authorities. The other can be termed the *competition perspective* – it analyses the complex interaction of Xinjiang Chinese administrators’ agenda with that of foreign powers and also with that of indigenous anti-Chinese insurgent groups, or in other words a phenomenon which may be referred to as the *Great Xinjiang Game*. It is these two prisms, which characterize the major proportion of currently available scientific output concerned with history of early modern Xinjiang. Several instances of such analyses

are works by Du Zhongyuan (杜重遠; Du 1938), Martin R. Norins (Norins 1944), Owen Lattimore (Lattimore 1950), An Ning (安甯; An 1952), Allen S. Whiting and Sheng Shicai (Whiting and Sheng 1958), Clarmont Skrine and Pamela Nightingale (Skrine and Nightingale 1973), Lars-Erik Nyman (Nyman 1977), Han-jung Ziemann (Ziemann 1984), Chen Huisheng and Chen Chao (陈慧生, 陈超; Chen and Chen 1999), David Wang (Wang 1999) or Huang Jianhua (黄建华; Huang 2003). A special mention should be made here about Zhang Dajun (張大軍), a former Kuomintang military intelligence officer based in Xinjiang down to 1949. Zhang is the author of 新疆風暴七十年 *Xīnjiāng fēngbào qīshí nián* (*Seventy Years of Storm in Xinjiang*; Zhang 1980), a monumental 12-volume and 7500-page opus drawing on his own eye-witness experience in the region, as well as on an enormous amount of primary sources. Thus, despite the fact that Zhang's text is conceived largely from the administration and competition perspective and is also richly spiced up with Kuomintang ideology, it is perhaps the most complex existing narrative of early modern Xinjiang history. Finally, Zhou Hong's (周泓) book provides a detailed and well researched glimpse of republican Xinjiang society that is largely devoid of both the administration and competition approach, but does not rely on sources in Uyghur language (Zhou 2001).

While studies drawn up from the *administration* and *competition* perspective provide us with a large amount of relevant information on political history of early modern Xinjiang, they fail to address at least one important aspect of early modern Xinjiang history. Namely, they convey only very modest knowledge about Uyghurs as such. Uyghurs are in these works perceived largely as one of multiple agents in the administrative/competitive plethora of relations, while the overall emphasis is laid on analysis of development and interaction of these relations. In this place, it is useful to borrow Ildikó Bellér-Hann's (Bellér-Hann: 1-2) reference to what can be called *boundary perspective* formulated by Fredrik Barth: '*...the nature of continuity of ethnic groups is clear: it depends on maintenance of a boundary.*' (Barth 14) Or, in other words: '*The critical focus of investigation from this point of view becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff within that it encloses.*' (Barth 15) Thus, from the majority of existing research we learn only very little about what was inside the Uyghur ethnic boundary of a community which constituted some 75% of the province's population (Benson 1988: 34; Toops 1) at the dawn of communist takeover. In other words, relying solely on Barth's boundary perspective cannot produce a sufficient amount of knowledge on early modern Uyghurs. Accordingly, Bellér-Hann opines that '*...the boundary focus is important, but, in itself, unsatisfactory.*' (Bellér-Hann 2), and dedicates her extensive volume solely to study of the cultural matter within the Uyghur ethnic boundary, basing her historico-anthropological perspective on extensive field research and textual primary sources. Analogously, Linda Benson in her unsurpassed study of the second East Turkestan Republic in northern Xinjiang in 1944-1949 submits that approaching events in Chinese frontier regions from the perspective of China's domestic minority policy provides only a single section of the overall interpretation. Rather, frontier peoples' modern history emerges '*...from circumstances and perceptions uniquely their own and distinct from that of the Chinese...*' and their struggle against Chinese domination should be viewed not as a rebellion, but as '*...an attempt to win political and military control over what they themselves viewed as their traditional homelands.*'; or in other words, as a liberation struggle conceived by twentieth-century nationalism (Benson 1990: 8). Along this line, Benson's work draws on large amounts of primary textual sources in several languages related to Uyghur intellectual history.

This dissertation attempts to emulate the approach of Bellér-Hann and Benson in supplementing Barth's boundary perspective and adopting an approach which could be perhaps called the *content perspective* – it concentrates primarily on the content within the early modern Uyghur ethnic boundary, particularly on its intellectual segment. I do not argue in this dissertation that examination of ethnic boundary is irrelevant for study of early modern Uyghurs. Quite on the contrary – this research shows the extreme importance and complexity of criteria according to which Uyghurs perceived themselves as different from other groups or agencies, as well as changing significance of modern Uyghur ethnic boundary. However, this research rather strives to clarify modalities of and forces behind Uyghur realization of importance of these boundaries and of their preservation. In other words, instead of examination of how nascent modern Uyghur national consciousness projected itself onto the stage of political events in Xinjiang in 1884-1949, this dissertation rather aims to clarify how this consciousness originated and evolved in the minds of Uyghur intellectuals.

Previously, there has been already a certain amount of research published in early modern history of Xinjiang which are conceived, at least partially, from the content perspective. Two important works are entirely dedicated to the topic of early modern Uyghur nationalism. So far the most systematic and thoroughly researched account of political events in the province in the period 1911-1949 was authored by Andrew Forbes and its central theme is '*...the development and nature of Warlord government and Muslim dissidence...*' (Forbes: 1) Thematically similar is Laura Newby's (unfortunately) unpublished dissertation, which explores the '*...nationalist movement of Eastern Turkestan – a people's search for autonomy during the period 1930-1950*', or in other words seeks to '*...trace the rise of national consciousness among the peoples of Eastern Turkestan as reflected in the development of the nationalist movement.*' (Newby 1986: v) Furthermore, Shinmen Yasushi's article researches the first modern attempt at founding an independent state of East Turkestan in 1933 (Shinmen 2001),¹ while Eden Naby's article looks more broadly into general intellectual trends acting in southern Xinjiang in the 1930s (Naby 1987). Linda Benson's now classic works based on a large number of primary sources provide a deep insight into Uyghur liberation movement and nationalist ideology in late republican era in the period 1944-9 (Benson 1990, Benson 1991 and Benson 1992), and are indeed essential for understanding pre-1949 Xinjiang. Similarly, Roostam Sadri's article also concentrates on the Uyghurs' and other nationalities' second attempt of independence in the republican era (Sadri 1984). Shinjiro Oishi's article is an excellent research in the rise of early modernization trends in the Kashgar area (Shinjiro 2000), while Eric Schleussel's article provides a useful overview of currently available literature on pre-1949 Uyghur education (Schleussel 2010).

The phenomenon of emergence of Uyghur national consciousness has also attracted a certain amount of scholarly attention. Several earlier arguments (exemplified for example in works of Pritsak 1959, Chen 1977, Gladney 1990 and Rudelson 1997) stress the *institutional aspect* of the phenomenon. In this interpretation, after the word 'Uyghur' as an ethnonym fell out of use for some five hundred years following Islamization of Uyghur Buddhist kingdom in today's east Xinjiang in late fifteenth century, the crucial moments in modern history were the institutional decisions taken to revitalize the ethnonym *Uyghur* as a designation for indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims of southern and eastern Xinjiang oases. According to such theories, the significant institutional resolutions were particularly the decision to revitalize the term *Uyghur* for use in Soviet Central Asia taken at a conference held in

¹ Shinmen authored two other influential works in Japanese dealing with the events in southern Xinjiang in 1930s (Shinmen 1990 and Shinmen 1994), which this dissertation does not draw on.

Tashkent in 1921 by delegates of Xinjiang descent, and the introduction of the concept of Uyghur nationality into Xinjiang nationality policy by Sheng Shicai in 1934 (Pritsak 525; Chen 100; Gladney 4; Rudelson 5-7). Some contentions go as far as claiming that prior to the moment of being labeled *Uyghur* in modern era, the people thus designated possessed no sense of ethnic commonality or national cohesion and clung to sub-ethnic (local) or supra-ethnic (religious) patterns of self-identification. In another words, such interpretation submits that the disuse of the term *Uyghur* between early sixteenth and early twentieth centuries implies also total absence of collective sub-religious and supra-local identity of people designated by this term prior to and following the period of this disuse (Warikoo 107-8; Gladney 11). Similarly, it has been argued by a foremost Central Asia specialist that on the eve of early modern era in mid-seventeenth century, inhabitants of Eastern Turkestan ‘...spoke closely related Turkic languages and shared a common Islamic culture and sedentary mode of life, but they had no sense of belonging to a single nationality, and their cities were not united by any common political structure other than that provided by the *Oyirad conquest...*’ and that ‘...the idea that the Kashgarians and the inhabitants of *Uighuristan* (i.e. eastern Xinjiang; note by Ondřej Klimeš) were one and the same nationality – let alone they were all *Uighurs* – is an innovation stemming largely from the needs of twentieth-century nationalism.’ (Fletcher 1968: 218, 364; Fletcher 1978a: 69)

Another way of understanding the formation of Uyghur modern national consciousness maintains that sedentary Turkic residents of Xinjiang shared some sort of ethnic kinship even prior to being labeled *Uyghur* in 1920s and 1930s. An extreme version of this argument was posed by Geng Shimin, according to whom the modern Uyghur nationality emerged already by early sixteenth century after the fusion of indigenous Indo-European groups with Turkic Uyghur immigrants and subsequent political, economic, religious, cultural and linguistic unification of the Tarim basin (Geng 1984). Laura Newby argues that as early as in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the people of southern Xinjiang shared a sense of commonality, which surpassed their local identification with a particular oasis and even extended north of Tianshan and to eastern Xinjiang (Newby 2007). Similarly, Bellér-Hann’s thorough anthropological survey portrays early modern Uyghurs of Xinjiang between 1884 and 1949 as a distinct ethnic community, whose common characteristics overpowered local identities of its constituent components (Bellér-Hann 2008). David Brophy’s (Brophy 2005) and Sean Roberts’ (Roberts 2010) fascinating research shows that in late Czarist and early Soviet Central Asia, negotiation of the contents of the label *Uyghur*, in other words of Uyghur ethnic identity, unfolded as a complex process which lasted from early 1910s well into 1930s, and that this process occurred as much among various elements within the ‘Uyghur’ ethnic community as between this community and Soviet authorities. Similarly, Justin Jon Rudelson maintains that since fifteenth century the ancient Uyghur identity and common culture existed as a historical undercurrent, which was redefined and tapped into by Soviet and Sheng Shicai’s ethnic policies in 1920s and 1930s (Rudelson 6-7).

Research Objectives and Research Questions

This dissertation elaborates on the second of the two above summarized hypotheses regarding origins and process of formation of modern Uyghur national consciousness: it strives to ascertain notions of communal identity and interest among Turkic Muslims of Xinjiang throughout the entire early modern era from 1880s to 1949 (that is to say, also prior to official institution of the term *Uyghur* in Xinjiang in 1930s). By analyzing a large number of previously unresearched sources, this dissertation traces and inspects the process of emergence of modern Uyghur ideas of nation and nationalism in Xinjiang, as articulated in

key texts authored by early modern Uyghur intellectuals in the period 1884-1949. In other words, it reconstructs the creation of Uyghur national symbology and practice by Uyghur intelligentsia by the ways this symbology and practice were reflected in early modern Uyghur discourse of nation and its interest. Or, in yet another words, the dissertation researches the nation and nationalism work performed by early modern Uyghur intellectuals. Based predominantly on the criteria of chronology and contents of primary sources, the dissertation is structured into four research chapters. The respective chapters are concerned with the pre-modern intellectual perceptions of communal identity and interest of Xinjiang sedentary Turkic Muslims (who were in the subsequent periods to become called Uyghur) during late imperial era (Chapter 1), emergence of their modern national consciousness from late Qing to early 1920s (Chapter 2), politicization of nascent national consciousness into intensified national and nationalist movement in 1930s (Chapter 3) and negotiation of the status of Xinjiang Turkic Muslim within the Republic of China in 1940s (Chapter 4).

The first key concept this dissertation addresses is *idea*. The research explores ideas, images, perceptions and beliefs of nation and nationalism as rendered into writing by educated Uyghur individuals, who fulfilled themselves in the spheres of historiography, literature, journalism and politics, or in combination of these fields. An important feature of the research is perhaps best summarized by the premise drawn by several specialists arguing that a nation exists when a large number of people *feel, consider or imagine* themselves to be members of this nation (Seton-Watson 5; Connor 156; Barth 15 etc.). Similarly, the acclaimed volume by Benedict Anderson illustrates how collapse of imperial and religious realms, changing perceptions of time, growing prestige of vernaculars and subsequent marketing of vernacularized printed books, newspapers and other printed matter played a critical role in the emergence of the national imagination in early modern era (Anderson 1991). Along these arguments, this dissertation investigates the specifics of emergence of the national idea in minds of early modern Uyghur intellectual elite. In particular, the research aims to show how and when the various markers of a nation, such as for instance common name, religion, language, culture, history, customs, identity sites or myths of common origin and the like, were articulated in intellectual discourse, what role they played in the debate of Uyghur national awakening and how they were used by respective actors of early modern Uyghur national movement and articulators of nationalist ideology. It will be illustrated by this research that, despite the fact that early modern Uyghur intellectuals shared a common drive toward the enlightened strife for their nation's well-being, their ideas of nation and nationalism varied greatly depending on the time when they were active, or on their affiliation with a particular political agency.

The focus on perception of national identity as reflected in printed material, or in other words the textual approach of dissertation, generates an important methodological issue: it is very hard, if not outright impossible, to assess the degree of what has been elsewhere called *social penetration* (Smith 1986: 70-2) of the national idea among non-elite strata and the appeal the nationalist ideology carried for common people (Breuilly 120). Based on existing research, it is sensible to assume that only a very modest proportion of individuals native to early modern Xinjiang had the capacity to cogitate in categories such as communal identity and interest. It is also clear that only even a smaller subgroup of this already modest enough proportion of individuals were able to put their thoughts into writing (Bellér-Hann 327). Similarly, observations made by foreign nationals active in early modern Xinjiang reveal that the perceptions of communal identity embraced by sizeable strata of ordinary, i.e. uneducated, Uyghurs were often quite different from or even in conflict with those held by their kindred intellectuals and political activists. In other words, the degree of social penetration of

intellectual discourse of nation and the intensity of appeal of these concepts to common sedentary Turkic populace of Xinjiang oases is unknown and arguably even low. Given the fact that in early modern Xinjiang, there was no systematic field research conducted in perceptions of communal interest and identity, and that we therefore have no data on these issues, we then have no fully reliable means of assessing the depth of social penetration of early modern Uyghur ideas of nation and nationalism. On the other hand, given the fact that an overwhelming majority of authors of sources of this research were actively involved in communal politics, it is likely that their writings reflected and articulated, with more or less significant contributions or their own, popular views. Anyhow, regardless of the degree of social penetration, this dissertation refrains assessing the particulars of modern Uyghur nation in early modern period and instead assesses Uyghur intellectual articulations of it. The *ideas* of belonging to a nation examined in this dissertation should not be mistaken for the nation itself.

In the analysis of the second central theme, Uyghur perceptions of *nation*, this dissertation aspires to answer the following question: ‘*What were the characteristics based on which Uyghur intellectuals perceived their people as a community?*’ Or, shall we choose to speak in terms of nation, the first question this research asks is: ‘*Which criteria defined nation for Uyghur intellectuals?*’ It is important to remain aware here that the phenomenon of nation has originated in European context and has been only secondarily transferred into other culturo-political realms throughout the world, such as Central and East Asia. Therefore, the concept of nation necessarily has an altered meaning in early modern Uyghur milieu than in situations described by most currently available studies of nation and nationalism. Nevertheless, for the purpose of relating results of this particular case study of Uyghur nation-formation to similar processes throughout the world, in approaching the first research question, this dissertation draws on three main theoretical approaches to national identity and nation-formation processes. It is firstly the primordialist, or perennialist, theory which interprets nation as a group of people bound together by shared innate and organic attributes such as kinship, language or culture, and who at a certain point become politically active. According to Pierre van den Berghe, a nation is an extended kinship (*ethny*) of people, who became politically conscious and aspire to create a state on the grounds of belonging to this *ethny* (Van den Berghe 1981). John Armstrong has illustrated that pre-modern ethnic identities existed in medieval European and Islamic culturo-political spheres and were later transformed into modern nations (Armstrong 1982). The examination of common traits shared by members of such pre-modern collectivity also clarifies the boundaries, which are vital for the existence of the collectivity (Barth 14).

Along this line of argumentation, this dissertation responds to Dru Gladney’s notorious thesis that prior to introduction of the ethnonym ‘Uyghur’ in 1921 in Soviet Central Asia and 1934 in Xinjiang, there was no Uyghur nation (Gladney 1990). In fact, it is impossible to compare the use of the term ‘Uyghur’ in modern era, when it denotes politicized identity, with the way it was used from seventh to early sixteenth century, when it acted as a clan and dynastic name (Hebibulla 43-55). Therefore, the practice of using the term ‘Uyghur’ in a modern, politicized sense to denote a nation, nationality or ethnic group (*Uy. millet*) could not have existed before the emergence of national idea in Xinjiang, i.e. sometime between 1884 and 1949. For this reason it is equally problematic, as it is customary in today’s PRC scholarship and politics, to interpret the entire history of Xinjiang as a continuous movement of primordial ‘people of all nationalities’ (*her millet khelqi*, 各族人民 *gèzú rénmin*) toward unification with the motherland. In the same way, in the context of China proper it is anachronistic to call historical ethnic and cultural communities by the modern term 民族

mínzú (in English ‘nation’, ‘nationality’, ‘ethnic group’), for it appears that the term has not been used in Chinese milieu until the turn of nineteenth and twentieth century (Crossley 1990: 19; Dikötter 97).

On the other hand, it is equally problematic to infer that since the term ‘Uyghur’ generally fell out of extensive use for a group of currently living people (and was instead used to refer to ancestral tribal formations or geographic locations) since the sixteenth century, the people who had been previously or subsequently labeled by this word also correspondingly ceased to exist or lost their sense of communal identity. Mainly Chapter 1 of this dissertation argues that, to borrow words of Mark C. Elliott, in its principles the process of ethnicity did not operate all that differently in late Qing Xinjiang than it does today (Elliott 19). In particular, this research posits that at least since the late nineteenth century, when the national idea or modern ethnonyms did not yet exist in Xinjiang and therefore we cannot call the contemporary community of ancestors of today’s Uyghurs a nation, early modern intelligentsia of Xinjiang Turkic Muslim oasis-dwellers articulated a clear ethnic, or proto-national, collective identity of their fellow kinsmen, who only several decades later came to be designated by the ethnonym ‘Uyghur.’

The modernist, or constructivist, view interprets nations as social constructs that emerged as a consequence of modernization process. For Ernest Gellner, nations are groups of people with common ideas, signs, association, ways of behaving and communicating (i.e. culture) who recognize other members of the group as its members. At the same time, nations are a result of industrialization process as traditional centralized society transforms into a modern decentralized one. The existence of industrialized society is dependent upon cultivation of a homogenized body of uniformly educated individuals who become the nationals of their state. For Gellner, nations are constructed by nationalism (Gellner 1983). For Miroslav Hroch, nation comes into existence as a result of primarily economic changes and is defined by common historical, economic, territorial, political, religious, cultural, linguistic and other ties and also by a sense of equality of its members. Modern nations arise as an outcome of two main kinds of nation building process – either within the boundaries of one ethnic culture, when the old feudal system is transformed into civic society composed of more or less equal citizens, or when an ethnic community dominated by ethnically heterogeneous exogenous elites successfully establishes itself not only against the internal, old and feudal ruling class, but also against the external rule (Hroch 1996; Hroch 2000). For Benedict Anderson, nations, or imagined, limited and sovereign communities, are formed as a result of secularization and rise of print capitalism (Anderson 1990). Mainly Chapter 2 of this dissertation demonstrates a powerful correlation between the modernization trends, and thus also between the emergence of national identities, in early modern Ottoman Empire and Russian/Soviet Turkic communities and analogous phenomena occurring within Turkic Muslim communities in Xinjiang.

The dissertation also elaborates on Anthony Smith’s ethno-symbolist approach that stresses the significance of common symbols, myths, memories, values, rituals and traditions in modern nation-forming processes. Smith argues that modern nations have their origins in pre-modern ethnic categories, which are groups that outside people perceive as a distinct body of people but which can themselves have a very low degree of communal consciousness. Ethnic categories can gradually evolve into ethnic communities (*ethnie*), which already prior to the emergence of modern nations possess a number of common characteristics, specifically a collective name, a common myth of descent, a shared history, a shared culture, an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity (Smith 1986: 22-31). Apart from

these criteria, Smith's more recent definition of a nation increasingly considers legal, political and territorial dimensions – a nation is '*...a named and self-defining human community whose members cultivate shared memories, symbols, myths, traditions and values, inhabit and are attached to historic territories or "homelands," create and disseminate a distinctive public culture, and observe shared customs and standardized laws...*' (Smith 2009: 29-30).

Thus, Smith holds that modern nations and nationalism are born of pre-modern ethnic categories and ethnic communities and their *symbolology*. This dissertation, however, shows that even the symbols themselves can be a modern emergence. As Eric Hobsbawm argued, the national phenomenon cannot be adequately studied without due attention to invented traditions, because much of what constitutes a modern 'nation' consists of constructed and invented components and also draws on recent national symbols (Hobsbawm 1983: 14). In the case of modern Uyghur nation and nationalism, it was often the symbols of modern Uyghur nation themselves, which subsequently became the foundation of Uyghur nationalism, that were the invented traditions, or newly emerged 'ancient' heritages. This argument also clarifies Rudelson's previously mentioned thesis of ancient Uyghur identity as of 'symbolic' ancient repertoire that could be tapped into in early twentieth century. While the existence of the pre-modern repertoire of national practice is confirmed by this research, partially Chapter 2 and mainly Chapter 3 of this dissertation show that the 'primordial' symbols of the 'ancient Uyghur nation' emerged only in early modern era.

The dissertation strives to preserve an eclectic approach and does not to treat the primordialist, modernist and ethno-symbolist perspectives on emergence of nations as clearly distinct, contradictory or mutually exclusive trichotomical correlatives. In other words, it does not claim that Uyghur nation started to exist at a particular point and does not even treat nation as an object, but rather as a mode of perception of social reality. As Rogers Brubaker has pointed out, instead of focusing on nation as a substantial and enduring collectivity suitable for analysis, we should rather understand it as a category of practice, which is constantly in flux. Similarly, nationhood should be grasped as an institutionalized cultural and political form and nationness as a contingent event or happening (2000). Therefore, instead of asking 'Which criteria defined Uyghur nation?', the first research question should be perhaps posed as '*What was early modern Uyghur national practice like?*' and '*What were the main features of discourse of Uyghur national practice?*'

The examination of nation as a practice and discourse taking place within the broader context of modernization process brings us to the third topic of the dissertation – *nationalism*. Here, the most important question this research aims to answer is '*What was regarded by Uyghur intelligentsia as communal interest?*' Or, again should one choose to cogitate in national terminology, the question should perhaps be phrased as '*What was the context and content of Uyghur discourse of nationalism?*' In other words, the second question aims to ascertain, what concepts or institutions were perceived by Uyghur intelligentsia as the aim of communal action, or national movement. Again, the assessment of early modern Uyghur nationalism relies on several general interpretations and approaches to nationalism. Ernest Gellner defines nationalism as a political theory contending that political units should overlap with national units. He also defines two other closely related terms. *National sentiment* is an indignation arising when the objectives of nationalism are not fulfilled; in turn, such anger triggers a *nationalist movement* that strives to fulfill those objectives (Gellner 1). For John Breuilly, *nationalist argument* is a political doctrine based on the assumption that there exists a unique nation, that *national interests* and values have priority over all other interests and values and that the nation must be politically sovereign. Breuilly's research focuses primarily

on the three kinds of oppositional relation between an existing state and a nationalist movement – separation, reform and unification (Breuilly 2-10). Chapters 3 and 4 of this dissertation show that reformist and separatist nationalism, as well as the desired congruity of political and national borders, are highly relevant for the Uyghur case. Moreover, Chapter 4 illustrates that Uyghur nationalist agenda was closely related to negotiation and maintenance of ethnic boundaries, the maintenance of which is interpreted as a vital for a nation's existence (Barth 14-5).

It appears that Miroslav Hroch's chronology of nation-building processes of small European nations is very well applicable to the process of modern Uyghur national movement and nationalism. Hroch recognizes three key stages of the phenomenon: scholarly interest in ethnicity (Phase A), patriotic agitation (Phase B) and mass national movement (Phase C; Hroch 1996: 80).). Similarly to some Central or Eastern European nations, in early modern era Uyghurs were dominated by an exogenous ruling class; their titular nobility and elite existed, but did not wield momentous political power. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of this dissertation show how, as a reaction to this situation and also following a transfer of modernist thinking and nationalist ideology from abroad, a discourse of national identity arose within early modern intellectual circles of Xinjiang Turks and was followed by agitation aiming at national awakening of to-be Uyghurs (similar to Hrochian Phases A and Phase B in European context). As beliefs, lineages, modes of life, customs, habits and other collective attributes were forged into national symbols, the largely cultural movement eventually became politicized and transformed into national movement, i.e. movement bent on achieving all the attributes of a fully-fledged nation (similar to Hroch's Phase B). At certain moments, national movement of Xinjiang Turks became pointedly nationalist when interests of the nation gained priority over all other interests and attracted popular support. However, moments of such deep and broad politically-minded nationalist movement, which would resemble Hroch's Phase C, are lasted for relatively brief moments throughout early modern Xinjiang history. In contrast with some of the European nations which are the object of Hroch's research, this dissertation outlines an emergence of national consciousness and its politicization of a nation which did not succeed in resolving the 'plight of the *non-dominant* ethnic group' (Hroch 1996: 80) in accordance with its hopes and desires. Instead, this dissertation tells a story of a failed nationalist movement.

Sources and Methodology of Research

Unlike when researching Xinjiang history from the *administration and competition perspective*, or in other words when examining the topic from the perspective of boundary between Uyghurs and Chinese state, or between Xinjiang and other powers, for examination of Uyghur history from the *content perspective* it is necessary that material penned or in other ways generated by Uyghurs themselves constitute the essential segment of exploited sources. So far such sources have been exploited only in a very modest extent. While Sadri (Sadri 1984), Forbes (Forbes 1986), Newby (Newby 1986), and Benson (Benson 1990; Benson 1991; Benson 1992) have worked with some Uyghur sources mainly in other than Uyghur languages (namely Chinese, Turkish and Russian) and Schleussel based his overview on a number of secondary titles in Uyghur (Schleussel 2009), so far only Shinjiro (Shinjiro 2000), Shinmen (Shinmen 1990, Shinmen 1994, Shinmen 2001), Brophy (Brophy 2005), Bellér-Hann (Bellér-Hann 2008) and Roberts (Roberts 2010) managed to make a substantial number of Uyghur primary sources the core of their research in early modern Uyghur issues. This fact is partially due to linguistic demands on such research, partially to the above mentioned scarcity of Uyghur written material related to early modern period 1884-1949.

The dissertation strives to improve the low exploitation rate of Uyghur sources. It fully espouses Miroslav Hroch's observation that at the moment, we have an over-production of theories and a stagnation of comparative research in history of national movements. '*All defensible conclusions remain no more than partial findings, and all theories should be taken as projects for further research.*' (Hroch 1996: 78) Along these lines, this dissertation strives infer more general conclusions from as many primary sources and textual evidence as possible. Based on the widest possible variety of sources, it attempts to reconstruct the process and modalities of rise of modern Uyghur national consciousness and nationalist ideology, or, in other words, to retrace the process of national awakening of Uyghur intellectuals and emergence of their national practice. Adopting the *content perspective* as a chief approach to early modern Uyghur history, the research is primarily based primarily on texts written by Xinjiang Turkic (or Uyghur) intellectuals in their native language in early modern period between 1884 and 1949. Occasionally, works by Uyghurs in other languages (namely Chinese and Russian) are also referred to. A special effort was exerted to refer to sources which have not been previously worked with. The sources analyzed by Sadri (Sadri 1984), Forbes (Forbes 1986), Newby (Newby 1986), Benson (Benson 1990; Benson 1991; Benson 1992), Rudelson (Rudelson 1997), Shinmen (Shinmen 2001), Brophy (Brophy 2005), Bellér-Hann (Bellér-Hann 2008) and Roberts (Roberts 2010) have generally not been worked with again; they are utilized indirectly through reference to the above research. As a whole, the research faces a problem of somewhat uneven distribution of sources pertaining to respective stages of early modern period – a reality caused mainly by the fact there are no more sources known to exist or be available to the particular period in question (relevant mainly for Chapter 2). Despite this shortcoming, this dissertation presents the first attempt to outline modern Uyghur national awakening in the entire course of early modern era from 1884 to 1949. At this moment, this dissertation also holds primacy of referring to so far the largest numbers of indigenous Uyghur sources, a large number of which have not been previously examined.

One category of utilized sources are historical writings – works by Molla Musa Sayrami (*Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*, Sayrami 1988; *Tārīkh-i Amniyya*; Sayrami 2000), Muhemmed Imin Bughra (*Sherqī Türkistan Tarikhi*; Bughra 1987) and Polat Qadiri (*Ölke Tarikhi*; Qadiri 1948), none of which have been previously systematically inspected. Another category are literary pieces, such as poems by Abdukhaliq Uyghur (*Abdukhaliq Uyghur Shé'irliri*, AUP), Memtili Tewpiq (*Memtili Ependi Shé'irliri*, MEP) and by a writer of whom nothing further is known except his pseudonym Uyghur Son (*Shé'irlar*, Uyghur Oghli). Of these, only poems by Abdukhaliq and Memtili have been previously briefly referred to (Schleussel 2009). An important bulk of sources is periodicals issued either directly with governments, or published under governmental auspices or by intellectuals affiliated with governments. One such category are newspapers published in Kashgar during insurgency, such as *Independence* of 1933 (*Istiqlal*, I); *Life of East Turkestan* of 1933 (*Sherqī Türkistan Hayati*, LET); *Free Turkestan* of 1933-4 (*Erkin Türkistan*, LET), or after restoration of provincial authority, particularly *New Life* of 1934-1937 (*Yéngi Hayat*, NL). Of these newspapers, the first three have been used by Shinmen in his article (Shinmen 2001). Previously unresearched articles published in periodicals run by intellectuals affiliated with the central government, particularly *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* of 1934 (*Chiniy Türkistan Awazi*, VCT) or with second insurgent administration, specifically *Revolutionary Eastern Turkestan* of 1947-8 (*Inqilabiy Sherqiy Türkistan*, RET) are also extensively worked with. Several separately published shorter essays, journal articles, political speeches, pamphlets and other miscellaneous documents by Nezerghoja Abdusémet (*Yoruq Sahillar*, Abdusémetov 1991),

Memet Emin Bughra (*Yurt we Millet Heqqide Qelem Kürishi*, Bughra 1948), Mes'ud Sabiri (*Bir Nutuq*, Sabiri 1947; *Türklük Orani*, Sabiri 1948) and Polat Qadiri (*Erk Shoari*, Qadiri undated) or by anonymous authors (*Kashgher Wilayet Hökümet Qurulushining Bayannamesi*, PFK 1933: 9; *Kashgher Wilayitining Shin Jin Jang Mehkimisinde Turghuchi Sherqi Türkistan Millet we Dölet Khizmetchisi Abdulrahman Efendi*, PFK 1935: 12; *Muhterem Duben Janabliridin Tiligram*, PFK 1937: 10; *Sherqiy Türkistandiki Barliq Musulmanlirimizgha Sherqiy Türkistan Merkiziy Dinniye Nazaritidin Muraji'et*, RS; *Qan Bedelige Kelgen Hoquqimizni Himaye Qilishqa Teyyarbiz*, ETRYO) are also analyzed; of these, only articles by Abdusémet have been analyzed before (Brophy 2005; Roberts 2009). The study of these primary sources is complemented by reference to existing scholarship in Uyghur, Chinese and English. At the same time, the data acquired during the case study of modern Uyghur ethnic identity and national consciousness are related to several existing general theories on rise of nations and national movements. Due to space limitations, extensive Japanese and Russian scholarship has not generally been worked with.

A special kind of sources used by this dissertation is memoirs of participants to the events, namely of Emin Wahidi (*Inqilab Khatirisi*, Wahidi 1938), Burhan Shehidi (*Shinjangning 50 Yili*, Burhan 1986), Seypiddin Ezizi (*Ömür Dastani. Eslime Bir. Zulum Zindanida*, Ezizi 1997a; *Ömür Dastani. Eslime Ikki. Tengritaghda Güldürmama*, Ezizi 1997b), Seydulla Seypullayov (*Men Shahid Bolghan Ishlar*, Seypullayov 2005) and Yolwas (堯樂博士回憶錄 *Yáolè bóshì huíyìlù*; Yaole Boshi 1969). Of these, the text by Burhan, Seypiddin and Yolwas have been previously consulted by other researchers. As a whole, the above memoirs are treated in this dissertation with certain caution. Besides from a generic problem with 'undisputable' eye-witness accounts, it is possible to directly doubt the authenticity of at least some of the views expressed in them. In fact, Emin Wahidi's rendering of southern Xinjiang insurgency in 1930s seems to be the most authentic from among the above memoir sources, because it was written mere three years after the described events took place. Moreover, Wahidi wrote his record in politically unconstrained conditions of his exile in Afghanistan. Another case are the memoirs of Seypiddin Ezizi and Burhan Shehidi, senior figures of pre-1949 events in Xinjiang who themselves made many of contemporary highest-level political decisions, which are likely to be fabricated to an unknown degree by Communist authorities – in a way not dissimilar to the 'memoir' of Puyi (溥儀), the last emperor of China, generally believed to be highly fictional. On the other hand, some specialists argue that both Ezizi and Burhan were after 1949 high enough in the PRC power hierarchy to be themselves aware what things were tolerable to be put into writing, and to have the authority to write what they themselves considered tolerable. This would make both memoirs rather reliable. Similarly, the memoir of Seypullayov, another high-ranking official in the second East Turkestan Republic of 1944-9, surely passed the careful scrutiny of the efficient PRC censorship and propaganda system and therefore cannot by default contain any undesirable information. On the other hand, the account is acclaimed by today's Uyghur historians as one of the most informative and balanced sources on the second East Turkestan Republic. In contrast, the views expressed by Yolwas in his work show an extreme ideological compatibility with Chiang Kai-shek's theory of nationalities. Also, Yolwas' contemporaries, some of who are still alive today in Taiwan, recall him to be nearly illiterate. Therefore, it seems unlikely for him to be able to physically write the memoir himself. In sum, Yolwas' 'memoir' is likely to be rather a representative articulation of Kuomintang's version of history and ethnic policy than a genuine view of its author.

Note on Terminology and Transcriptions

A clarification should be made here of several terms used throughout the dissertation. Firstly, several terms related to historical periods should be elucidated. The fact that during the initial period of Uyghur early modern history (1880-1911) Xinjiang was part of the Qing empire is reflected in the use of the term ‘late imperial’ for reference to Xinjiang Turkic affairs, even though no historiography recognizes a period of Uyghur history that would be known as ‘imperial’. Similarly, the term ‘early modern’ is used in the dissertation for the period under research, i.e. for the era spanning between Qing dynasty’s proclaiming Xinjiang a province in 1884 and Chinese Communist Party’s taking control over republican Xinjiang in 1949. This usage clearly does not correspond to terminology used in historiography of other regions. For instance, in European historiography the term ‘early modern’ refers to period from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, while in historiography of China the term refers to period from late Ming (明) dynasty in late sixteenth century to military clash of Qing dynasty with Western powers in mid-nineteenth century. However, as will be illustrated in the following chapters, in Xinjiang it was only in the period 1884-1949 that the first features of modernity started to come about. However, in this period the extent to which modernity spread throughout Xinjiang remained only partial and indigenous Turkic milieu remained to figure as ‘*a basically pre-industrial, agrarian social structure*’ (Bellér-Hann 11). The term ‘early modern’ as used in this dissertation therefore mainly reflects the fact although numerous modern concepts appeared and evolved in unique Xinjiang context before 1949, it was only after founding of the People’s Republic of China that Xinjiang Turkic society underwent a strong transformation, some aspects of which can be perhaps termed modernization.

Another special mention should be made here about the pivotal concept of this research. In primary sources stated invariably as a loanword from Arabic *millet*, its meaning in English evolves from that of ‘religious community’ (Chapter 1) through ‘nation’ (Chapter 2 and 3) to ‘minority nationality’ or ‘ethnic group’ (Chapter 4). In other words, Uyghur language uses the term *millet* to denote an ethnic group, which can have varying political status, and can therefore be designated in English by several equivalents. For instance, it will be demonstrated that insurgent leaders of the first East Turkestan Republic (1933-4) regarded their community as a *millet* (in this context most aptly translated into English as ‘nation’) intent on founding a nation-state. On the other hand, Xinjiang Turkic nationally minded figures of 1940s perceived their community as an ethno-cultural *millet* (here most appropriately translated as ‘nationality’) which, along with other *millet*, formed the political *millet* of China (‘nation of China’). The practice of using a single term *millet* that can comfortably acquire a wide range of contextual connotations and translations (‘nation’, ‘nationality’, ‘ethnic group’, ‘ethno-cultural community’ and others in English, similarly ‘*natsia*’, ‘*natsional’nost*’, ‘*narod*’, ‘*etnicheskaya grupp*a’ and others in Russian) is also common in other Central Asian Turkic languages with close ties to Xinjiang Turkic milieu (namely Tatar and Uzbek). It also exists in Chinese, where the term 民族 *minzú* can acquire various meanings according to context, and thus also several translations into English (Leibold 166). However, in contrast to recent trend in English studies on China to directly introduce the Chinese term 民族 *minzú* into English for denoting concepts such as ‘nation of China,’ ‘Chinese minority nationality’ or ‘ethnic group of China’, the author of this dissertation chooses to translate the term *millet* into English by contextually suitable, albeit varying, terms.

Although the title of this dissertation promises its contents to be devoted to ‘Uyghur ideas of nation and nationalism’, the author is aware that the use of the word *Uyghur* in the title is at least partially anachronistic and is employed mainly for the sake of simplifying. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 will demonstrate that the term *Uyghur* appeared only very sporadically in Xinjiang in 1920s, was officially introduced only in 1930s and remained marginal within certain circles of Xinjiang Turkic intellectual milieu until 1949. On the contrary, this dissertation will show that throughout the entire early modern period, significant portion of Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia described their community by autonyms such as ‘*Musulman*’ (in English ‘Muslim’), ‘East Turkestani’, ‘Turkestani’ or ‘Turk’. Therefore, the most correct term to refer to indigenous Xinjiang Turkic Muslim oasis-dwellers throughout early modern period should be ‘early modern ancestors of a nationality today classified as Uyghur’. In general, the text of this dissertation strives as much as possible to avoid this unattractive expression by respecting the use in contemporary primary sources. Therefore, Chapter 1 tends use the term ‘*Musulman*’, Chapter 2 uses the neutral term ‘Xinjiang Turkic Muslims’, Chapter 3 features the term ‘East Turkestani’ and ‘Uyghur’ and Chapter 4 employs the term ‘Turk’ and ‘Uyghur’. All these various terms, however, point unanimously to the single object of this research: forefathers of today’s Uyghurs.

The language, in which primary sources for this research are written, also deserves special explanation. The language of the sources substantially evolved during the period under research, i.e. between 1880s and 1949. Chapter 1 draws on historical chronicles written in Chaghatay, a once spoken Turkic tongue stemming from ancient Uyghur imbued with Persian and Arabic vocabulary, which from fifteenth until early twentieth century functioned as an elite literature language of Central Asian Turko-Islamic milieu. Similarly, Chapter 2 relies on poetry pieces written in Chaghatay that starts to be, however, less or more close to vernacular of the time. In contrast, Chapters 3 and 4 inspect newspapers articles and political essays that already show a substantial extent of vernacularization. Here, it is important to remain aware that throughout the entire early modern period, the language spoken by Turkic Muslims of Xinjiang remained very similar to languages spoken by other sedentary Turkic nationalities of Central Asia (mainly to Uzbek) and mirrored the persistent common Turko-Islamic identity of Central Asians. Thus, as the eastern variety of closely related Turkic languages of sedentary oasis-dwellers of Central Asia, this language can be referred to by the term ‘Turkic,’ ‘Turki’ or ‘East Turki’ (which is an expression commonly used by foreign specialists throughout the entire early modern period).

On the other hand, the vernacularization of Xinjiang sources also increasingly reflects specific traits of the language spoken exclusively by indigenous Xinjiang sedentary Turks. In fact, some inspected texts from 1930s and 1940s are so close to vernacular that when read out loud, they sound as if spoken today on the streets of Kashgar. In other words, vernacularization and endowing common Central Asian Turki with local Xinjiang traits reflects the nationalization of communal identity of Xinjiang sedentary Turks and emergence of modern Uyghur nation. Therefore, since 1930s the language of people today called Uyghurs can be also referred to by the, again partially anachronistic, term ‘Uyghur’. In this process of Uyghurization of East Turki, the once massive proportion of Persian vocabulary gradually decreased and was replaced by either Turkic words or Russian or Chinese loanwords (which is also demonstrated in the dissertation). As for the sources themselves, only those examined in Chapters 3 and 4 specifically name the language, which they are written in, as ‘Turkic’ or ‘Uyghur.’ Language of the Taranchis, who were in 1930s temporarily recognized as a separate nationality of northern Xinjiang, can in fact also be considered a variety of Uyghur, as the Taranchis can be (and in today’s Xinjiang indeed are)

regarded as a subaltern community of Uyghurs. Finally, a similar situation can be observed in orthography of the examined sources. As Central Asia was historically one of the core regions of Islamic culture, Chaghatay was written in Arabic script containing several graphemes reflecting its phonetic specifics. Until early twentieth century, this script contained only minor differences throughout the region of its use from the Caspian sea to Komul in eastern Xinjiang. From 1920s to 1949, the sources under research in this dissertation are written in an increasingly phoneticized script, which contains a growing number of graphemes appearing in modern Uyghur.

Also in a slightly anachronizing way, for the sake of simplification this dissertation transcribes numerous Uyghur/Turki terms contained in early modern sources into Latin alphabet according to transcription of modern Uyghur as used in an influential anthology of studies in modern Xinjiang edited by Frederick Starr (Starr 2004). If not stated otherwise, the original terms and phrases stated in parentheses are in Uyghur (written in the text of the dissertation in Latin letters; e.g. *dölet*) or Chinese language (written in the text in Chinese characters [e.g. 民族] followed by the transcription in the *Pīnyīn* system [e.g. *mínzú*]). Chinese proper names are generally transcribed without tone marks; similarly, tones are not marked when a term appears repeatedly. In cases when terms are adopted from languages other than Uyghur and Chinese, the original language is specified as for instance Russian, Turkish or Arabic. Unlike other chapters in the dissertation, Chapter 1 chooses to transcribe the title of several sources according to Arabic transcription used by Kim Ho-dong (Kim 2004) because these sources have been written in Chaghatay, for which such transcription is more suitable. The overwhelming majority of nouns (e.g. *musteqil*) or noun-derived expressions (e.g. *musteqilliq*) contained in the original Uyghur expressions also come from Arabic; this fact is generally not pointed out. Toponyms contained in the sources are written in the dissertation according to today's use (i.e. 'Yangissar' as today instead of 'Yéngi Hissar' as used in sources). Some toponyms are moreover written in a commonly known and slightly simplified way, instead of their entirely correct forms (i.e. 'Kashgar' instead of 'Keshqer', 'Urumchi' instead of 'Ürümchi'). This principle is also applied to some commonly known terms in Chinese (i.e. 'Kuomintang' instead of 'Guomindang'). Similarly, Chinese terms and loanwords in the sources are transcribed according to today's *pīnyīn* (i.e. 'Huijiao' as used today instead of 'Khuyjo' as used in sources). Chinese characters are used throughout the text in their traditional forms when pertaining to pre-1949 concepts and in their simplified forms when related to PRC phenomena.

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1. Pre-Modern Basis of National Identity (late 19th century)

The initial chapter of this dissertation briefly introduces history of pre-modern Xinjiang, including late imperial Qing conquest and policy in the region. Referring mainly to *History of Hamid (Tārīkh-i Hamīdī)*, a remarkable historical record of an anti-Qing Muslim uprising in Xinjiang in 1864-1877 written by historian Molla Musa Sayrami in 1908, this chapter further describes the shape of ideas of communal identity and interest among Xinjiang Turkic Muslims as the close of imperial era. Such initial scrutiny is important as it introduces the pre-modern basis of modern Uyghur national identity and nationalism which were to appear in subsequent stages of early modern era between 1884 and 1949.

This chapter will show how elite strata of Xinjiang Muslim society viewed their communal identity and interest at the close of pre-modern era in late nineteenth century. *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* reveals that Sayrami perceived himself as a member of a clearly defined community of *indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims of Xinjiang*, for which he uses the name *Musulman*. In Sayrami's view, the *Musulman* shared not only common religious affiliation to Islam, but also descent, language, mode of life, locus of residence, culture, mythology, historical past or political tradition. By mere being aware of sharing such group identity markers, at least some strata of late Qing *Musulman* exhibited a firmly consolidated sense of communal consciousness. Comparison of Xinjiang indigenous Turkic Muslims' communal consciousness to several modern current definitions of nation (mainly Barth 1969; Smith 1986; Smith 2009; Gellner 1983; Anderson 1991 and Hroch 1996) will establish that in late imperial era the *Musulman* existed as a proto-national ethnic category bound together by many principles that form modern nations. The chapter will also illustrate that in late imperial era, Xinjiang *Musulman* occasionally managed to transform their awareness of communal identity into coordinated and large-scale movement intent on defending their communal interest. Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Muslims' centripetal sense of communal identity and their ability to act as a single whole solely due to awareness of this communal identity are in this chapter termed the *community principle*.

Finally, this chapter will also illustrate that *Musulmans'* pre-modern sense of communal identity and ability to jointly defend their communal interest was often of secondary importance. The description of factual unfolding of events during the uprising described by Sayrami in *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* shows that although the *Musulman* were aware of having in common a large number of specific identity markers and interests, it eventually happened that they allied and took action together with non-*Musulman* groups. Often, the non-communal alliances were established on the basis of common locus of residence or social stratum. The fact that the *Musulman* eventually resigned on pursuing their communal interest, defined by the fact of sharing their *Musulman* identity, and instead chose to defend cross-communal interests of social or local factions, shows that *Musulman* communal identity and interest did not take up a primary importance in thought and action of Xinjiang indigenous Turkic Muslims in late imperial era. The sense of communal unity, solidarity and alliance that figure in several current definitions as important traits of national movement and nationalism (mainly Smith 1986; Hroch 1996; Anderson 1991; Gellner 1983 and Breuille 1986) were conspicuously absent in communal action taken late Qing Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims. For these reasons, this chapter asserts that despite the fact that in late imperial era *Musulman* possessed a number of traits of proto-national ethnic community, their uprisings did not fully follow the pattern of national movement and nationalism. The centrifugal prominence of *Musulmans'* local and social interests and the resulting inability to

take action bent on defending communal interests is in this chapter termed the *disparity principle*.

Politics and Ethnicity of the Today's Xinjiang in Pre-Modern Times

In *Eurasian Crossroads*, the first comprehensive history of what is today called Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (新疆维吾尔自治区 *Xīnjiāng Wéiwú'ěr zìzhìqū*; *Shinjang Uyghur Aptonom Rayoni*), its author James Millward has argued that the term 'Chinese Turkestan' is an apposite way to refer to the passionately contested area. On the one hand, the word *Turkestan* conveys the fact that the place has long been home to Turkic-speaking peoples of whom Uyghurs, as we call them today, constitute the majority. On the other hand, its attributive 'Chinese' also embodies the fact that the territory, unlike the western part of Turkestan today partitioned into the five independent Central Asian republics, has a long history of contact with China, including periods of direct political control. 'In this way, Xinjiang is indeed both Turkic and Chinese.' (Millward 2007: ix) Its function as a bustling hub of ideas, religions, cultures and doctrines, as well as the immense variety of social and political structures stemming from its medial position, are only two of the main themes of Millward's excellently written book. As the findings of this dissertation corroborate the continuation of the region's historical role of pivot of ideas and ideologies in early modern era, it is useful to outline briefly several relevant subjects of Xinjiang's pre-modern history.

Presently available archeological evidence suggests that the earliest population of today's Xinjiang in the second millennium BC were groups who were both pastoralist and agriculturalist and spoke Tokharian and other Iranian languages. From the late first millennium BCE, it is possible to indentify these populations with historical names of peoples as preserved in material and written sources. Thus, it is assumed that from about 1000 BC, parts of Xinjiang were inhabited by Iranian-speaking Sakas (sometimes identified with the Scythians), who formed the first city states in southern Xinjiang. Other groups known in Chinese sources from the second century BCE were the Yuezhi (月氏; generally identified with the Tokharians) living in parts of the Ili Valley, or the Wusun (烏孫) inhabiting other parts of northern Xinjiang. The Yuezhi were later dispersed by the Xiongnu (匈奴, presumably indirectly related to people known as Huns in Europe) who were the dominant proto-Turkic nomads exerting control over large areas of inner Asia, including Xinjiang, at the turn of the two eras. The Yuezhi eventually settled in the area of today's Uzbekistan and Afghanistan. After forming the Tokharian-speaking Kushan empire, they also periodically established their control over parts of southern Xinjiang. Such cases of domination by an outside power were the first historical instances of a pattern that was to repeat itself throughout the following millennia: an external and confederated inner Asian nomadic power (which occasionally could be based even in northern Xinjiang, i.e. the Ili Valley or Zungharia) controls and economically exploits the sedentary population of southern Xinjiang (i.e. the Tarim Basin, or the oases around the Taklamakan Desert) and/or eastern Xinjiang (i.e. the Turfan Basin and Qomul; Millward 2007: 13-5).

Along this model, from around 500 BC the Xiongnu started to collect tribute from the city states of the Tarim Basin and even instituted direct political control over substantial number of them by 130 BC. At the same time, the Xiongnu challenged ascending Western Han (西漢; 206 BC – 9 AD) dynasty based in China proper. Western Han were by the Xiongnu coerced it into a set of diplomatic relationships known in Chinese historiography under the euphemism *heqin* (和親 *héqīn*), which on the Han part included recognizing

Xiongnu rulers (單于 *chányú*) as equal to Han emperors, marrying off royal princesses to Xiongnu aristocracy and paying tribute to the Xiongnu court. After this strategy failed to secure peace, a more assertive approach to Xiongnu affairs was taken up by Han emperor Wudi (武帝; ruled 141-87 BC). Under Wudi's patronage, General Zhang Qian (張騫) carried out a diplomatic mission to the Yuezhi in 139-125 BC, which aimed at forging a Han-Yuezhi military alliance against the Xiongnu. Not knowing that the Yuezhi had in between migrated, Zhang Qian ventured through the present-day Xinjiang, Ferghana, Sogdiana and Bactria until he found the Yuezhi by the Oxus (Amu) River. Although he failed to enlist the Yuezhi's support (and later also that of the Wusun), he brought to Han court an enormous amount of intelligence on previously mostly unknown western regions. It was also owing to Zhang Qian's mission that the Han were able to wrestle the control over varying portions of Xinjiang from the Xiongnu since 120 BC, temporarily establishing the Western Regions protectorate (西域都護府 *Xīyù dūhùfǔ*) lasting from 60 BC till the first decade AD. Han control over parts of the Western Regions was renewed during the Eastern Han dynasty (東漢; 25-220 AD) between 70s and 150s AD. During this time, Western Regions became a prosperous region along the famed Silk Road. After that, the control over the south of the region swayed back to the Kushans. In this period, the noteworthy pattern to recur in Xinjiang's history is the phenomenon of a China-based power striking preemptively at a hostile nomadic people beyond the empire's northwestern frontier by conquering the fertile city states in eastern and southern Xinjiang and thus disrupting the nomads' economic base. In another words, Han dynasty's control over Western Regions was a result of its war with the Xiongnu, not of a quest for new territory or trade routes. Another notable principle was the traditional Chinese strategy of 'using barbarians to control other barbarians' (以夷制夷 *yǐ Yì zhì Yì*, also 以夷治夷 *yǐ Yì zhì Yì*), in particular the Yuezhi against the Xiongnu. Similarly, the Han were the first China-based power to deploy in the Western Regions affairs a strategy that had been originally used by the Qin (秦) state during the late Warring States period (戰國 *Zhànguó*, 475-221 BC) of gradual military and economic expansion by commissioning military troops to establish agricultural colonies known as 屯田 *túntián*. The colonies were later extensively reintroduced in Xinjiang by the Tang (唐) and Qing (清) dynasties (Millward 2007: 17-25).

Between the third and sixth century, the city states of the Tarim Basin came under the domination of Kushans and Sogdians or were ruled independently by local Iranian-speaking monarchs, maintaining only loose political and somewhat stronger cultural affiliation to China proper. Run largely by Sogdian elites, the region prospered materially and became an important centre and conduit of Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Manicheism and Nestorianism. Since late sixth century, northern and partially also southern Xinjiang found itself under the control of Western Turkic *kaghanate*, while the Turfan Basin and eastern portion of the Tarim Basin were under the control of the Sui dynasty (隋; 581-618). Expansion of China-based power continued under the Tang dynasty (唐; 618-907), which despite constant warfare with Turks and Tibetans managed to establish its protectorate in significant parts of the region under the name Pacified West (安西 *Ānxī*) between 640s and 750s (Millward 2007: 25-39; Soucek 51-3).

Subsequently, control over the territory passed into Turkic hands. In particular, the region was subdued by the Uyghurs, a tribal confederation associated with a broader term Toqquz Oghuz (Nine Oghuz; in Chinese 九姓 *Jiǔxìng*; Nine Surnames) who between mid-seventh and mid-ninth century had formed a prospering dynasty in today's Mongolia along the Orkhon River (Mackerras 317-20). As of today, there is not a definitive scholarly accord on the etymology of the term 'Uyghur' (in Tang sources also transcribed in a wide

variety of ways, for instance *Huihé* 回鹘 or 回紇). On the other hand, ethnic origin of Uyghurs is one of the most contested topics among Chinese and Uyghur scholars, as well as among Western specialists. Different theories describe the Uyghurs as descendants of different proto-Turkic tribes of inner Asia, for example formations known in Chinese sources as Dingling (丁零), Gaoju (高車, also known as Gaoche) or Tiele (鐵勒; Tursun 92; Millward 2007: 42-3). Various theories interpret the word as meaning ‘unity’ or ‘civilization’ (Muti’i 1990: 382) or expressing the fact of ancient Uyghur tribal confederations inhabiting river valleys (from Turkic *on ghur*, ‘ten rivers’ or *on ghul*, ‘ten gorges’; Hebibulla 52).

In any case, after the Orkhon Uyghur state collapsed in 840 after attacks by the Kyrgyz, Uyghurs migrated south and settled in portions of Xinjiang territory (as well as in the Hexi corridor in Gansu province²). Here, a complex interaction started of sedentary and nomadic civilizations, during which Iranian-speaking oasis agriculturalists would accept a vague sense of political suzerainty, and eventually also the language, of the Turkic nomads. At the same time, the Turks would adopt become ethnically intermixed with the oasis dwellers, eventually adopting the sedentary mode of life, as well as large number of cultural and political institutions. A marked consequence of this dynamic was linguistic Turkicization of the Xinjiang region. In the northeastern portion of the Tarim basin, the newly arrived Turkic Uyghurs mixed with the predominantly Iranian population of the local city states, whereas in eastern and northern Xinjiang they formed a Buddhist and Manicheist kingdom with Beshbaliq (Pentapolis; in Iranian Panjkent, near today’s Urumchi) and Qocho (near today’s Turfan) as seasonal capitals. This culturally and economically advanced Uyghur state, or Uyghuristan³, ruled the area from Qomul to Kucha and existed throughout the twelfth century, when it accepted the Qarakhitay suzerainty, until it was finally incorporated into the ascending Mongol empire in 1370s. At the same time, southern and southeastern part of the Tarim Basin had heretofore found itself periodically under Tibetan and Tangut domination (Millward 2007: 40-50; Soucek 55-6, 77-82; Golden 2009: 16-7).

Meanwhile, a confederation of Turkic tribes called the Qarakhanids emerged in the western part of Tarim basin, Semirechie and Transoxania in the ninth century. In mid-tenth century in Kashgar, the Qarakhanids initiated the process of conversion of the Xinjiang region to Islam and continued by the conquest of Buddhist and Saka-speaking Khotan around 1000. The Qarakhanid period experienced a massive cultural development when scholars such as Mahmud Kashgari (1005-1102) and Yüsüp Khas Hajib (1019-1085) composed some of the greatest works of Turkic Islamic culture, the *Compendium of the Languages of the Turks* (*Türkiy Tillar Diwani*) and *Happiness-Bringing Wisdom* (*Qutadghu Bilig*) respectively. It was in Kashgari’s *Compendium* that the term ‘Turkestan’, or ‘Land of the Turks’, first appeared (Millward 2007: 50-6; Soucek 83-92; Golden 1990: 354-8). As evidenced by numerous references, there existed bitter hostility between the Muslim Qarakhanid state and Buddhist Uyghuristan (Geng 11). In the twelfth century, the whole of today’s Xinjiang passed under the control of the Qarakhitay, and in late thirteenth century the whole region found itself in the realm of descendants of Chaghatay, the second son Chinggis Khan (lived probably 1167-

² Uyghurs settled in the Hexi corridor, sometimes referred to as the Yellow Uyghurs (*Sarigh Uyghur*), eventually formed today’s Yugur (裕固) minority.

³ It was observed that the geographical proximity of Uyghuristan to China and the fact that the character Hui (回) denoted both ‘Uyghur’ and ‘Islam’ has contributed to emergence of notion common in modern China, which perceived all the Turks of Eastern Turkestan as Uyghurs (Fletcher 1968: 363). Chapter 4 of this dissertation shows that the error led to Republican China’s total confusion over the concepts ‘Uyghur’, ‘Turkic’, ‘Turkic-speaking Muslim’ and ‘Chinese-speaking Muslim’.

1227). During this period, Uyghurs served as scribes and educators and Uyghur culture had a unique position within the Chinggisid realm. Uyghur writing, derived from Sogdian, became the basis for Mongolian, later also Manchurian, scripts. Chaghataid elites began to convert to Islam, while simultaneously adhering their nominally Mongol nomadic heritage. As a result, since mid-fourteenth century, the gradually Islamicizing Tarim and Turfan Basin along with Zungharia and territory between the Yaxartes (Syr) river and Lake Balkhash became known as Moghulistan (Soucek 23-4, Golden 2009b: 116) where the Dughlats constituted the most prominent clan. By the end of the fourteenth century, the Dughlats also incorporated the Buddhist Uyghuristan (Millward 2007: 56-72; Soucek 121-2). Since the fifteenth century, the word 'Uyghur' was used only sporadically, largely in toponyms, and effectively disappeared as ethnonym or clan name, only to be revived in the twentieth century to denote modern Uyghurs.⁴ Islamization of 'Moghuls' was complete by mid-sixteenth century and the area of Tarim and Turfan basins was to a large degree politically unified by early seventeenth century (Golden 2009b: 117; Millward 2009: 260-7).

Throughout seventeenth century, authority of Chaghataids and Dughlats was gradually replaced by that of Naqshbandi⁵ Sufi brotherhoods. The Sufi clergy, called the *khojas*, on the one hand widely proselytized in the Tarim and Turfan Basins (and beyond), on the other hand also engaged in complex struggle for political control. Along with the region's Islamization, the significance and prosperity of the ancient Silk Road decreased due to emergence of maritime trading routes. Due to these phenomena, the Chaghataid realm decomposed into a cluster of more or less autonomous city states ruled by the *khoja* theocracy vying for political influence. This system roughly resembled *polis* where local and factional rivalries coexisted under the name Seven Cities (*Alte Sheher*; Heptapolis) with common consciousness of Chinggisid political and ethnic heritage. Eventually, the main schism emerged between the Ishaqiyya (Qarataghliq) and Affaqiyya (Aqtaghliq) factions headed by Makhdumzade Sufi *khojas*. This configuration lasted until late seventeenth century, when a new power, the Buddhist Zunghars, a branch of Oirat Mongols, emerged in northern Xinjiang and the surrounding steppes. Reviving the classic pattern of an external nomadic power preemptively projecting its control over the Tarim and Turfan Basin oases, Zunghars subjugated and nominally unified the Seven Cities around 1780. Their lordship more characterized by extraction than by governance, Zunghars nevertheless managed to develop agriculture and commerce in Heptapolis and Zungharia. They also installed some *khojas* and remnants of Moghul aristocracy as so-called *begs*, local rulers in lower administrative positions throughout the Seven Cities (Millward 2009: 267-9; Millward 2007: 78-93; Soucek 165-73; Fletcher 1968: 218-220).

Qing Conquest and Administration of Xinjiang

The Chinggisid era of great Inner Asian empires ruled by khans claiming Mongol nomadic origin and Chingissid descent came to its end with the entrée of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) and its victory over the Zunghar Khanate in mid-eighteenth century. The projection of Qing imperial mandate into Central Asia was a conclusive moment in a complex empire-building process, which started with Manchu ethnogenesis and their military challenge to the Ming dynasty early in the seventeenth century and ended in 1759 with the annexation of the Seven Cities Region. The result of this 'unprecedented project of expansion' (Perdue

⁴ This process is examined in Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

⁵ The Naqshbandiyya is a Sufi order named after Baha' ad-Din Naqshband (1318-89), a mystic and proselytizer of the Bukhara region.

133) was a realm of a grand territorial expanse which massively exceeded those of the venerated Han and Tang dynasties. At the same time, due to their non-Han ethnic origin and large numbers of non-Han subjects, the Qing were obliged to pay particular attention to ethnic affairs within the empire and institute sophisticated ethnic policies. Similarly, both the Qing inclusion of the Zunghar khanate and its dominion Heptapolis into the empire and subsequent management of ethnic affairs in the newly annexed frontier region are significant agents in the process of formation of modern Uyghur national identity and nationalism.

The Zunghar Mongols under the khanship of Galdan (ruled ?-1697) had been defying the Qing authority along the northwestern border since the rule of the Kangxi emperor (康熙, ruled 1662-1722). It remained up to the Qianlong emperor (乾隆, ruled 1736-1795) to deal ultimately with the Zunghar menace. After power struggle developed among the Zunghar nobility after 1745, Amursana (died 1757) emerged as the leader and challenged the Qing authority by claiming khanship over all Zunghar tribes. In a series of campaigns north of the Tianshan, Qianlong conquered the Zunghar territory and massacred almost all the population of Zunghar tribes. Amursana himself fled to Russian territory where he died of smallpox. The moment of elimination of Zunghar khanate constitutes the end of Chinggisid legacy of great empires dominated by elites of Mongol nomadic origin between late twelfth and mid-eighteenth century (Millward 2009: 268-71; Di Cosmo 351-2).

By destroying the Zunghar state, the Qing were suddenly confronted with an opportunity to extend their domination south of the Tianshan Range over the Seven Cities region, a polity previously controlled by the Zunghars. During the conquest of Ili, the Qing got hold of two sons of khoja Mahmut, the last legitimate leader of Seven Cities, who had been held in captivity by the Zunghars. According to Qing world view, this moment made the young khojas Qing vassals and made a vassal state out their dominion. They released the elder khoja and sent him home with the intention to control Seven Cities indirectly through his rule and kept the younger khoja in captivity as a hostage. He managed to escape and the two brothers claimed sovereignty over Seven Cities and later clashed with the Qing troops in Kucha and Yarkend. However, the Qing obtained assistance of some the local factions and also of the Kyrgyz and drove the khojas out of Kashghar. The khojas fled to Badakhshan, where they were captured and executed. In December 1759, the Qianlong emperor announced achievement of ‘eternal peace and security on the borders;’ by the end of the eighteenth century the region has been called Xinjiang (新疆, in English ‘New Frontier’ or ‘New Dominion; Millward 2009: 271-3; Di Cosmo: 351-2).⁶ Thus, the conquest was ‘a by-product of the Zunghar campaigns’ (Perdue 291-2), as well as yet another more or less preemptive projection of a China-based power’s authority onto inner Asia nomads in a way that was structurally identical to the pattern outlined above. Qing annexation Xinjiang finalized the empire-building process that availed the dynasty of historically the largest territorial extent of Chinese empire. On the other hand, the vastness, remoteness and limited resources of Seven Cities were to prove a strong strategic setback for retaining control over the region for later administration of Xinjiang by Beijing-based governments.

⁶ Other Qing terms were the nostalgic name Western Region (西域), Muslim Frontier (回疆 *Huijiāng*), Muslim Region or Muslim Tribes (回部 *Huībù*), Zunghar Region or Zunghar Tribes (準部 *Zhǔnbù*) etc.

Qing Ethnic Policy

The Qing empire was unprecedented in Chinese history as regards both territorial extent and variety of its inhabitants in ethnic origin, religion and culture. In order to deal with this diversity, the Qianlong emperor was obliged to institute manifold legitimization measures. One of these concepts was ‘universality’ of imperial power, also termed ‘simultaneous emperorship’ (Crossley 1999: 11). In accord with his era title (meaning ‘Supported by Heaven’), the emperor posed himself as the cultic pivot for each of the five main ethno-religious entities within the empire – Manchu (滿 *Mǎn*), Mongol (蒙 *Měng*), Han (漢 *Hàn*), Tibetan (藏 *Zāng*) and Turkic (回 *Huí*). Thus, by performing traditional shamanistic rituals and worshipping Heaven, he remained the ruler of Manchus. By adopting the titles Son of Heaven (天子 *Tiānzǐ*) and Sage-King (聖王 *Shèngwáng*), by adopting neo-Confucian orthodoxy and methods of rule, by performing Chinese state rituals, by promoting the worship of folk hero/war god Guan Di (關帝) and accepting other institutions of Chinese civilization and statecraft Manchu ruler successfully appealed to the Han. Previously, the Qing had also procured Yuan imperial seal (‘state-transmission seal’ 傳國璽 *chuánguóxǐ*) and the title Khan from Chakhar Mongols, thus gaining legitimacy for the Mongols. For both Tibetans and Mongols, Qianlong became a legitimate ruler by posing as the reincarnation of *bodhisattva* Avalokiteshvara, Manjushri and king turning the Wheel of the Law (Sanskrit *chakravartin*, 轉輪 *zhuǎnlún*), by adopting cult of the war god Mahakala and of popular hero Geser, as well as by accepting spiritual guidance of Tibetan clergy and presenting himself as the patron of faith, which a pattern that existed in Tibeto-Mongol relations since the Yuan dynasty (元, 1271-1378; Rawski 197-263; Crossley 1999: 225-46; Slobodník 21-2). The complex strategy of simultaneous emperorship is also perceptible for example in the use of six kinds of scripts (Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, Tibetan, Oirat and Arabic) in some instances of official communication (Perdue 430-1). Such universalist approach elaborated substantially on Chinese traditional culturalist perception of the world as one composed of concentric circles, where in the center of civilized world stands Chinese culture (*Huáxià wénhuà*), which is surrounded by non-Chinese ethnic groups whose level of cultural development decreases with growing distance from China-proper (Fig. 2). Instead, Qing emperor was to function as a center of the universe consisting of five equally civilized ethno-cultural realms (Manchu, Mongol, Han, Tibetan and Turkic), each administered under different rules (Millward 1998: 201; Fig. 3).

Although modalities of establishing a connection between the Qing emperor and Islamic ritual practice have so far not been sufficiently researched, it appears that the case of Islam was more complicated. Obviously, the emperor could not proclaim himself God or a reincarnation of the Prophet, nor could he convert to Islam. Qianlong’s title *khan* boasted formidable prestige among the Turkic population of Heptapolis, but this prestige was, strictly speaking, unrelated to Islam because its very origin lay in the pre-Islamic title *kaghan* (Khan of khans) held by Turkic and Uyghur rulers in 6-9th centuries. Occasional instances of Qing use of Chaghatay language written in the sacred Arabic script, official patronage to build the Sulayman mosque (also known as Emin’s Minaret, Uy. *Emin Munar*, 伊敏塔 *Yīmín tā*) in Turfan (Millward and Newby 120), tax exemption on the property of religious endowments (*waqf*) or sporadic appointment of guardians of khojas’ sacred shrines (Fletcher 1978a: 75) did not produce significant degree of legitimization of Qing rule through Islam. A more significant measure, by which the Qing could gain justification in the eyes of the Muslims, was the facilitating peace and prosperity, or so-called ‘rule of justice’ (*adalet*; Kim 70). Overall, however, the Qing never managed to bridge the religious divide between the dynasty

and Muslims of Xinjiang who continuously perceived Qing heteronomy as domination by impure and inferior infidel pagans. In time of mismanagement and abuse of power by the exogenous ruling class, the religious issue immediately became a powerful factor pouring oil to the fire of revolt. After the fall of the empire, the exclusively Han administration in Republican Xinjiang was to be perceived in identically unflattering, yet essentially unalterable way.

In accordance with the principle of simultaneous statecraft, the Qing also introduced a different system of administration for the five ethnocultural entities (因俗而治 *yīnsú ér zhì*; literally ‘rule in accordance with customary practice’) of the empire. Manchus all over Qing empire were organized into banners (旗 *qí*), supplemented by Mongol and Han banners. Tribes of today’s Inner and Outer Mongolia formed another type of banners (旗 *qí*). Inner China was to consist of eighteen provinces (省 *shěng*) controlled by governors-general and governors. In Tibet, the Qing ruled indirectly via local institutions under the supervision of a resident high official (Ma. *amban*; Ch. 大臣 *dàchén*). Manchuria was to be conserved by proscription of Han immigration as an isolated sanctuary of Manchu culture. Some regions, e.g. tribal areas in the southwest or Kokonur, were also ruled indirectly through the late Song system of local chiefs (土司 *tǔsī*).⁷ An ingenious and sophisticated system of segregation and stratification of various ethnic and social groups was instituted, which was palpable in virtually all spheres of Qing life. Many elements of this ‘Manchu apartheid’ originated in Liao (遼, 907-1125), Jin (金, 1115-1234) and Yuan practice. This system of rule provided for some autonomy of local affairs in frontier areas, while simultaneously instituting distinction and separation between the conqueror and conquered and upholding ‘ethnic sovereignty’ (組群主權 *zúqún zhǔquán*) of a conquest elite ‘essential to the vitality of all Inner Asian dynasties’ (Elliott 6, 98-116, 197-216). At the same time, it was these divisive policies that ‘stimulated social, cultural, and economic changes in the peripheries that encouraged the growth of ethnic identities... Under the Qing rule, the focus of primary identities had begun to shift from tribal units to larger social groups’ (Rawski 301). In similar words, it was argued that negotiation of identity in the Qing period shifted from cultural via racial to ethnic arena (Crossley 1990: 8). Regardless of particular wording, this chapter will illustrate that the trend was highly significant for the rise of modern Uyghur ethnicity and nationalism.

As in other parts of the empire, the Qing instituted principles of indirect rule and social division into Xinjiang. The whole territory turned into a military agency (軍府 *jūnfǔ*) and the General of Ili (伊犁將軍 *Yīlí jiàngjūn*) acted as the highest-ranking official for the whole territory. Xinjiang was partitioned into three administrative units. Zungharia was named the Circuit to the North of Tianshan (天山北路 *Tiānshān běilù*, also called Northern Circuit), oases along the Tarim Basin were called Circuit to the South of Tianshan (天山南路 *Tiānshān nánlù*, also known as Southern Circuit or Eight Cities of the Southern Circuit 南路八城 *Nánlù bāchéng*) and the area from today’s Urumchi to Komul and Bariköl was called Circuit to the East of Tianshan (天山東路 *Tiānshān dōnglù*, also called Eastern Circuit). All three divisions were subordinate to the General of Ili in military matters; he was also the

⁷ Until the establishment of *Zongli Yamen* (總理衙門 *Zǒnglǐ yámén*) in 1861, relations of the Manchu court with rulers and elites of territories located to the north and northwest (such as of today’s Mongolia, Tibet, Xinjiang and also Russia) were under the jurisdiction of Court of Colonial Affairs (理藩院 *Lǐfān yuàn*), whereas tributary relations with vassals from east to southwest were managed by the Board of Rites (禮部 *Lǐbù*; Di Cosmo 354-62).

highest authority in civil matters for Northern Circuit. Manchu population of the Northern and Eastern Circuit was divided into banners. The civilians of Eastern Circuit fell under jurisdiction of the governor of Gansu province. Turfan was the only oasis in Seven Cities which had its population divided into banners (Perdue 332), while the rulers of Turfan, Komul and Lükchün were awarded Qing titles *jasak junwang* (札薩克郡王 *zhásàkè jūnwáng*) or *wang* (王 *wáng*) for their merits to the Qing conquest. As mentioned above, the Qing also revived the practice of ‘reclaiming land while protecting the frontier’ (屯墾戍邊 *túnkěn shùbiān*), another expression for founding military-agricultural colonies (屯田 *túntián*). In the Northern and Eastern Circuit, there existed military colonies (兵屯 *bīngtún*, 軍屯 *jūntún*), civilian colonies of immigrants from the interior (戶屯 *hùtún*, 民屯 *míntún*), colonies of Seven Cities’ Muslims resettled to the Northern Circuit (回屯 *huítún*) and convict colonies (遣屯 *qiǎntún*, 犯屯 *fàntún*). After 1931, the Han were permitted to establish colonies also in the Southern Circuit. Han immigrant population of Northern and Southern Circuits was administered by magistrates in a system identical to interior China. The remaining non-colonist population of Xinjiang was also segregated into separate residences – bannermen (旗人 *qírén*) and Han (漢人 *Hànrén*) population usually occupied two distinct parts of a newly founded municipality called customarily the New City, whereas the original city inhabited by local Muslims started to be called the Old City. The Old and New cities often lay kilometers apart (Kim 15-7; Di Cosmo 352-3; Millward and Newby 118-23).

The elements of Qing indirect rule were best evident in the administration of the Southern Circuit. The Qing allowed for a substantial degree of autonomy in the initial period of their rule. There was no military deployment due to the fact that oases along the brink of the Tarim Basin could not support increased population. The Qing also adopted previous Zunghar practice and vested all the power on lower levels to indigenous hereditary ruling class, begs, thus creating so-called beg system (伯克制 *bókè zhì*). There existed approximately thirty-five different beg titles, such as the ‘governor of a district’ (*hakim beg*), ‘assistant to the governor’ (*ishikagha beg*), ‘treasurer’ (*khazanachi beg*) or ‘administrator of irrigation and water distribution’ (*mirab beg*). Begg were incorporated into the official ranking system (品級 *pǐnji*) by being granted ranks three to seven. They were also entitled to cultivated land, people to work on it, stipends, right to present tribute to the emperor and to trade at the border with China proper or in the capital, privilege to braid their hair into a queue, wear Qing official attire and prostrate themselves in front of the emperor. Furthermore, the Qing also relied on semi-official category of functionaries called ‘heads’ (*bash*). Their principal task was to assist begs in tax collection – there was the ‘head of a thousand households’ (*míngbashi*), a ‘head of a hundred households’ (*yüzbashi*) or a ‘supervisor of agriculture’ (*kökbashi*). Apart from that, there were numerous other minor officials, such as interpreters (*tungchi*), couriers (*chekchi*) or scribes (*bichikchi*). Finally, the Qing also left the system of Muslim religious administration intact. Local educated clerisy (*ulama*) remained in charge of educational and some judicial matters that were decided according to Islamic law (*shari’a*; Kim 12-4; Newby 1998: 282-4).

On the one hand, the described pattern of indirect rule allowed for considerable autonomy of local affairs and secured tolerance for the Qing domination by the indigenous Muslims and *vice versa*. Along with Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans and the Han, Muslims of Seven Cities were considered one the five legitimate constituencies of the empire. Immediately after the conquest, the Qing administration dropped the derogative denomination of Muslims (character 回 written with the dog radical; Millward 1998: 194). From then on,

Muslims were called in politically correct terms *Huimin* (回民 *Huímín*) or *Huizi* (回子 *Huízi*, both meaning ‘Muslim’).⁸ In its initial stage until early nineteenth century, Qing ‘steppe imperialism with Chinese characteristics’ in Xinjiang did not thus simply promote Chinese political and cultural forms for their own sake, nor did it sought to assimilate Xinjiang population (Millward and Newby 114-7). The result was a sort of *pax Manjurica* that availed Xinjiang with relative stability and prosperity during the initial sixty-year period after the conquest (Fletcher 1968: 220; Millward 1998: 248).

On the other hand, the complex plethora of indirect rule relationships turned into a potent destabilizing factor at the turn of 1820s and 1830s, when descendants of Heptapolis khojas exiled in neighboring Khoqand khanate staged several incursions into southwestern Xinjiang and challenged Qing authority. After reestablishing their rule, the Qing started distrusting local Muslims, reevaluated their universalist ethnic policy vis-à-vis Muslims and united their interests with Han settlers. Notably, by allowing establishment of Han civilian colonies in Southern Circuit, the Qing took first steps towards closer incorporation of Xinjiang into the empire by the means of altering demographic makeup of the region. Furthermore, the economic situation in Xinjiang worsened dramatically after a series of events in the interior – outbreak of natural disasters in the 1840s and uprisings in 1850s. The repercussions for Xinjiang were reduced fiscal subsidy from the central government and increased taxation (Millward 1998: 225; Kim 30), which were accompanied by arbitrary extortion and rampant corruption of Qing officials and begs. These developments severely alienated local Muslims from the Qing administration. The region started brewing with trouble that materialized in the outbreak of so-called khoja rebellion in 1864 in Kucha, an important oasis on the northern rim of the Tarim Basin.

Life and Works of Molla Musa Sayrami

The Introduction to this dissertation pointed to problems with the primordializing reconstruction of modern collective, particularly national and ethnic, identities into pre-modern past, and with the anachronizing projection of modern ethnonyms onto historical communities. On the other hand, to argue that in pre-modern era, the populace of what we today call Xinjiang had no sense of belonging together, could be also misleading. The remaining part of this chapter seeks to address the question of existence, or absence, of late Qing period Xinjiang Muslims’ perceptions of communal identity and interest by examining indigenous primary sources. The most authoritative source for such probe is *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*, a history of 1864 anti-Qing rebellion in Kucha and subsequent domination of entire Xinjiang by Khoqandi warlord and adventurer Ya’qub Beg in 1865-77, written by Molla Musa Sayrami in 1908.

The scarce information available today on Molla Musa Sayrami is mainly a result of long-time research by contemporary Xinjiang Kyrgyz historian Enwer Baytur. According to Baytur, Molla Musa Sayrami was probably born on August 23, 1836, in Sayram near Aksu⁹ as the first son of a wealthy and educated landowner and religious scholar Molla Eysa khoja.

⁸ Sometimes the disrespectful term ‘Turban-head Muslim’ (纏頭回 *Chántóu huí*, 纏頭 *Chántóu* or 纏回 *Chánhuí*) was also used. This label refers to white headscarves (*selle*, 散蘭 *sànlán*) worn by Muslims of high religious status or older age.

⁹ Sayram is located in today’s Toghayli neighborhood (*mehelle*), Anaqiz village (*kent*), Toqsun Township (*yéza*), Bay County (*nahiye*), Aqsu Prefecture (*wilayet*).

Musa attended the Sayram *madrasa*¹⁰ from the age of seven. Owing to his outstanding learning skills and beautiful handwriting, Musa soon became known as the ‘Baby Scholar’ (*Bala Molla*) or ‘Musa the Scholar’ (*Molla Musa*). From 1847, Musa continued education at the Saqsaq *madrasa* in Kucha, one of the most prominent educational facilities in the Seven Cities Region at the time. At the Saqsaq, Molla Musa received complete classical training in Qur’an and *hadith*,¹¹ history, literature, calendar drafting, astronomy, grammar, mathematics, agricultural science, Arabic, Persian, Urdu and other subjects. By reading the classics of the Turko-Islamic milieu, Molla Musa also indirectly acquainted himself with Greek and Roman authors. He returned to Sayram in 1854 and became a senior teacher at the Sayram *madrasa*. After an uprising broke out in Kucha on June 6, 1864, and rebel forces advanced westwards in the direction of Aksu and Kashgar, Molla Musa became commander of a rebel unit composed of his students, peasants and craftsmen. Later, he became a senior officer in the Üchturpan area and functioned as an advisor to several higher commanders. He also served in Ya’qub Beg’s administration during his control of Xinjiang (1865 - 1877). After the Qing reconquest (1878), Molla Musa travelled widely for several years throughout the whole territory of Seven Cities in order to collect sources for a history of the preceding events. In 1879, he settled in Aksu and began his career of a historian and a poet. He lived in dire poverty and when he fell ill in March, 1917, his relatives transported him on a donkey cart back to his hometown Sayram where he passed away in April, 1917. A domed tomb with blue tiles and a mosque, which were built at the site of his burial within three months after his death, were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution in 1967 (Sayrami 1998: 3-11; Ömer 1321-8; Ekhmidi 279-83).

Molla Musa Sayrami wrote the overwhelming majority of his works between 1879 and 1917. In *Qeside-i Sidiq* (1903), he describes contemporary social life through peculiar images seen by a fictional character called Sidiq. His other literary works include *Diwan Mesnewi* (*Compendium of Masnawi*, 1907), *Ghezeliyat* (*Ghazels*) and *Ferhad we Shirin* (*Ferhad we Shirin*). However, it is Sayrami’s historical works that are regarded as highly significant, and it is mainly owing to his innovative methodology of combining thorough textual research with extensive fieldwork that Sayrami is considered a superb historian and one of the founders of the modern Uyghur literature. Sayrami also often included large pieces of oral history and folklore into his texts. This approach is exemplified by *Tadhkirat-ul Ewliya fi Muftah-ul Iman* (*Biographies of Holy Men*; 1885) and *Tadhkira-i Eshabul Kehif* (*Biography of Eshabul Kehif*; 1898). Both of these works narrate the expansion of Islam into the region of Seven Cities, list biographies of most important saints and describe their sacred shrines and burial sites. At the same time, they refute some of the false contemporary beliefs and rumors about the expansion of Islam in the Seven Cities region disseminated by texts such as *Tadhkira-i Sultan Qurmish* (*Biography of Sultan Qurmish*). Molla Musa Sayrami’s other historical works include *Salamname* (1916) and *Tadhkira-i Khoja Afaq* (*Biography of Apaq Khoja*). Several other anonymous texts are attributed to him (Sayrami 1998: 3-11; Ömer 1321-8; Ekhmidi 279-83).

Another important approach of Sayrami is well perceptible in the *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* (*History of Hamid*). Sayrami took part in the Kucha rebellion of 1864 and then served for over ten years as an official in the Ya’qub Beg administration (1865-1878). In *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*, a record of these tumultuous events, the historical methods Sayrami had used previously are supplemented by the priceless fact that he had been a direct participant and an eye-witness to the historical events he later described. He also made use of extensive interviewing many

¹⁰ *Madrasa* was Islamic institution of secondary learning. For more information on Islamic education, see Chapter 2 of this dissertation.

¹¹ *Al-hadith* – actions and statements traditionally attributed to the Prophet and regarded an important instrument of Islamic jurisprudence.

other participants and witnesses of the events. As a result, the work is marked by rigorous impartiality and broadness of opinion. This approach makes *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* a uniquely valuable historical source unmatched by any other contemporary text.¹² Kim Hodong, who extensively drew on *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* in his brilliantly researched analysis of the khoja rebellion and Ya'qub Beg's incursion, aptly calls Molla Musa Sayrami 'one of the best historians that Central Asia has ever produced' (Kim xvi), while the *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* itself has been called 'cornerstone of modern Uyghur historiography' (Tursun 88). The text of *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* is also the initial source of research in modern Uyghur national consciousness in this dissertation.

The predecessor to *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*, the *Tārīkh-i Amniyya (History of Peace)*, was written by Sayrami in 1903 and printed in the *Medrise-i Ulum* printing house in Kazan, Tatarstan, in 1904. As it was Sayrami's only work to be printed, *Tārīkh-i Amniyya* became widely distributed in the Seven Cities region. Its title referred to the fact that from the Qing reconquest of Xinjiang (1878) until the time of writing, 'enmity, hatred and turmoil ended and peace and tranquility prevailed' in Seven Cities (Sayrami 2000: 6). Eventually, Sayrami corrected and substantially expanded *Tārīkh-i Amniyya* and rewrote it as *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*. The new work was finished in 1908, and circulated only in the manuscript form. Sayrami specifically stated the purpose of writing *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*: to record the events of war and the following insurgent administration so that they are not forgotten by in the future. He also mentioned that history is an invaluable discipline of science and that the very act of recording events of holy war against infidels engenders God's appreciation and causes ordinary people to remember the occurrences of the time. Finally, Sayrami's choice of title of *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* also stressed the need for ordinary people to be aware of high political affairs of their time (Sayrami 1988: 33-5, 40).

In choosing the title of the text, Sayrami alluded to the work of the influential Sayyidid historian Mirza Muhammad Haydar (1499-1551). Haydar wrote his extensive historical work between 1541 and 1546 and named it *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* in commemoration of Abdulreshid Khan (1533-1570), the ruler of the Yarkend-based Seyyidid dynasty (1514-1680) who was then in power.¹³ Similarly, Sayrami dedicated his *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* to the Ottoman Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876-1909), whom he calls 'the Supporter and Sustainer of Muslims in our epoch' (Sayrami 1988: 39).¹⁴ Both, *Tārīkh-i Amniyya* and *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* are structurally similar. However, *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* contains a far larger amount of information based on a more thorough research. Therefore, of the two texts it is the *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*, which is considered a more valuable historical source and a monumental work of scholarship. The presently existing translation of *Tārīkh-i Amniyya* from Chaghatay into modern Uyghur is based on the Kazan edition (Sayrami 2000: 2). Enver Baytur's transcription of *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* from Chaghatay, upon which is this chapter based, was made from a manuscript,

¹² Other historical works on this period include *Jang-namā (Book of War)* by Umīdī, *Ghuljaning Waqī'atlarining Bāyāni (Story of Ghulja Events)* by Qāsim Beg, *Ghazāt al-Muslimīn (Holy War of the Muslims)* by Muhammad Sālih Yārkendī, *Ghazāt dar Mulk-i Chīn (Holy War in China)* by Mullā Bilāl, *Zafar-nāma (Book of Victory)* by Mullā Shaqīr and *Tārīkh-i nāma-i Ya'qūb Khān (History of Yaquub Khan)* by Mahmud Shaykh Gharīb (Sayrami 1988: 4; Kim 263-266).

¹³ Mirza Muhammad Haydar binni Mirza Muhammad Muhammad Hüseyin Dughlatī (1499-1551) was an official at the Seyyidid court. His *Tārīkh-i Rashīdī* combines personal memoir with account of the history of Turkic tribes, mainly the Dughlat, from the mid-14th century until 1546 (Elias 1895).

¹⁴ Under Abdülhamid II, pan-Islamism became an official policy of the Ottoman Empire. For more on the theme of pan-Islamism, see Chapter 6 of this dissertation.

which was copied by Sayrami himself in 1911 and is presently kept by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Sayrami 1988: 1).

The main content of *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* is divided into four parts. In the ‘Introduction’ (*Muqeddime Iptidasi*), Sayrami recounts mythical past by narrating legendary origins of the world and humanity, the origins of Turkic tribes, their conversion to Islam and other legendary events. He then proceeds to description of historical past of the Seven Cities region and surrounding areas since the moment of Chinggis Khan’s birth, rule and conquest. The narrative also covers further partition of Chinggis Khan’s empire and rule of his descendants, the establishment of the Dughlat tribe as the ruling elite in Moghulistan, the Seyyidid dynasty, the rule of the Makhdumzade khojas before the Qing conquest and the period of Qing control until 1864. In this part, genealogies of local ruling elites are a strong concern of the narrative. The following part, the so-called ‘Former Epic’ (*Awalqi Dastan*), accounts the Kucha uprising led by religious aristocracy, the so-called *khojas*, which quickly spread to other parts of Seven Cities. The ‘Second Epic’ (*Ikkinci Dastan*) documents the invasion of Ya’qub Beg into the Seven Cities region, his subjugation of the *khojas* and other rebel regimes, his rule over Seven Cities in 1865-1877 and reconquest of Xinjiang by the Qing in 1877. The ‘Conclusion’ (*Khatime*) consists of brief description of each of the Seven Cities, typical characteristics of their inhabitants and important local pilgrimage sites and places of worship. Contents of the previously mentioned texts *Tadhkirat-ul Ewliya fi Muftah-ul Iman* and *Tadhkira-i Eshabul Kehif* are also included in the Conclusion.

Boundaries of Ethnicity in *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*

Sayrami’s *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* provides a fairly detailed picture of the perception of communal identity and interest of the inhabitants of Heptapolis as perceived by an indigenous elite intellectual at the end of pre-modern era. For an introductory example, it is useful to refer to the following passage which is highly typical of the whole text in terms of vocabulary used to label various groups residing in Seven Cities, as well as in terms of author’s general understanding of communal identity and interest:

‘...The city of Kucha revolted. Khoja Ishaq Khan Khojam was enthroned and had the sword of Islam publicly applied to the infidels’ (*kafir*) throats. The pleasing news and grand celebrations of these events spread to all directions throughout the Seven Cities region to those with power (*wali*) and to commoners (*ahale*). As a result, Muslims (*Musulman*) and Tungans (*Tungani*) in every city united for the purpose and delight of drinking the nectar of Islam and applying the sword to the necks of cruel infidels (*zalim kafir*). After Kucha, the Tungans and Taranchis (*Taranchi*) of Seven Cities in Ili became rid of subjection to the infidels and made the scholar (*elem*) Shewket Akhun their leader and sovereign. He was a very virtuous and pious man. Then, even the people (*ehl*) of Khotan slipped from the hands of the Chinese (*Khitay*). The people (*khelq*) of Yarkend and Kashgar also severed the thread of submission and servitude. Because Kucha stands like a gate to the other six cities, thus, when the soldiers from the interior (*Bijin*) came and were not able to raid Kucha, they were also not able to proceed anywhere else. People (*adem*) in Seven Cities were aware of this and revolted in one city after another. Everywhere, they chose a military commander and another person to whom they submitted, thus establishing state authority (*mülk-i tawayif*) ...’ (Sayrami 1988: 247)¹⁵

¹⁵ If not stated otherwise, terms and passages throughout this dissertation were translated by Ondřej Klimeš.

In the passage, Sayrami uses two types of labels used to denote communities residing in Seven Cities at the time. The first type distinguishes in a very clear manner between and among communities according to several criteria. When defining these communities, it is useful to refer to definition of ethnic identity employed by Fredrik Barth. According to this perspective, it is the ethnic *boundary* itself that constitutes the most significant marker of ethnic identity of a particular group, and not the cultural substance enclosed within the boundary (Barth 15). In other words, an ethnic group is distinct because and by what it differs from other ethnic groups rather than because it bears certain characteristics. Notably, Barth uses the term boundary in a sense of a *social boundary*, not a territorial one. For the purpose of analysis of communal consciousness of inhabitants of the Seven Cities region, it is initially possible to apply Barth's social boundary approach to three main constituents of their identity – religion, descent and mode of life.

Religion was arguably the most prominent identity marker of the residents of Heptapolis at the end of the Qing dynasty. The key autonym, which resounds throughout the whole text of *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*, is *Musulman*, meaning 'Muslim.' This loanword from Arabic denotes identity based on the religion its bearer follows. Indeed, Islam and related cultural and social practices were factors sharply differentiating the *Musulman* from 'infidels' (*kapir*, e.g. Sayrami 1988: 262) or 'polytheists' (*mushrik*; e.g. Sayrami 1988: 263), which are terms also frequently used in *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*. The religious impurity of infidels is sometimes emphasized by further attribution of the term – 'an infidel without religion' (*dinsiz kapir*, e.g. Sayrami 1988: 185), *nizamsiz kapir*, 'an infidel without moral principles' (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 632) – or by other terminology, such as *biseremjan*, 'a person in moral disorder' (ibid.). As the events related by Sayrami in both *Tārīkh-i Amniyya* and *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* illustrate, Islam was the strongest element which at least temporarily unified the numerous rebelling and campaigning factions under the khojas' leadership during the Kucha uprising. This was partly caused by the fact that, unlike the conservative and corrupt clergy (Ar. *'ulama*) and begs, the khojas were the only indigenous elite group who retained credibility in the eyes of common Muslims of the Seven Cities region. In fact, due to their noble descent from the Makhdumzade ruling class and Moghul aristocracy, they possessed 'a tremendous religious charisma' (Kim 14). The prominence of religion as a guiding principle of *Musulman* society is further evinced by strong religious overtones of *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*. Sayrami specifically stated that one of the reasons he wrote the account was his desire to fulfill a divine moral imperative. Throughout the text, Sayrami also frequently expresses his devotion to God and principles of religious piety, acknowledges God's guidance of worldly occurrences, hopes for God's counsel and assistance in writing and in numerous other ways demonstrates that he is proper Muslim.

Sayrami commonly refers to the insurgency by the term 'holy war' (*ghazat*; e.g. Sayrami 1988: 185). In a pattern common in the revered 'Golden Age' of Islam during the rule of the four initial rulers of the Muslim realm (Hourani 22), after overthrowing the Qing administration the Kuchean khojas also adopted honorary titles that declared unity of political and religious power, such as *Seyyid Ghazi Rashidin Khan Khojam* (Honorable Holy Warrior Rashidin King Priest; e.g. Sayrami 1988: 197) or *Khojam Padishah* (Cleric-Ruler; e.g. Sayrami 1988: 233). As ascertained by Kim, the leader of the uprising, Rashidin Khan, was a descendant of respected Central Asian Sufi clan; similarly, the leaders of revolts in the other cities were mostly people of high religious status (Kim 61-6). Institution of local rebel regimes was often followed by vigorous promotion of Islamic practice – implementation of Islamic law (Ar. *shari'a*), compulsory public prayer, construction of mosques etc. (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 208, 230). In the same way, after Ya'qub Beg invaded Heptapolis, defeated the

khojas and declared a single Islamic realm, he appealed for support to the Ottoman Sultan Abdülaziz (ruled 1861-1876), who indeed did proclaim him the ‘Commander of the Faithful’ (Ar. *Amir al-Muminin*), a title previously reserved to the ruler of all Muslims (*caliph*; Kim 153). In turn, Ya’qub Beg minted coins with Abdülaziz’s name inscribed on them (Zhu 71). Both the Kuchean and Ya’qub Beg’s regimes had strong religious inclinations and resembled the Makhdumzade theocracy from before the Qing conquest. At the same time, Ya’qub Beg’s diplomatic efforts also reveal that he was very well aware of contemporary international politics and the changing nature of the imperial world order. Thus, Ya’qub Beg’s negotiations with Great Britain represented an effort to address the difficult position of his state between imperial China and czarist Russia (Kim 138-58).

In practice, the term ‘infidel’ as used by Sayrami in *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* is synonymous with the term *Khitay* meaning ‘Han Chinese.’¹⁶ Their homeland was designated as *Bijin* (presumably from ‘*Beijing*’ 北京), a term which in Sayrami’s work denoted either the capital or the interior provinces of the Qing empire. Sayrami notices that the Han in Seven Cities were soldiers, administrative officials and merchants (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 262). The Han residing in whole Xinjiang at the time consisted of four main subgroups. First were members of Qing garrison, namely Green Standard troops (綠營 *Lǜyíng*; Millward 1998: 33), numbering approximately 12.000 in mid-eighteenth century (Kim 16). However, this force was composed of the Han and Chinese-speaking Muslims (ancestors of today’s Hui 回 nationality) in an unknown ratio. The other three subgroups were administrative officials (including the higher officials who were almost invariably Manchus and Mongols), merchants (who had established themselves in the region prior to Qing conquest and whose numbers swelled dramatically between 1759 and 1864, which made the Han, along with the Khoqandis, the most influential business circle in Xinjiang at the expense of indigenous Musulman businessmen; Millward 1998: 113-168) and settlers residing in civilian agricultural colonies. Thus, apart from being an object of holy war waged by Muslims against infidels, due to their privileged status the Han also personified the oppressive and invasive Qing domination in Xinjiang. These two factors often made the Han victims of brutal annihilation during the insurgency, which, after its initial outburst in Kucha, erupted practically simultaneously in all of the Seven Cities. *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* contains numerous descriptions of horrid atrocities committed by revolting Muslims.

Notably, Sayrami does not use the term *Manchu* in his text description of the khojas-Ya’qub Beg insurgency. This might be due to weakening Manchu occupational and language identity already by early eighteenth century (Elliott 278-9, 294). In fact, Manchus constituted 76,6% of 619 high officials serving in Xinjiang before 1884 and there were approximately 12.000 Manchu bannermen deployed in Xinjiang in mid-eighteenth century (Kim 16). Similarly, Sayrami disregards several other groups living in north Xinjiang, e.g. the Shiwe and the Daghur who were moved to Xinjiang from today’s Manchuria in order to protect the border and quell uprisings. Thus, the term *Khitay* as used by Sayrami could have actually

¹⁶ According to Baytur, the name *Khitay* comes from the ethnonym *Kitan*, an ethnic group who constituted the main element of the Liao dynasty (遼, 907-1125). After its devastation by the Mongols, the Kitans migrated west and founded the Kara-Khitay empire (西遼 Xi Liao, 1124-1218) in Central Asia. During their reign over China (1271-1378), Mongols used the term *Khitay* to denote northern China and northern Han population (the corresponding Chinese term being 漢人 *Hàn rén*), whereas southern China and southern Han population were classified as *Chin* (南人 *Nán rén*; Sayrami 1988: 722-3).

included several disparate ethnic elements clearly perceived by the indigenous *Musulman* as a homogenous group of infidel intruders.

Sayrami further distinguishes two other indigenous non-*Musulman* ethnic communities that fall under the category of infidel. The first were the *Qalmaq* (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 200). These were the Torghut Mongols who in late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries migrated from today's eastern Zungharia westwards to escape Khalkha and Zunghar expansion. They settled north of the Caspian Sea, where they indeed came to be called Kalmyks. However, in 1771 about 70,000 Kalmyks came back to the Qing, seeking refuge from the Russian taxes. They were permitted resettlement in Zungharia and eastern part of Southern Circuit of Xinjiang (Millward 2001: 91-2). The second group recognized by Sayrami, the *Solon* (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 199), was a Manchu tribal formation resettled from the Heilongjiang province. Finally, Sayrami also designates as infidels the foreign nationals of Caucasian origin, namely the *Urus* ('Russians,' e.g. Sayrami 1988: 324), and the *Fereng* (from Arabic, originally the word *Franc*, meaning 'Westerners'; *ibid.*).

Importantly for this research, besides religious identity of its bearer the term *Musulman* also conveyed several other patterns of self-identification by the Heptapolis population. These covert connotations become clear as the term *Musulman* is juxtaposed with other names applied by Sayrami to communities residing in Seven Cities. First, we can infer that the term *Musulman* means *Turkic Muslim*. There were numerous other Islamic communities living in the region, which Sayrami identified by distinct terms. The most prominent of these were the *Tungani*,¹⁷ Chinese-speaking Muslims or Tungans, ancestors of today's Hui. Similarly to the Han, the Hui were present in the region already at the moment of Qing annexation of Seven Cities (Millward 1998: 113). In Qing sources, they are generally not considered a separate ethnic category, and are included into the Han under terms 'Han-Muslim' (漢回 *Hàn huí*) and 'interior Muslim' (內地回民 *nèidì Huímín*). Therefore, similarly to the Han population, their exact number in Xinjiang at that time is not certain. As mentioned above, after the conquest, the Hui formed an unknown portion of the 12,000-strong Green Standard troops stationed in Xinjiang and lived in agricultural colonies in Eastern Circuit and Zungharia. In the Seven Cities region, they formed sizable military and merchant communities in Urumchi and Yarkend (Kim 41-6). Apart from residing in agricultural colonies, Tungans also made living by activities related to supplying the Qing garrison. In fact, Qing conquest of Xinjiang availed Tungans of the opportunity to escape strained living conditions in Gansu (Lipman 94-5).

During the Khoja-Ya'qub Beg insurgency, Tungans were second most powerful element in the Kucha insurgency. In reality, it appears that with the exception of Khotan, it was Tungans who started the rebellion in each of the Seven Cities (Kim 37-57). The *Musulman* and Tungans were capable of forming a military alliance, such as during the outbreak of the Khoja rebellion in Kucha (Sayrami 1988: 182-83) or joint attack of both groups on Urumchi (Sayrami 1988: 277). However, generally there was strong distrust between the two groups that frequently resulted in bitter animosity, such as when the Tungans controlled Yarkend (Sayrami 1988: 219). Occasionally, even Tungans' adherence to Islam was disputed by the *Musulman*, who perceived the Tungans as equally 'infidel' as the Han

¹⁷ There are several theories on the origin of the name Tungan. Some Tungans in today's Xinjiang are convinced that it reflects their alleged origin in eastern Gansu province (Dōnggān 東干; field research, Xinjiang 2000). For other theories, see e.g. Dyer 1977.

and indiscriminately massacred both groups, such as during the revolt in Khotan (Sayrami 1988: 380).

Apart from the Tungans, Sayrami identifies other communities adherent to Islam in Heptapolis. The above excerpt takes note of the *Taranchi*,¹⁸ the descendants of a disputed number of Turkic Muslim, or in other words *Musulman*, families from Seven Cities first resettled to Zungharia by the Zunghars in the beginning of seventeenth century (Kim 52) and then in larger numbers shortly after the Qing conquest (Millward 1998: 50). The purpose of the resettlement was to engage the Turkic Muslims in farming and soil cultivation, which were skills in high demand north of the Tianshan due to mostly pastoral nature of local economy, and after the region was depopulated by decimation of Zunghars. Other Islamic communities residing in Seven Cities recognized by Sayrami are the *Hindi*, Muslims from India (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 641), the *Keshmiri* (ibid.), the *Afghani* (ibid.) and the *Bedekhshi*, 'Badakhshanis' (ibid.). Sayrami is further aware of the existence of the *Ereb*, 'Arabs' (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 43), the *Ejem* 'Persians' (ibid.) and the *Tajik* (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 188). Thus, the use of the term *Musulman* as contrastive to *Tungan*, *Taranchi* and other Muslim groups emphasizes the Turkic origin of the inhabitants of Seven Cities.

Further, the term *Musulman* clearly denotes *sedentary* population of Seven Cities. Other Islamic groups native to the region were the *Qyrghyz* (Kyrgyz; e.g. Sayrami 1988: 211) and the *Qazaq* (Kazakh; e.g. Sayrami 1988: 264). These nomadic tribal formations were clearly differentiated by Sayrami from the majority (sedentary and agriculturalist) population of sedentary *Musulman* owing to their different (nomadic and pastoral) mode of life. Finally, the term *Musulman* pointed to the *indigenous* population of Seven Cities. During his rule over Seven Cities, Ya'qub Beg relied predominantly on his own Muslim troops brought from Khoqand, which were, in perception of Sayrami, composed of two main elements. Apart from the nomadic *Qipchaq* (Kipchak; e.g. Sayrami 1988: 215), it was the Turkic sedentary population of Khoqand, which was a community very similar to the *Musulman* of Heptapolis in terms of religion, culture, history and other characteristics. However, the *Musulman* of Seven Cities viewed the newcomers as a distinct and alien group and called them *Enjanliq*, an 'Andijani' (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 224). This sharp distinction was exacerbated by the Andijanians' higher social and economical status, namely commercial and tax privileges granted by the Qing even prior to the rebellion, as well as by the fact that high posts in Ya'qub Beg's military and administration were also held by Andijanians (Kim 106-7). The entrée of Ya'qub Beg, who was himself also a Muslim from Andijan, into the Seven Cities region is by Sayrami often referred to as 'occupation' or 'raid' (*istila*; e.g. Sayrami 31).

Dynamics of Accord

In short, building on Barth's boundary approach makes it possible to determine that Sayrami's term *Musulman*, when posited contrastively to labels denoting other communities of Qing Xinjiang, pointed specifically to *sedentary Turkic Muslims indigenous to Seven Cities*. In other words, apart from religious identity, the collective name *Musulman* also distinguishes its bearer according to descent, mode of life and place of residence. Judging by the text as well as by factual unfolding of the insurgency, the boundary of the *Musulman* group was delineated quite firmly – the *Musulman* were clearly aware that they belonged into their

¹⁸ One theory traces the origin of the name *Taranchi* to the Chaghatay word *taranchi*, meaning 'farmer' (Millward 1998: 271). Uyghurs today believe the term comes from the Uyghur word *térimchi*, meaning 'harvester.' (Field research, Xinjiang 2004).

community, and not to another. This assumption is confirmed when we expand method of analysis from the boundary focus to examination of the cultural substance enclosed within the boundary set by the name *Musulman*, or in other words when we explore the dynamics of accord, which cemented notions of communal identity as felt by the *Musulman*.

Perhaps the most evident example of the notion of common *Musulman* identity is Sayrami's use of the toponym *Yette Sheher* (from Turkic and Persian), meaning 'Seven Cities', the 'Heptapolis.' Ildikó Bellér-Hann remarks that while the term Seven Cities itself is very suitable because it conveys the reality of both difference and similarity of the individual cities, it tends to emphasize 'if not exactly territorial unity, at least features that these settlements had in common' (Bellér-Hann 39-40). Administrative unification and other Qing measures seeking to run Xinjiang as a single polity had their predecessors in past homogenization patterns, such as Turkicization starting in the ninth century, Islamization starting in the tenth century or subjugation of the whole area by the Zunghars in the seventeenth century. But it was only after the Qing annexation in 1759 that the previously rather loosely bound *poleis* of the Tarim Basin were forged into a single administrative unit and the seven respective cities turned into a factual 'Heptapolis,' a translation of *Yette Sheher* which would be perhaps more suitable than the term 'Seven Cities.' Even though the local power rested in the hands of begs who were appointed for each city separately and enjoyed a high degree of local autonomy in their action, Sayrami understood the overall political and social situation in Seven Cities under the Qing as a single phenomenon. Events taking place in Turfan-Komul-Barköl and Ili region were included by Sayrami into his description of the insurgency, although these regions were part of Eastern and Northern Circuit respectively. Evidently, in Sayrami's perception the *Musulman* and Taranchi population of Xinjiang formed a group with common religious, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, occupational and other characteristics.

The factual unfolding of the insurgency also testifies to a considerable strength of notions of common identity of the *Musulman* of the Seven Cities region. After the practically simultaneous outbreak of revolts in all of the Seven Cities, as well as in Ili, the local rebels established largely autonomous rebel regimes in each city. However, the Kuchean khojas almost immediately campaigned against the other cities in order to bring them under unified Kuchean administration. Similarly, the *Musulman* often fiercely resisted Ya'qub Beg's invasion because they perceived it as an occupation by an alien force. Similarly, after Ya'qub Beg conquered southern and eastern Xinjiang,¹⁹ he turned the territory into a single polity united under centralized administration system and military command.

Sayrami's focus on cohesiveness of the *Musulman* community is further testified by the description of the individual cities given in the Conclusion to *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*. Sayrami specifically lists Kashgar, Yarkend, Khotan, Aksu, Üchturpan, Kucha and Turfan as the respective seven cities²⁰ and describes typical traits of the people living in each city. We can for example learn that Kashgar cannot be competed with in terms of skillfulness of local craftsmen, knowledge of scholars and trading abilities of merchants – for this reason, Kashgar is nicknamed 'second Bukhara' (Sayrami 1988: 639). People of Yarkend are known to respect travelers on journey, but travel rarely themselves (Sayrami 1988: 641). Similarly, people of

¹⁹ Northern Circuit, i.e. the Ili Valley reaching to Lake Balkhash, was annexed by Russia in 1870. Its eastern part was returned to the Qing after conclusion of the Treaty of St. Petersburg in 1881.

²⁰ There are several variants of list of the seven cities of the Heptapolis (for a useful summary, see Bellér-Hann 39). A large portion of Western scholarship refers to the region by the name *Altisheher*, Six Cities (e.g. Millward 1998), a term neither used nor mentioned by Sayrami.

Khotan are extraordinarily stingy (Sayrami 1988: 642), people of Kucha have reasonable intellectual and manual capabilities but are not too happy about outsiders coming to the city (Sayrami 1988: 659), people of Turfan are honest, sincere and know no treachery (Sayrami 1988: 660) etc. Notably, Sayrami interprets the special characteristics of people from respective cities as local dissimilarities within one entity. Another important attribute of common cultural identity of inhabitants of Heptapolis is the description of sacred tombs and burial sites (*mazar*) of Sufi saints, masters and patrons located in each city. These shrines constituted important identity sites and were visited and venerated by the *Musulman* of the whole Xinjiang (Sayrami 1988: 668; Bellér-Hann 349-50). In some cases, several pilgrimages to such local site could even be equivalent to one pilgrimage to Mecca, which is one of the pillars of Islamic practice. The *mazar* worship is a strong marker of Uyghur identity which retains its large significance until today (Dawut 2007). In short, Sayrami does not mention any local differences in culture, language or customs of the *Musulman* in respective oases and describes Heptapolis as a homogenous cultural realm with a common heritage and symbology of religion, language, political tradition, culture and other identity markers.

Similarly, Sayrami's narrative of the early history of the Seven Cities region and its residents also tends to highlight the aspect of commonality. He sees Seven Cities as a region which has been culturally and religiously compact since the Islamization of Uyghuristan by Khizir Khoja, son of Tughluq Temür (ruled 1347-63; Sayrami 1988: 119). Sayrami even anachronistically refers to the region by the name 'Seven Cities' when narrating the region's ancient myths and legends. Another term used by Sayrami throughout the text is *Moghulistan*, which is portrayed as a unitary realm located between Bariköl and Komul in the east, Lake Balkhash in the north, Ferghana valley in the west and the Karakorum Range in the south, which had been ruled by the *Moghuls*, descendants of Chinggis Khan (Sayrami 1988: 67-97, 636-7). When recounting the myths of creation of man and Turkic peoples, Sayrami traces the genetic origins of all the inhabitants of Seven Cities to Moghul, who was a fifth-generation descendant of Türk, who was a son of Yapheth, who was a son of Prophet Noah, who was a son of Adam, the first human (Sayrami 1988: 41-46, 52-53). The conversion of Turkic peoples to Islam occurred during the life of Oghuz, grandson of Moghul (Sayrami 1988: 53-4). Thus, Sayrami views the inhabitants of the Seven Cities region as genetically related by having the same ancestry.

The above expressions of the notion of communality of the *sedentary Turkic followers of Islam indigenous to Seven Cities*, as articulated in by Sayrami in *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*, articulated by Sayrami in *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* can be compared to several theories which point to the existence of pre-modern common proto-national identities, or in other words foundations of future nations. The above paragraphs demonstrated that the *Musulman* constituted a clearly defined community as understood by Barth's boundary approach. Further, Sayrami's perceptions of *Musulman* communal identity resemble some of the dimensions used by Anthony Smith to characterize an ethnic community (ethnie). In particular, the *Musulman* possessed common myth of descent (Oghuz-Moghul-Türk-Yapheth-Noah), shared history (the Moghul legacy), distinctive shared culture (no major differences among respective oasis-based identities), association with a specific territory (the Seven Cities region and northern Xinjiang) and, at least in the upper stratum of the society, a sense of solidarity (Sayrami's focus on common aspects of *Musulman* identity; Smith 1986: 22-31; Smith 2009: 27).

The above criteria even enable us to compare the *Musulman* to some definitions of a nation, which consider the fact of *sharing* certain characteristics by a group of individuals as a

decisive criterion of communal, or national, identity. In Sayrami's understanding, the *Musulman* definitely possessed *memory* of common past and were bound together by *linguistic and cultural ties* facilitating social communication easier within than beyond their group – one of criteria that define a nation according to Miroslav Hroch (Hroch 1996: 79). Ancient myths of common descent related by Sayrami are a basis for *Musulmans'* sense of kindredness or sameness, or in another words sense of belonging to a group resembling a nation (Connor 1984: xiv). *Shared culture* as a system of ideas, signs, associations and ways of behaving and communicating is one nation's characteristics as proposed by Ernst Gellner (Gellner 7). The spread of khoja-Yaqub Beg's insurgency signals the fact that the *Musulman* carried a certain *imagined* unity within geographical *limits* of Xinjiang – two traits of a nation according to Benedict Anderson (Anderson 7). Sayrami's emphasis on the notion of communal identity of the people of Seven Cities indicates his *feeling* of belonging to the community and willingness to be included in the group *Musulman* (Seton-Watson 5; Anderson 6; Connor 1978: 156; Barth 15).

In the same way, the khoja-Ya'qub Beg insurgency also bears some traits of emerging national movement. Some factors behind the outbreak of the rebellion remind of John Breuilly's definition of mobilization and urban communal conflict – the Muslims of Seven Cities rebelled because they were subject to imperial rule and domination by new indigenous ruling elite (begs). Also, the immigrant Han and autochthonous Turkic Muslim merchants and settlers, or in another words two groups markedly distinguished by religion and language, were in competition over resources, namely market and land (Breuilly 20, 22). We can also observe that the khoja rebellion embodied social tension that could be mapped onto linguistic and religious division and as such resembled an impetus to national movement (Hroch 86). The khoja insurgency also generated a pattern not dissimilar to ethnicism as defined by Anthony Smith – acts of ethnic resistance and cultural restoration, namely the specific conditions of a socio-economic challenge and a culture contact of two reactive communities (Smith 1986: 50, 55-6).

As indicated in the Introduction to this dissertation, by drawing on texts written by Uyghur intelligentsia and politicians, this research outlines views of indigenous elites. Due to Sayrami's social status and educational background, we can only speculate about the degree of social penetration of his notions of *Musulman* communal identity among common people of Heptapolis at the time. On the other hand, given that Sayrami was a superb historian, he most probably recorded *prevalent* and *relevant* beliefs of the time, not marginal or insignificant patterns. Sayrami's self-declared intention to write *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* as a *record* of events for future generations, along with his eventual detachment from political life and focus on academic career signal that *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* was most probably not penned as work of political agitation by an activist bent on inventing or fabricating an illusion of *Musulman* communal identity. Instead, *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* is rather a historical record of events written to fulfill a moral obligation imposed by God. Thus, the text likely reveals existent *Musulman* notions of community, which were presumably not limited to elite circles.

Thus, we can conclude that sedentary Turkic Muslims native to Xinjiang at the close of imperial era were well aware of their belonging to a clearly defined category called *Musulman*. In other words, the *Musulman* possessed a definite feeling of communal identity defined mainly by shared name, religion, language, mode of life, place of residence, ancestry and culture. These identity markers, when shared, clearly defined their bearer as *Musulman*; when not shared, they transparently signaled that their bearer belonged into another community. Thus, the idea of *Musulman* communal identity constituted the basis of the idea

of modern Uyghur nation whose emergence is examined in subsequent chapters of this dissertation. The dynamics fortifying *Musulman* perceptions of commonality, which I call the *community principle*, is one of two major forces that affected the rise of modern Uyghur national consciousness in early modern period between 1884 and 1949.

Dynamics of Discord

The above section gave examples of common identity of the *Turkic sedentary Muslims native to Heptapolis* at the end of pre-modern period. The following section examines the opposite principle – dynamics of discord, which generated behavioral disunity and factionalism of the *Musulman*, regardless of their common identity. Again, the first passage of *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* translated above is indicative. Besides employing terms that reveal quite an advanced degree of distinct *Musulman*, Tungan and Taranchi identity based on shared religion, descent, mode of life, language and other markers, the excerpt contains a second type of terms used to label the region's population. Such denominations identify the bearer according to social status and function. This mode of identification is represented by several words meaning 'people' or 'populace' – *ahale*, *ehl*, *khelq* and *adem*. Other synonymous terms frequently appearing in *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* are *puqra* (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 182) and *khalayiq* (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 266). Apart from their general meaning 'people', these terms often imply 'common people' or even 'poor people,' as shown by the usage of the term *ahale* in the above quoted excerpt. Another term for common people at the time was *alban-kash*, the payer of *alban*, the head-tax. The head-tax payers could be further divided into landowning peasants, tenants on government lands and tenants of private landowners (Fletcher 1978a: 73).

Sayrami's use of terms denoting 'people' or 'common people' is contrasted by terminology denoting members of the hated Qing administration, such as the term 'tyrant' (*zalim*) used in the excerpt. Another synonymous term used in *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* is 'person indulging in oppression' (*zulumkhor*; Sayrami 1988: 185). Combined traits of cruelty and religious infidelity are also quite frequent when characterizing the Qing officials, such as the expression 'infidel tyrants' (*mushrik zalim*; Sayrami 1988: 255). However, Sayrami declares on several occasions that it was the corruption and tyranny of the Qing administration that was the most significant underlying reason of the *khojas*' rebellion (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 182, 632). Although not specifically mentioned by Sayrami, we know that another factor contributing to the outbreak of the rebellion was the previously mentioned conflict over resources between the *Musulman* and the Han. Furthermore, besides the emotionally tinged expressions, *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* also contains numerous neutral references to Qing administration apparatus, represented in the above excerpt by the word *wali* meaning 'governor,' here rather in the general sense of 'high official.'

Nevertheless, it is the references to divisions and antagonisms *within* the ethnic category *Musulman* which are more significant for this research. Judging from the text and content of *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*, it appears that there existed several kinds of discord among the *Musulman* at the end of pre-modern period. The first kind was fragmentation according to territory and *locus* of residence. Although Sayrami portrayed Hexapolis as a single territorial, cultural and political entity, it is evident that local identities continued to play important role in a way only slightly altered since the pre-Qing times. This fact was due to the previously described physical layout of the Seven Cities region – a string of more or less isolated and distant *poleis* around the Taklamakan Desert, several self-sufficient oases in the Turfan Basin and steppe-covered Zunghar Basin separated from each other by demanding mountain ranges.

Not only during the late Qing did this trying geographical layout impede the emergence of unified political organization.

The persistence of local identities in Seven Cities is also obvious from the factual events of the khoja-Ya'qub Beg rebellion. Immediately after the rebels overthrew and massacred the Qing garrison and the Han population of Kucha, the newly enthroned ruler, Rashidin Khan Khoja, sent troops to subjugate other parts of Seven Cities that rose shortly after Kucha. But the local rebel leaders in the other oases put up a fierce resistance against the intended unification under the Kucha regime. For example, the Kuchean army campaigned against Khotanese forces, but was badly defeated and fled. The rebel ruler of Khotan, Hebibula Khan, reprimanded the Kuchean regime for slaughtering good-hearted officials of the Chinese emperor and subsequently allying with malevolent elements and Tungans. Hebibula Khan himself had previously sought military assistance against Kucha from Khoqand; in exchange, he even preferred submission to Khoqandi rule to recognition of Kuchean authority (Sayrami 1988: 380-1). Later, when Ya'qub Beg's invasion of the Seven Cities was imminent, some *Musulman* factions collaborated with the Khoqandis while other factions resisted (e.g. Sayrami 1988: 305-10). Local factionalism and disunity within the Kuchean regime itself was the main cause of the defeat of the khoja rebellion and subsequent control of the whole territory by Ya'qub Beg (Kim 58-9).

Similarly, even though Sayrami did not specifically mention so, we can assume that there also existed several inner sub-boundaries within the *Musulman* category. Good description of internal disparate communities included by Sayrami into the *Musulman* community can be found in the account of expedition by Russian scientist Nikolay Mikhaylovich Przhevalskiy (1839-1888) from Kyakhta to springs of the Yellow River in 1885. En route, Przhevalskiy traversed the territory of the newly founded Xinjiang province and took note of ethnic self-perception of the local population. He records that

‘...in entire eastern Turkestan, there is not a universal type of inhabitants. Various nationalities, which have migrated into the region, have intermingled here... Along with the isolated location of the oases of eastern Turkestan, their mutual rivalry and grudge have obstructed the unification of the inhabitants, which until today are only called by the towns and oases which they live in, without the denomination of common nationality.’ (Przhevalskij 304)

In the except, Przhevalskiy refers to at the time common means of identification of a person by employing the name of the oasis of the person's residence and attaching to it the suffix *-lik* (phonetic variations *-liq*, *-luq* and *-lük*; meaning ‘coming from’ or ‘living in’ a certain place), producing forms such as *Qeshqerlik* (a Kashgari) or *Khotenlik* (a Khotani). Interestingly, Sayrami does not use this way of identification in his works, neither does he use the terms ‘Turk,’ ‘Turki,’ ‘eastern Turkestan’ or ‘eastern Turk,’ does not appear in Sayrami's *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*. Przhevalskiy's account further identifies the *Loplik* living near Lop Nor, the *Machin* living in the area between Cherchen and Khotan and in Yarkend, the *Ardbul* living in Kashgar and Aksu, the *Khorasan* living in Bay, Kucha and Korla, the *Qul* living in Chire and Yarkend and the *Dolan* living in the Maralbeshi and Merkit area. It was the Machin who considered themselves indigenous to the region (Przhevalskij 242-57, 303-4, 368, 385). These, and most probably also other ethnocultural groups living in the Seven Cities region, were by Sayrami simply included under the grouping *Musulman*.

Furthermore, Sayrami's text suggests that there also existed severe disunity among inhabitants of the same oasis. Again, Conclusion to *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* can be taken as an

example. One of the principal issues Sayrami examined in the description of mentality of the people of a particular city was their sense of unity. He tells us that for example people of Khotan are united in words, actions and goals, whereas people from Aksu or Üchturpan have no concept of partnership or community (Sayrami 1988: 642, 649, 656). As the following passage illustrates, this factionalism and disunity again contributed to the smooth reconquest of Southern Circuit by Qing troops:

‘...*Mirab* Ehmet Beg was appointed governor of Khotan and *yüzbashi* Tokhti Niyaz was appointed governor of Yarkend. Because when the beg was returning after he had conquered Khotan, he wanted to fight with the imperial soldiers. So he ordered his secretary to take hay, fodder, flour and rice to Maralbeshi. Tokhti Niyaz was put in charge and sent with the provisions. When he came to Maralbeshi and waited, suddenly a Qing commander arrived there. *Yüzbashi* Tokhti Niyaz took the provisions, donated them to the soldiers of the Great Emperor and declared: “When I heard that many soldiers of the Great Emperor came from far away to call on such worthless people as us, and that they arrived in Aksu, I took the grain, which I had myself planted, along with some of my own animals and went ahead to welcome the soldiers of the Great Emperor.” The commander was very happy, praised the good heart of Tokhti Niyaz and, because of this merit, appointed him the governor of Yarkend...’ (Sayrami 1988: 607-8)

Numerous passages of *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* seem to indicate that the disunity of the *Musulman* native to a single city was a result of social stratification and sharp divide between common people and indigenous ruling elites. As described earlier, the lower levels of power in Southern Circuit were entrusted to begs, who were appointed by and received substantial benefits from the Qing administration. Begg’s substantial autonomy in ruling practices resulted in corruption, namely various kinds of illegal taxes and surcharges imposed on the common taxpayers. In other words, in the eyes of ordinary Muslims, begs became integral part of the Qing administrative system and as such were despised in much the same way, regardless of their *Musulman* identity and religious creed. In a way, the begs were caught between ‘two worlds’ of the religious mandate of Islam and the political mandate of the Qing (Newby 1998). Sayrami states that the oppression by begs was a reason behind the khoja rebellion equally significant as the oppression by the Qing (Sayrami 1988: 182). During the outbreak of rebellion in Kucha, the crowd murdered a former beg who refused to become the leader of the uprising on the grounds of loyalty to the Qing (Sayrami 1988: 183-4).

The divide between common people and ruling stratum was not surmounted even after the Kuchean regime took power. Sayrami makes an uncompromising evaluation of khojas, stating that they were different neither from begs nor from Qing officials in terms of mismanagement, corruption and extortion. Sayrami even opines that during the thirty-seven months of their rule, khojas amassed an enormous amount of wealth, but have not used it for the welfare of the people. At the same time, they were utterly incompetent in running state affairs:

‘...They neither found relief for themselves, nor created peace for the common people. During the time they were in charge of the realm, difficulties and inconveniences arose for the common people. Therefore, after the khojas were gone, no one missed them nor wished for their return and no one thought in good terms of them. All the families, clans and people of the land were dissatisfied with them...’ (Sayrami 1988: 324-5)

Sayrami's explicit listings of khojas' misgovernment further disclose his motivation for writing *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* – to record events in order for future generations to be aware of the lot of common people and to be better able to establish efficient and humane government. Interestingly, diction of this appraisal of Kuchean khojas is almost identical with Sayrami's criticism of the pre-Qing khoja theocracy (Sayrami 2000: 25-6). Thus, Sayrami reveals his concern with the khoja insurgency not from the perspective of *Musulman* holy warrior, but from the point of view of an enlightened intellectual who extols virtues of good government regardless of its religious creed and genetic origin. Indeed, Sayrami's deep concern with the fate of common people makes his work transitory between the classical approach of Turko-Islamic histories, which perceived events mainly through the prism of religion, and modern historiography, which was concerned with progress and welfare of mankind (Duara 33-4). This quality of Sayrami's approach is well exemplified in one of the final passages *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī*'s Second Epic:

'...To sum up, the poor and weak who could no longer withstand the bitter oppression of immoral and deluded infidels, sought comfort and hope from God, the Lord of Life, till their eyes were full of tears. God heard their prayers and lamentations and bestowed the Kuchean khojas upon the tyrants. The people rejoiced as if they had been salvaged from the tortures of hell and as if they had entered the paradise and the world of eternal delight. Cries of joy rose all the way up past the blue dome of Heaven. But khojas soon opened the doors of tyranny, forgetting about their previous nature. The people burst into anger and turned to God again. The mighty God gracefully and kindly fulfilled their prayers and imposed Muhammad Ya'qub Beg upon the khojas. The people prayed and chanted in gratitude for being saved from the despair under the rule and taxation of the Kuchean khojas, and celebrated merrily. But eventually Ataliq Ghazi Bedölet's character changed and he began to commit improper deeds. The patience of the people was depleted once again and they became fed up with the taxation by the state. Shedding tears, they turned to God the Creator and as they demanded and called for the Emperor of China, their cries went past Heaven. In the end, with the consent of God, Lord of Life, the officials of the Emperor of China stepped into Seven Cities. They brought this land under their domination and appended it for the second time to the realm and heritage bequeathed by their great ancestors. All the people, even former officials, cheered like blooming buds as if their own relatives and parents were resurrected back to life... But in this moment of history, again the imperial officials surrendered their conscience and discarded their policy of righteousness, and in a wink of an eye increased their despotism. Once again, the eyes of the poor and miserable filled with tears. Oh God, may your supreme might grant sense of justice to the kings and gracefully show the right path to common people!...' (Sayrami 1988: 632-5)

In sum, Sayrami's interpretation of the khoja-Ya'qub Beg insurgency reveals that there existed sharp inner boundaries within the category *Musulman*. These boundaries delineated differences mainly according to locus of residence and according to social status. Local and social factionalism, or the combination of both, was the main factor that prevented the *Musulman* from attaining their communal interests during the insurgency. At first, Kuchean khojas and other local insurgent regimes in Seven Cities did succeed in overthrowing the Qing administration under the banner of Islam. But after this primary objective was accomplished, they failed to move forward – to form a coalition and establish effective administration uniting all local and social elements throughout Heptapolis. Islam, despite initially being a strong unifying factor for the numerous factions involved, eventually turned out to be only a secondary issue. Religion became prominent only after oppressive Qing heteronomy had become unbearable, but quickly lost its centripetal appeal and building

potential once the Qing administration and Han population was annihilated. Moreover, the elites of both the Kucuban and Ya'qub Beg's administration formed a sharply distinguished social stratum which did not represent interests of lower social strata. Eventually, the khojas and Ya'qub Beg's administration became as oppressive as the infidel Qing system against which the insurgency was originally aimed. Indeed, the oppressive *Musulman* administrators during the insurgency were not infrequently labeled by exactly the same terms as the previous Qing officials. The fall of Ya'qub Beg's realm was even marked by defections of *Musulman* soldiers to the Qing troops whose return into the Seven Cities region was often welcomed by local Turkic Muslim population. Different ethnicity and religion suddenly did not matter anymore for ordinary *Musulman* in the case of the Qing troops. *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* contains many powerful passages similar to the one above, which emphasize the difficult fate of common people plagued by oppressive administration and war atrocities. It seems as if Molla Musa Sayrami, after what he witnessed himself during the insurgency, put down the sword of political activism and picked up the historian's pen to wage war against social injustice.

Although Sayrami does not use the modern term 'nation' (*millet*) nor he refers to the national idea itself, the communal action of the *Musulman* as portrayed in *Tārīkh-i Hamīdī* can be related to several theses and interpretations of national movement and nationalism. It has been mentioned that Smith considers one of the dimensions of an ethnic community (*ethnie*) 'a strong sense of belonging and an active solidarity, which in time of stress and danger can override class, factional or regional divisions within the community'. In this sense, the *Musulman* would more resemble a pre-*ethnie* group, such as an ethnic category (Smith 1986: 30). According to Hroch, a nation must show 'a conception of equality of all members of the group organized as a civil society' (Hroch 1996: 79). In Anderson's assumption, a nation must be imagined as a 'deep, horizontal comradeship,' regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that occurs within the community (Anderson 7). In Gellner's view, nationalism demands cultural homogeneity and school-transmitted nature of culture (Gellner 39). As hypothesized by Breuilly, nationalism requires that the interests and values of the nation 'take priority over all other interests and values' (Breuilly 2). Sayrami's account showed that the ultimate communal action taken by the *Musulman* during the khoja-Ya'qub Beg insurgency lacked the principle of solidarity and comradeship generated by shared communal identity, described by various formulations in all of the above definitions. Thus, although the *Musulman* of Seven Cities did manifest a strong sense of communal identity in the initial stages of the revolt, they eventually did not regard their communal interest as superior to interests of local and social factions.

Actions of the *Musulman* in late Qing can also be tentatively related to some definitions of pre-modern societies. If we adopt Gellner's definition of agro-literate society, we can see that the society of insurgent Heptapolis was topped by clerisy (khojas) and other religious notables. The geo-political arrangement of Seven Cities prior to the insurgency was a fusion of large empire and partially self-governing communities. During the insurgency, the khojas had no interest in promoting cultural or social homogeneity (Gellner 8-14). If we refer to Anderson's approach, we can see that the *Musulman* society had some characteristics of both religious community and dynastic realm. There existed sacred language and script wielded by the elite (Arabic in religious affairs and Persian and/or Chaghatay in administrative matters), there was a strong divine mandate for the ruling elite and the rebel regimes displayed firm unity of sacral and secular power. The khoja-Ya'qub Beg insurgency was an effective rejection of another form of state form as offered by the Qing, while the proclamation of theocratic realms by khojas and Ya'qub Beg (even though he was well aware of the changing world order in international relations) signaled a nostalgic restoration of the

original lost paradise of timeless and perfect Islamic social order. Common people subscribed to the central divinity of religious leadership and submitted to the hierarchy demanded by it, and were subjects rather than citizens in the sense that they clearly had no capacity to control the state affairs (Anderson: 13-9; Armstrong 16). Parallels of unity of political and religious power of khojas as Sufi insurgent leaders can be found elsewhere in the Islamic world, such as in the *mahdi* insurgency of Muhammad Ahmad in the Sudan in 1881-1898 (Hourani 313). Breuilly observed that religious organizations are ‘important for ethnic identity because in pre-modern conditions such organizations penetrate the masses of a population to a degree that few administrations of large polities can attain’ (Breuilly 238). The overemphasis on religious issues, albeit in accord with Islamic universalism, which strives to eliminate ethnic identity, caused the gradual loss of credibility of the khoja-Ya’qub Beg leadership for common people – they eventually started to desire Qing restoration that paradoxically terminated the existence of the insurgent Islamic realm.

We can conclude that despite the existence of a clear notion of communal identity among *indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims* of late Qing Xinjiang, conflicting interests of *Musulman* local groups and social strata inhibited transformation of their common identity into unified action intent on forwarding *Musulman* communal interests. In the moment of crisis, the awareness of communal identity, itself of an unknown degree of social penetration, yielded to varying interests of subgroups within the *Musulman* category. The inner boundaries within the community became more prominent than its outer boundaries and factionalism prevailed over common objectives and shared identity to a degree that caused the collapse of the joint *Musulman* cause. The centrifugal dynamics of diverging particularisms is the second of the two most prominent forces that molded modern Uyghur national consciousness in early modern period – I will call this pattern the *disunity principle*. Subsequent chapters of this dissertation will relate more instances when, despite firm awareness of communal identity and clearly defined communal interest, indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims of Xinjiang did not act as a single nation throughout the entire early modern era until 1949.

2. Transfer of National Idea and National Agitation (1880s – 1920s)

The second chapter of this dissertation explores how the patterns of *Musulman* communal identity and interest of pre-modern era, outlined in previous chapter, evolved into nascent notions of Uyghur national identity and nationalism in Xinjiang in the very late imperial and early republican period (1880s-1920s). It will be again pointed to Xinjiang's immemorial position as a crossroads of ideologies and trends stemming from both the East and the West, as the emergence of modern Uyghur national consciousness was directly inspired by modernization and nation-formation processes that were at the time occurring in several other regions and cultural milieus. Particularly, ideas of Han anti-Manchism and nationalism spreading in China proper laid foundations for republican China's official ideology of 'five-nationalities' republicanism' (五族共和 *wǔzú gōnghé*), which included the *Musulman* of Xinjiang under the term Hui (回) and therefore was later to have a direct influence on their ideas of nation and nationalism. A more significant stimulus for formation of Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Muslim elites' national consciousness in the period between 1880s and 1920s was modernism of the Ottoman empire. There, reforms of late nineteenth century, which originally aimed at modernizing the Ottoman state, were provided a basis for some elites and intelligentsia campaigning towards transformation of pre-modern Ottoman subjects into modern Turkish nation, defined most importantly by language. Some activists were also supporters of pan-Turkism, which championed the idea of unity of Turkic peoples, including the Turkic population of Xinjiang. Comparable identity-formation and modernization trends took place within Turkic communities of Czarist Russia. This process was spearheaded by Tatar enlighteners seeking to improve the status of Muslims within the Russian empire. The main avenue to this goal was a reform of obsolete religious learning facilities into modernized, vernacular-based education system that would be capable of turning the students into nationally-conscious individuals. Another arena of Tatar activism was publishing of newspapers and other periodicals printed in vernaculars, which were intended to inform their readership about contemporary developments in surrounding world. It will be shown that Tatar modernism, also referred to as Jadidism, had a strong impact on formation of national consciousness of all Turkic communities in Czarist Russia. The course lasted for some time as a result of affirmative action taken by the Soviet state toward formation of national identities Central Asian Muslim communities.

Further, the chapter will show how Turkic modernism of the Ottoman and Russian empire reached Xinjiang in late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The transfer occurred through affluent Xinjiang Turkic entrepreneur and merchant families, whose members travelled or lived in the Ottoman empire, in Turkic areas of Russia or in Europe. There, they came into contact with contemporary modern trends and imported them into their home milieu. As a result, in southwestern part of Xinjiang in the cities of Kashgar and Atush, local Musabay family promoted and sponsored first modern schools in the 1880s. In 1910s, the Musabays even contracted several Ottoman teachers for their schools in Xinjiang, which put the area under direct influence of Ottoman nationalist ideology. Northern Xinjiang was in a similar way strongly influenced by Russian Tatars, who settled and founded first modern schools in cities of Ghulja, Chöchek, Tarbaghatay and Urumchi since late nineteenth century. In 1910s and 1920s, enlighteners headed by members of the Muhiti family started modern schools in the Turfan region, for which they contracted Tatar teachers from Russia. Thus, northern and eastern Xinjiang was under impact of modernist trends of Turkic Jadidism in Russia, later also of early Soviet policy. Consequently, the period from 1880s to 1920s experienced a gradual spread of modern education and first attempts at founding Turkic

periodicals and cultural societies. As pointed out by other specialists referring to developments in other regions (Seton-Watson 1977; Gellner 1983; Smith 1996; Hobsbawm 1996; Anderson 1991), it was mainly these three symptoms of modernity that gradually ushered modern Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia into perceiving their community as a modern nation.

The chapter will also argue that analogously to modernity as such, the idea of modern Uyghur nation was probably imported to Xinjiang context from Turkic communities in Russian Central Asia. Namely, it will be shown that Jadids of Central Asia became acquainted with studies of European Turkologists of the nineteenth century, who were the first to draw a linguistic, genetic and cultural connection between ancient Uyghurs inhabiting the Xinjiang region and the community which Molla Musa Sayrami in his works termed the *Musulman*. As will be illustrated by journalistic articles written by Nezerghoja Abdusémet assembled in the anthology *Bright Shores of Knowledge (Yoruq Sahillar)*, the idea that Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims are in fact a nation (*millet*) descended from ancient Uyghurs appeared in Central Asia at least as early as in 1910s. From there, enlightened entrepreneurs, Jadidist teachers and modernist activists brought this concept to Xinjiang.

Despite the fact that sufficient research of this historical period is restrained by lack of contemporary primary sources and field research, it will be demonstrated on works of two enlightened poets and activists, Abdukhaliq Uyghur (*Abdukhalıq Uyghur Shé'irliri*) and Memtili Tewpiq (*Memtili Ependi Shé'irliri*), that throughout 1920s at least some Xinjiang Turkic elites arrived at perceptions of communal identity and interest that were markedly different from those of traditional intellectuals, such as Molla Musa Sayrami. Abdukhaliq Uyghur and Memtili Tewpiq did not anymore see their community as a group of *Musulman*. Instead, they envisioned their people as modern 'nation' (*millet*) of famed ancient Uyghur ancestry bound tightly to their homeland by shared national decline and interest in national well-being. Similarly to other cases of nation-formation processes (Hroch 1996), one important goal of their writings and actions was agitation of their community toward national awakening. In this way, Abdukhaliq Uyghur and Memtili Tewpiq articulated a fundamental shift from late imperial elite perceptions of communal identity, which was based to a substantial degree on religion, social stratum or locus of residence, to modern identification with a community defined in national terms. In their imagination, nation fully replaced religion as the fundamental concept of worldview.

It will also be exposed how the modern and nationally conscious Xinjiang Turkic Muslim intelligentsia defined a new set of communal interests for their nation. Abdukhaliq Uyghur's, Memtili Tewpiq's and other similarly minded activists' efforts were bent on mobilizing their nation to self-improvement and eventual uplifting of its status in Xinjiang. In their perception, the interest of their nation outweighed the interest of a particular social stratum or local faction. Ideas of first modern Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals thus displayed a sense of communal solidarity and image of national interest that sought to trigger a coordinated national mobilization. Similarly to some general patterns illustrated elsewhere (Smith 1986; Breuilly 1993; Hroch 1996), it will also be pointed out that although throughout 1920s Xinjiang Turkic elites saw the goals of mobilization and national movement primarily in cultural arenas and did not generally articulate political objectives, it was the nationally conscious stratum of society cultivated in modern Jadidist schools established from 1880s to 1920s that was in subsequent decade to stage a strongly politicized nationalist movement.

End of Qing Dynasty (1878-1911) and Early Republican Administration (1911-1933)

Simultaneously with gradual collapse of Ya'qub Beg's regime after mid-1870s in Xinjiang, a debate over the profitability of Xinjiang reconquest resounded in Qing military circles in China proper. The side in favor of giving up the vast, barren and restive region, which moreover required regular central subsidy, was represented by Li Hongzhang (李鴻章, 1823-1901), the Governor-General of Zhili (直隸) province and one of the leading promoters of maritime defense of China. The opposing side represented by Zuo Zongtang (左宗棠, 1812-1885), another leading figure of modernizing Qing army who gained merit by suppressing Taiping (太平), Nian (捻) and Tungan rebellions in 1860s and 1870s, argued for reconquest of Xinjiang in order to use the territory as a buffer against territorial expansion of Great Britain and Russia in the direction of the capital (Millward 2007: 125-7). Ultimately, the reconquest faction won the dispute. Following several years of preparations, Zuo Zongtang's well armed, trained and supplied forces under field command of Liu Jintang (劉錦棠, 1844-1894) were able to take advantage of decomposition of Ya'qub Beg's regime and indigenous Muslim defense and reconquered Xinjiang by January 1878. Under the provisions of Treaty of St. Petersburg of 1881, the Qing also recovered eastern part of the Ili valley that had been annexed by Russia in 1870. Subsequently, Xinjiang's administrative status and division was changed from militarily managed region to regular civil province in 1884 (建省 *jiànshěng*). The new province was divided into prefectures and counties (郡縣 *jūnxiàn*) staffed by exclusively Han magistrates selected through state examination system. Newly, the highest ranking official was the Governor (巡撫 *xúnfǔ*) based in Urumchi, although he formally answered to the Governor-General of Shaanxi and Gansu (陝甘總督 *Shǎn-Gān zǒngdū*) provinces based in Lanzhou (蘭州; Millward 2007: 124-48).²¹

Apart from saving funds previously needed to maintain sizeable military garrison, instituting provincial administration in Xinjiang also brought about other substantial changes. The new system terminated the principle of indirect rule through begs and wangs. In order to repopulate the region and expand its taxation base, provincial government also facilitated Han immigration by the means of resettlement-stimulation packages. New administrative division generated the need to establish institutes of Confucian learning throughout the province, which was in turn expected to enable cultural change of indigenous population (化風 *huàfēng*). Through these measures, Xinjiang was to eventually become culturally and demographically homogenous with China proper and hence easier to rule. In other words, provincialization aimed at tighter incorporation of Xinjiang into Chinese politico-cultural realm through mainly sinification of administrative system and acculturation of indigenous population (Millward 2005: 265-6). It has been pointed out that this fundamental shift of Xinjiang administration policy was parallel to extension of the inner China system of rule to

²¹ Similarly to reconquest of Xinjiang, its provincialization was a measure which had been debated previously within imperial policy-drafting circles. In an essay of 1820, Qing reformist scholar Gong Zizhen (龔自珍, 1792-1841) first stressed eventual financial benefits of initial investment into infrastructure, resettlement of populace from China proper, abolition of military rule and introduction of the provincial system. Wei Yuan (魏源, 1794-1856), another influential Qing literatus, was also an advocate of administrative unification of Xinjiang with China proper by the means of Han resettlement and reclamation of land in the Southern Circuit (Millward 1998: 241-4, Newby 159-60). Zuo Zongtang himself was convinced of the need to provincialize Xinjiang long before the reconquest (Millward 2007: 132).

other frontier regions, which materialized for instance in establishment of Taiwan (臺灣, in 1887), Fengtian (奉天), Jilin (吉林) and Heilongjiang (黑龍江, all three in 1907) provinces. Even though the Qing dynasty did not manage to solve the problem of Xinjiang's dependence on central budget, to acculturate local population or to meet other objectives, provincialization was nevertheless a moment of great significance for Xinjiang and is considered one of markers of beginning of its early modern era (1884-1949; Millward 2007: 148-58).

The uprising in Wuchang (武昌) in 1911 and subsequent proclamation of Republic of China (中華民國 *Zhōnghuá mínguó*, ROC) quickly influenced events in distant Xinjiang. Revolts broke out at the turn of 1911 and 1912 in Urumchi and Ghulja. In the provincial capital, the movement was swiftly suppressed by the last Qing governor, Yuan Dahua (袁大化, 1851-1935). The rebellion in Ghulja was more successful. Discontent and revolt had been stirred there mainly by two forces. One was the Ghulja branch of Revolutionary Alliance (同盟會 *Tóngméng huì*), an all-China secret society aiming to overthrow Manchu rule and establishing the republic. The other was Elder Brothers' Society (哥老會 *Gēlǎo huì*), an underground anti-Qing brotherhood which was founded during uprisings in 1851-1874 in the middle and lower Yangzi (長江 *Chángjiāng*) region and which infiltrated Xinjiang with the arrival of Zuo Zongtang's troops. In the course of Ghulja rebellion, officers of modernized provincial New Army forces, who were often simultaneously members of both of the two subversive organizations, managed to mobilize their ranks, a certain part of civil officials, local Han and Tungan settlers and even some Turkic Muslims, and succeeded in establishing a revolutionary administration. Meanwhile in Urumchi, Yuan Dahua transferred his authority to his subordinate official Yang Zengxin (楊增新, 1859-1928). Yang immediately declared allegiance to the Republic of China and was confirmed by president Yuan Shikai (袁世凱, 1859-1916) in the post of Civil Governor (都督 *dūdū*) and Military (督軍 *dūjūn*) Governor of Xinjiang and in May 1912.

During his rule over Xinjiang until 1928, Yang Zengxin proved to be a superb strategist capable of eliminating a great number of various security threats and challenges to his power. He brought the Ili region back under provincial jurisdiction by awarding the uprising's leaders with government posts. Soon after, he charged them with treason and had them executed. He dealt in the same way – co-optation into provincial power structure and subsequent liquidation – with bosses of Elder Brothers' Society, which challenged his power in southern Xinjiang, and with leaders of Muslim Turkic uprisings against wangs of Komul and Turfan, which broke out several times around the Qing-Republic transition. He also successfully avoided a full-scale military conflict with Outer Mongolian troops which raided northeastern border of Xinjiang. By 1918, he managed to disarm and repatriate around 300.000 Kazak refugees streaming into the province in the wake of Russian misrule and also some thirty to forty thousand White Russian troops running away to Xinjiang from the repercussions of the October Revolution, to suppress Turkic Muslim uprising in Kucha and mutiny of provincial troops in Altay. It is remarkable that Yang scored these victories largely through the means of negotiation or plot and that he was able to maintain control of Xinjiang for over sixteen years with mere ten thousand troops (Forbes 11-2, 17; Millward 2007:167-70; Huang 6).²²

²² If we accept growth of military personnel and investment into combat technology and infrastructure as elementary traits of warlordism and militarism (Van de Ven 353, 360), then Yang Zengxin should not be classified as a warlord. As with other personages of China politics in the Republican era, it is more apt to regard him a relict of imperial statecraft that survived into modern era.

Yang was equally ingenious in maintenance of his power. He terminated working relationship with Beijing and established the practice of merely notifying the central Beiyang government (北洋政府 *Běiyáng zhèngfǔ*; 1912-1928) about his actions. At the same time, he deployed sizeable garrison along the eastern border of Xinjiang to limit and control traffic with China proper and Inner Mongolia. These measures led to the loss of central government's factual control over Xinjiang. Yang also relied on majority of imperial administration mechanisms. On the lowest administrative level, he preserved the authority of begs. In Turfan, Komul and Lükchün, he kept local wangs in position to rule over their fiefdoms. Finally, he also left intact customary authority of clergy and landowners. In exchange, indigenous power elites supported Yang's rule and were also instrumental in enforcing his policies (Ezizi 1997a: 124; Shehidi 158). This tactic was combined with a range of totalitarian and violent practices, such as assassinating opponents, creating efficient intelligence and censorship system, appointing functionaries exclusively on the basis of strong personal ties, restricting travel within, in and out of the province etc. In managing ethnic affairs, Yang employed the traditional strategy of *controlling barbarians by other barbarians* and created interest clashes between nomadic Mongols and Kazaks, and between sedentary *Musulman* and Huis (Forbes 15; Burhan 171). Yang's economic policy, on the one hand, succeeded in dealing with termination of subsidy from central budget after the fall of the Qing. On the other hand, it also meant harsh exploitation of provincial resources, developing only those aspects of indigenous economy and infrastructure which were instrumental in maintenance of his power and wide-spread corruption (Forbes 14-5, 28-32; Lattimore 1950: 56-60).

Yang's cultural policy was conceived in accordance with his belief that ignorant and uneducated people are easier to rule than cultured and knowledgeable population. He implemented a set of measures, termed the *ignorant people policy* (*khelqni nadaliqta qaldurush*; 愚民政策 *yùmín zhèngcè*), which relied on blockading all political and cultural influences from east and west, including obstructing modern education, press and other attributes of modernity. As will be illustrated in the following sections of this chapter, Yang's isolation policy did not succeed all the way. Nonetheless, the period of his rule is notorious for complete absence of the government's contribution to cultural progress. There existed no provincial press, bookshops, theaters or other cultural institutions. Bringing any printed material into Xinjiang and discussing political matters in public was illegal. Befriended indigenous clerisy and landowning circles gladly cooperated with Yang on this project. Thus, Yang Zengxin's thoroughly autocratic government and elaborate efforts at preserving general overall status-quo had a twofold effect. For one, during the initial period of republican era (1911-1928) Xinjiang remained politically and economically stable and thus was spared the chaos and inflation of civil war raging in China proper. On the other hand, Yang's politics of isolation resulted in detrimental stagnancy in all walks of life. Contemporary sources relate that conditions in Yang's Xinjiang showed only minor differences from society of pre-modern era (Ezizi 1997a: 129, 131; Shehidi 182-3, 214; Abdusémetov 70, 94-6).

Jin Shuren (金樹仁, 1879-1941), who came out victorious from the power struggle after Yang Zengxin's assassination in 1928,²³ sought to follow the course set by Yang. He

²³ The coup to overthrow Yang's rule was designed by his subordinate, a reform-minded official Fan Yaonan (樊耀南, 1879-1928). The actual murder took place during a banquet in Urumchi on July 7, 1928 (or on the seventh day of the seventh month of the seventeenth year AR; hence name of the event in Chinese – Triple Seven Coup, 三七政變 *Sānqī zhèngbiàn*). There exist several eye-witness

continued to declare Xinjiang's adherence to the Republic of China while maintaining *de facto* independence on the Nationalist government's (國民政府 *Guómín zhèngfǔ*, 1928-1949) jurisdiction.²⁴ Similarly, using autocratic and draconian ruling practices, depleting local resources for personal benefit, maintaining economic and cultural isolation remained the fundamentals of governmental practice under Jin (Forbes 38-42, Millward 2007: 189-91). However, it soon became clear that Jin lagged far behind his predecessor in talents and skills. Economic and social conditions deteriorated rapidly and Jin's rule was challenged by mutinies and rebellions which started erupting as soon as in 1929. Furthermore, he alienated indigenous Turkic Muslims by a series of acculturating measures such as terminating the power alliance with local elites and appointing Han officials to junior administrative posts previously staffed by begs and wangs. Turkic Muslim discontent eventually erupted in the form of Komul uprising in 1931 and quickly threw the whole province into turmoil and bloodshed. Jin Shuren was unable to deal with the situation and was overthrown in a coup in 1933.

Apart from provincialization, another distinguishing characteristic of the onset of modern era in Xinjiang was the emergence of influences from the territory of Russia/Soviet Union. One area where the trend was clearly visible was economy. Russian commercial involvement in Xinjiang had begun already in the 1830s and grew steadily as Russia was able to negotiate instruments to propel her interests. By the end of Qing rule in Xinjiang in 1911, Russia enjoyed such privileges as duty-free commerce in cities where consulates were located (Chöchek, Ghulja, Kashgar, Urumchi and Sharasume), extraterritorial judicial status of her subjects or the right to station security personnel to protect her business interests. Easy marketing of Russian products (mainly sealskins and furs, velvet, gold and silver embroidery thread, house and agriculture tools, smelted copper and steel, loafsugar etc.) was possible due to geographical and logistical proximity of Russian Central Asia to Xinjiang in comparison with inner China.²⁵ By the end of Yang Zengxin's administration, Soviet trade constituted 23% of provincial income, and by the end of Jin's era, Soviet Union became the only trading partner of Xinjiang (Fletcher 1978b: 325-32; Huang 2003: 5). The actual protagonists of the trade from Russian/Soviet were mostly Tatars and Uzbeks, who, due to their close cultural ties with Xinjiang *Musulman*, formed a bridge between Xinjiang and the West, over which modern trends could penetrate the province. Following sections and chapters of this dissertation will illustrate that cultural and political influences stemming into Xinjiang from Russia and Soviet Union proved a potent factor in formation of modern Uyghur concept of nation and nationalism.

Contemporary Nation-Formation Processes in China and the Ottoman Empire

Before we approach the topic of cultural and political stimuli from Russia and Soviet Union, it is necessary to focus on two other phenomena contributing to emergence of modern Uyghur national consciousness. In China proper, anti-Manchuism, republicanism and

accounts of the assassination (for example Wu 45-52). Fan's scheme misfired - Yang loyalist Jin Shuren had him arrested and executed the next day.

²⁴ Nationalist government introduced new terminology for official posts: Jin was appointed provincial Chairman (主席 *zhǔxí*) and Commander-in-Chief (總司令 *zǒng sīling*). Yang Zengxin had pledged his allegiance to the new central authority shortly before his assassination.

²⁵ Logistical proximity of Russian and Soviet Central Asia was mainly due to construction of a set of railways through western Central Asian territory between 1879 and 1931. As a result, in the beginning of 1920s, the journey from Kashgar to Beijing took around five months, whereas to Andijan it was seven days (Rudelson 42).

nationalism were the most significant intellectual movements of late 19th century. These trends gained prominence as the Manchu-dominated dynasty rule proved to be incompetent in ruling China and defending it from foreign incursion and economic subjugation. Anti-Manchuism (排滿 *pái Mǎn*) had its origins in thought and works of intellectuals of the Ming-Qing transition, such as Gu Yanwu (顧炎武, 1613-1682) or Wang Fuzhi (王夫之, 1619-1692), who bitterly opposed Manchu rule, arguing that alien ethnic groups can never become fully acculturated and thus are unfit to rule culturally superior China. Late Qing proponents of anti-Manchuism such as Zhang Binglin (章炳麟, 1868-1936) or Zou Rong (鄒容, 1885-1905) argued for annihilation or expulsion of Manchus from China (Dikötter 97-119; Rhoads 11-8). However, excluding Manchus and denouncing the Qing imperial heritage would mean that the new Chinese state would be expected to relinquish vast border regions previously conquered by the Qing. Therefore, the leading activists who demanded overthrowing the dynasty by the means of revolution soon realized the problematic aspect of anti-Manchuism and dropped the radical creed from their rhetoric. Shortly after the emergence of the Republic of China on January 1, 1912, a new theory of ethnic relations embodied in the theory of nationalism was designed (Leibold 167-183).

Nationalism was by far the most formative thought throughout the whole period of republican China (1911-1949). As mentioned in the Introduction to this dissertation, the term nation (民族 *mínzú*) was incorporated into Chinese revolutionary discourse at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century (Crossley 1990: 19; Dikötter 97). Early Chinese nationalists were on the one hand inspired by modernization and reforms in Japan during the Meiji era (明治; 1868-1912), which adopted nationalism and concept of ‘nation’ (in Japanese 民族 *minzoku*) from European thinkers and politicians. On the other hand, Chinese nationalists also encountered the term directly in Chinese translations of English and American works. Leading revolutionary activist Sun Yat-sen (also known as Sun Zhongshan, 孫中山; 1866-1925), who is revered as the ‘Father of the Republic’ (國父 *Guófù*), is also regarded as the foremost theorist of Chinese nationalism (民族主義 *mínzú zhǔyì*; literally ‘doctrine of people’s lineage’). Albeit not systematized, seemingly contradictory and often purely utilitarian, Sun’s nationalism became one of his ‘Three People’s Principles’ (三民主義 *sānmín zhǔyì*; the other two being ‘doctrine of people’s authority’ 民權主義 *mínquán zhǔyì*; and ‘doctrine of people’s livelihood’ 民生主義 *mínshēng zhǔyì*), the definition of fundamentals of republican revolutionary administration. Under this theory, Chinese republic was constituted by unity of five distinct and legally equal ethno-cultural communities (i.e. Han, Manchu, Mongol, Muslim and Tibetan), which in turn formed the political ‘nation of China’ (中華民族 *Zhōnghuá mínzú*) delimited by the boundaries of the Qing empire, and thus ideally also of the Republic of China. It was understood that the Han were to make up the core nationality. This principle of five-nationality republicanism (五族共和 *wǔzú gōnghé*) was a leading ethnic theory of the very early Chinese republic in 1910s and early 1920s. Three People’s Principles later became official state ideology of the Republic of China after Chiang Kai-shek’s (蔣介石, 1887-1975) nominal unification of China (the Northern Expedition, 北伐 *Běifá*, 1926-8) and the subsequent decade of the Chinese Nationalist Party’s (Kuomintang, 中國國民黨 *Zhōngguó guómín dǎng*, KMT) administration (Leibold 183-203; Rhoads 274-5; Dikötter 123-31).²⁶ Apart from KMT’s ideology, nationalism was also a potent ideological element in the influential May Fourth Movement (五四運動 *Siwǔ yùndòng*, 1919), which

²⁶ The KMT’s interpretation of nationalism is examined in greater detail in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

emerged as a negative reaction of Chinese students and intellectuals against the Treaty of Versailles' transferring the former German concession in Shandong (山東) under Japanese jurisdiction. May Fourth Movement subsequently had an enormous impact on formation of modern Chinese thinking, culture and politics. At the same time, nationalism also became one of the basic tenets of the Chinese Communist Party (中國共產黨 *Zhōngguó gòngchǎn dǎng*, CCP), founded in 1921 in Shanghai. Indeed, it is possible to say that the impact of nationalism on modern Chinese politics and thought does not decrease even today in the twenty-first century. Nevertheless, the following sections of this chapter will show that during the period 1884-1933, the influence of ideological developments in China-proper on intellectual evolution of Turkic Muslims of Xinjiang and on emergence of modern Uyghur ethnic identity was rather minor.

In contrast, intellectual currents flowing into Xinjiang from western direction proved to be powerful stimuli to Xinjiang Turkic Muslim intellectuals. Initially, the most relevant role was played by the wave of reformist movement which surged within the Islamic world since the latter part of 19th century as a reaction of Muslim elites to the advance and strength of European nations over the Islamic community (Ar. *'umma*). In the Arab regions of the Ottoman empire, reformist trends were to a certain extent sanctioned by the state. Mainly in Cairo and Tunis, schools with curricula modeled after European examples were being established which trained officials, officers, doctors and engineers for government service. At the same time, modern schools were also started by indigenous bodies and foreign missions, particularly in Lebanon, Syria and Egypt. Arab newspapers and periodicals introduced Western culture, science and technology to their growing readership as did the translations of Western literature, manuals and textbooks. New literary genres were created according to Western models (such as drama, short story or novel) and new vocabulary implanted into Arabic. The combined effect was emergence of new progressive intelligentsia, who were strongly aware of their ethno-cultural identity and eventually capable of articulate expression of their political demands of increased national autonomy (Hourani 302-10, 326-8). Even in the new social context of modern era, Islam remained a defining trait of modern culture. Arab intellectuals drew upon the thought of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839-1897) and Muhammad 'Abduh (1849-1905) who believed that Islam was fully compatible with the bases of modern civilization such as reason, progress and social solidarity (Hourani 302-7). The closely related doctrine of pan-Islamism, which stressed the importance of overall Muslim unity in political and economic aspects, became one of the leading lines of imperial foreign policy vis-à-vis Muslim realms under sultan Abdülhamid II (ruled 1876-1909; Zürcher 81; Hourani 314; Kim 150; Landau 46-8).

In the core Turkic parts of the Ottoman empire, modernization began in 1826 during the reign of sultan Mahmut II (ruled 1808-1839). The ultimate purpose of all his policies was to centralize power relying on support of strong and modern army. To achieve his objective, he instituted a wide range of policies in administration, finance, legal system, communication, education and diplomacy. The reforms continued through the so-called *Tanzimat* era (En. reorganization; 1839-1876) and to a certain extent also during the reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909; Zürcher 39-45, 56-66). Later, reform ideals were also carried by intelligentsia and elites who opposed the sultanate and advocating patriotic, constitutional and parliamentary system, such as 'Young Ottomans' (Tu. *Yeni Osmanlılar*, since 1865) or 'Ottoman Unity Society' (Tu. *İttihad-i Osmani Cemiyeti*, since 1889), later renamed the 'Committee for Union and Progress' (Tu. *İttihat ve Terakki Cemiyeti*, CUP). This organization, also known as 'Young Turks' (Tu. *Yeni Türkler*) was a radical and nationalistic

political association which had a dominant influence on Ottoman, later also Turkish politics long into 20th century (Zürcher 68-70, 86; Landau 45-56).

Even though the Young Turks were initially exponents of *ottomanism* (Tu. *Osmanlılık* or *Osmanlıcılık*), or ideal of equality of all religious communities (Tu. *millet*) within the Ottoman empire and their patriotic loyalty to it, later they became ardent advocates of modern Turkish nation defined most importantly by common language (Hourani 309). Turkish nationalism was even projected into a series of reforms by the CUP politicians in 1910s. The ideology was closely related to the concept of pan-Turkism, an initiative toward cultural or/and political union of all peoples or proven or alleged Turkic origins, living within or outside the Ottoman empire, or subsequently Turkey (Landau 1).²⁷ Prominent theoreticians of pan-Turkism were Yusuf Akçura (1876-1935), Ziya Gökalp (pseudonym of Mehmed Ziya, 1876-1924) and Tekin Alp (pseudonym of Moise Cohen, 1883-1961; Zürcher 123, 127-32; Landau 29-45). However, both the Ottoman empire and Turkey, the only sovereign Turkic territory in late 19th and early 20th century, failed to transform the idea of pan-Turkism into political action aimed at physical unification of Turkic territories. But although the ideology of pan-Turkism remained a largely cultural phenomenon with only marginal influence on political affairs of the time, it did carry strong appeal to some intellectual strata of Muslim Turkic communities in other parts of Islamic cultural space, such as Xinjiang.

Turkic Nation-Formation Movements in Russia/Soviet Union

The initial stimulus for the process of modern Uyghur ethnic identity formation stemming from Russian territory was Islamic modernism of Turkic communities of late 19th century. Its first protagonists were Tatars of the Volga region and Crimea, whose activities in fact predated those of Ottoman modernists. The khanates of Kazan and Crimea had been for a long time subjected to Russian rule (since 1552 and 1783 respectively) and were thus strongly influenced by Russian developments. One of the effects was a considerable level of Tatar cultural development and literacy when compared with other Muslim communities throughout the Islamic world. In the second half of the 19th century, Russian Tatars encountered the doctrine of pan-Slavism, which was one of the fundamentals for Russian foreign policy and a model for pan-Turkism. Finally, they also profited from geographical proximity to the Ottoman Empire (especially that of the Crimean Tatars) that enabled them to follow Ottoman trends. Tatar intellectuals were the first to realize several important facts. In spite of common ethnic origins and close linguistic relation of Turkic nations, attainment of their unity was impeded by geographical incontinuity of the regions they inhabited. This reality resulted in deficiencies in communication between the Turkic regions. Moreover, individual Turkic languages and their written and spoken forms differed markedly. Finally, the overwhelming majority of Turkic population was illiterate. The rare cases of literacy were reserved for men educated in traditional religious institutions. Thus, education and press were the two most important arenas of activity of Russian Turkic Muslim modernists.

The two issues outlined above – lack of communication and insufficient education – were first systematically addressed by Crimen Tatar Ismail Bey Gaspıralı (also called

²⁷ Another related term is pan-Turanism, or Turanism, which seeks to unify all the peoples originating from Turan, a mythical land lying among China proper, Tibet, India, Iran, the desert of Dasht-i Kipchak and the Caspian Sea. Turanism strived to appeal to even non-Muslim nations such as Hungarians, Finns and Estonians. Concepts of pan-Turkism and pan-Turanism were formulated by Hungarian orientalist Hermann Vambéry in his title *Sketches of Central Asia* (1868; Landau 2).

Gasprinskiy; 1851 – 1914). In 1883, he started publishing a Turkic/Russian bilingual newspaper *Interpreter (Terjüman/Perevodchik)* with the motto *Unity in Language, Thought and Action (Tu. Dilde, Fikirde, İşte Birlik)* in mast. Turkic contributions to the paper were written in so-called ‘common language’ (*lisan-i umumi*), an artificial language devised by Gaspirali to breach languages differences within Turkic milieu. The common language was based mainly on Crimean Tatar and Ottoman Turkish, but it was deprived of Arabic and Persian vocabulary. The practice of publishing in a sort of Turkic *lingua franca* spread and later other periodicals were issued which used such a language, for example *Time (Waqit)* in Orenburg, *Voice (Sada)* in Baku, *Kazan Correspondent (Kazan Muhbiri)* or *Turk (Türk)* of Cairo. Apart from these, there existed yet a larger number of periodicals in local Turkic languages which circulated in all parts of Turkic world, including Xinjiang, especially after the Russian 1905 revolution brought some liberal policies, such as increase in freedom of speech and press. Thus, spread of printed matter improved communication within the Turkic milieu and was instrumental to rise of Turkic Muslim national consciousness (Landau 9-13).

Gaspirali achieved significant breakthroughs also in the realm of education. In 1884, he opened the first school which taught modern curriculum modeled on Western system. In exchange for traditional Arabic, the language of instruction was native Turkic. The amount of classes on Islam was reduced and supplemented by secular subjects taught, such as Turkic language and history, Russian, French, German, world history, geography, natural history, physics, chemistry, psychology, logic or accounting. In the remaining religious courses, a modernized form of Islam reflecting current trends was taught. Gaspirali’s language classes used so-called ‘new method’ (*usul-i jadid*), or in other words phonetic way in teaching the Arabic alphabet (Khalid 89). This term gave name to Jadidism, signifying modernist approach to education and to the whole social and cultural reform movement pioneered by Russian Turkic Muslims. Apart from new education, Tatar Jadids also advocated general fostering of knowledge, creation of new civic institutions, and improvement in the position of women in Muslim society and other progressive measures. These ideas and practices quickly spread to other Muslim territories in Russian empire, where they simultaneously combined with local progressive trends and inspired an intense wave of modernism. Apart from areas with strong Tatar (Kazan, Ufa, Orenburg, etc.) and Azeri (Baku) presence, Jadidist movement was the strongest in Central Asia, an area with largely Turkic population that had been only recently incorporated into Russian empire (1865-1895). Prominent figures of Central Asian Jadidism were for example Behbudi (pseudonym of Mufti Mahmud Khoja, 1874-1919), Munawwar Qari (1878-1931), Abdurrauf Fitrat (1886-1938) or Fayzullah Khojaev (1896-1938). By 1905, the number of modern schools throughout Russian Muslim communities reached approximately 5.000 (Allworth 61-70).

In his thorough analysis of Central Asian Jadidism, Adeeb Khalid (Khalid 1998) aptly summarizes its traits and its impact on the traditional Muslim society. He underlines the fact that Jadidist intelligentsia were primarily concerned with adaptation of Islam to modernity, mobilization of their Muslim compatriots to national awakening, and uplifting their status within the Russian empire. For this purpose, they successfully employed current technical innovations, such as newly built roads and railways, postal system, telegraph or press, as vehicles for more intensive spread of information and thought. As a result, new forms of social organization and cultural practice emerged – publishing houses, philanthropic societies and eventually also political parties. By far the most important concern of the Jadids was modern education system, a crucial means to Turkic self-perfection which taught both religious and secular knowledge in native Turkic vernaculars enriched with progressive neologisms. The main difference from the traditional education system was that in the new

curriculum, and ideally also in the whole of new society as envisioned by Jadids, Islam constituted only one of several components of identity. The natural result of this approach was loss of monopoly on social leadership by traditional clergy. The ideal alumnus of a Jadidist school was a practitioner of Islam, who was well educated and skilled in contemporary secular matters. Despite recurrent conflicts with conservative clergy, by 1917 the Jadids managed to establish themselves as a new social class of patriotic Muslim progressive enlighteners. In a way, Jadids' emphasis on modern education, infatuation with print and publishing, markedly urban tint or antagonistic relationship with the power monopoly of traditional clerisy, its approach to cultural and religious matters make their initiative comparable to Islamic Protestantism, which through cultivation of progressive elites strongly stimulated the emergence of national identity and nationalist movement in Islamic cultural sphere (Gellner 40-1; Anderson 39; Breuilly 48-9).

Jadidist approach had a strong effect on the process of formation of Central Asian Turkic Muslim ethnic identities. Even though the Muslims of Central Asia generally defined boundaries of their community in religious terms, in some instances they based their identity on Turkic fundamentals. The prominence of Turkic aspects of ethnic identity even briefly increased after 1917 due to relaxed Russian censorship on one side and the support of pan-Turkism by the Ottoman Empire on the other side (Khalid 291-2). A good example of embrace of Turkic identity by Jadids is a statement made by Tashkent Islamic Council (Ar. *Tashkand Shura-yi Islamiya*), a committee of Muslim representatives, in 1917:

‘Muslims! All hopes, all goals of us Turks are the same: to defend our religion and our nation, to gain autonomy over our land and our country, to live freely without oppressing others and without letting others oppress us. Turkestan belongs to the Turks.’ (Khalid 293)

Khalid points out that the Czarist and Soviet authorities mistook Jadidism for a sort of separatism, but that such concern was rather exaggerated. There were two main reasons to this, namely because in Czarist and Soviet power structure, there existed no mechanisms for the Muslims to effect independence, and because Jadids themselves failed to recruit support of Muslim conservative strata (Khalid 228-9). However, after the Russian 1917 revolution Jadids did to a certain degree manage to broaden the scope of their activities from cultural to political arena. The fact that they were sometimes involved in projects which strongly compromised Soviet authority²⁸ and subsequently played leading roles in Central Asian Turkic until 1930s suggests that there was a close correlation between Jadidist ideology and increased political participation followed by articulate demands for political autonomy. This relation is further discussed in following sections of this chapter.

Apart from the Jadidist movement, after 1917 it was also the Soviet nationality policy that built on previous Jadidist nation work and contributed strongly to formation of ethnic identities of Central Asian Muslims. The chief strategy during first stage of Soviet minority policy (1922-1929) was a complex affirmative action in the form of so-called ‘indigenization’ (Ru. *korenizatsiya*), or providing the newly defined nationalities of the Soviet empire with national attributes. The newly introduced criteria of communal delimitation were based predominantly on ethnicity and language, and were to replace the previously existent religious,

²⁸ Separatist Central Asian statelets with Jadid participation were for example Khoqand autonomy existing in Ferghana Valley in 1917-18 and Alash Orda with capital in Semey in 1917-1920.

regional and occupational identities of Central Asian Muslims.²⁹ In a process lasting until 1936, indigenization led among other to abolition of Czarist administrative division of Central Asia and to gradual creation of Soviet republics with borders delimited according to ethnic boundaries which formally had the right to secede from the Soviet Union. Other measures intended to stimulate national identities of newly defined ethnic groups were for example standardization or creation of national spoken and written languages, compilation of national histories or epics, founding of national Academies of Sciences, opening schools in native languages or training of native Communist cadres. Naturally, defining of national traits of Central Asian ethnic groups accelerated the growth of national consciousness among Central Asians and led to rise of new class of secular, often fervently Communist, Central Asian intellectuals who were strongly aware of their ethnic identity (Connor 1984: 201, 213-4; Martin 1-2, 125-6; Wimbush 1985: 73; Bruchis 1984: 132). A representative example of the new Soviet secular elite was Mirza Sultan-Galiev (1892-1840), a prominent Tatar communist. However, an undesirable consequence of indigenization for the Soviet authorities was increase in articulation of political demands by new Muslim intelligentsia. Thus, the affirmative action experiment was terminated after J. V. Stalin (1878-1953) commenced his drastic power-consolidation campaigns in mid-1930s and set a new course of Soviet ethnic politics. Sultan Galiev and other Soviet Muslim figures, along with leading Jadids, eliminated in Stalin's purges of late 1937 on charges of nationalist deviations.³⁰

Origins of Modernity in Xinjiang

The above described Turkic nation-forming processes in the Ottoman empire/Turkey and Czarist/Soviet empire provided a model pattern which profoundly influenced, and sometimes even directly steered, the emergence of modern Uyghur national identity and nationalism. Similarly to Tatar society, the most significant contribution to this process was done by enlightened educators and publishers affiliated with merchant circles. Since the late 19th century, a certain portion of Xinjiang *Musulman* elites were able to greatly increase their physical mobility. Some families ran extensive commercial networks in Czarist Russia/Soviet Union and even managed to expand their entrepreneurial activities into the Ottoman empire, occasionally venturing as far as Austria-Hungary or Germany. Other reasons for travelling abroad were education or religious pilgrimage to Mecca (Khushtar 2000a: 210-5; Janishif 39; Bellér-Hann 349). During these stays, Xinjiang Turkic business elites observed foreign contemporary cultural and political trends and were also stunned by the difference in degree of development in comparison with Xinjiang. Upon return to Xinjiang, they strived to introduce foreign practices into their own society. Thus, despite potent factors inhibiting cultural interaction of Xinjiang with the outside world (mainly geopolitical distance and Yang Zengxin's isolationist policy), in the initial stage of early modern era (1884-1933) Xinjiang Turkic society experienced first instances of modern progressive trends. Similarly to other Islamic regions discussed above, mainly modern education, press and new social structures provided conditions for emergence of progressive Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia, who subsequently played a key role in formation of modern Uyghur national consciousness.

²⁹ The absence of ethnic criteria of self-identification of Central Asian Muslims during the czarist era was similar to the situation in Xinjiang at the end of the Qing dynasty, as described in previous chapter. Also similarly to Xinjiang, judging for example by existence of some ethnic categories in Russian censuses of 1897 and 1911 (Matley 104), it is evident that proto-national consciousness did to a certain degree exist prior to Soviet indigenization.

³⁰ Soviet ethnic policy is further discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Chinese and Traditional Islamic Education

The most powerful impact on emergence of Uyghur national consciousness was generated by modern education. But before we examine this process, it is useful to summarize briefly other types of educational facilities available to Xinjiang Muslims in the period 1884-1933. First type of educational institutions, the so-called *yìshù* 義塾 (literally ‘compulsory school’), was established by the provincial authorities and used Chinese language as a medium of instruction. Immediately after the reconquest of Xinjiang in 1878, Zuo Zongtang started founding free Confucian schools in order to acculturate local Muslim elite children and to train them as interpreters and clerks. Future job of these bi-lingual Turkic officials was to facilitate communication between the Qing empire and its subjects. In addition to standard teaching materials used in schools in China proper, there were special bilingual Chinese-Turkic materials in use that were expected to bridge the language barrier between Turkic students and Han or Hui teachers. Muslim students were given Chinese names (such as *Ai Xuéshū* 愛學書, in English ‘Loves Learning,’ *Bì Dé míng* 必得名, in English ‘Must Acquire a Reputation’ or *Tuī Dà lùn* 推大論, in English ‘Promotes the Great Theory’), were obliged to wear Chinese attire, to shave their heads and to braid their hair. For a number of reasons, these schools remained largely unpopular among Turkic population (Millward 2005: 265-6; Millward 2007: 142-3; Schleussel 385).

Since 1904, the Qing court implemented policy of replacing traditional Confucian schools with founding modern schools, the so-called 學堂 *xué táng* (literally ‘hall of learning’). Their curricula were drawn upon Japanese and Western models and included natural sciences, mathematics, foreign languages, world geography, physical education and other subjects which gained importance due to the changing geopolitical status of China.³¹ Modernized education system was also implemented by the Xinjiang provincial authorities. By 1911, there were approximately six hundred new schools with about fifteen thousand students throughout the province. Modern schools were intended to educate children from all social backgrounds and their attendance was theoretically mandatory for boys. But although the new system did contain some attractive local specifics (for example emphasis on teaching technical subjects instead of facilitation of cultural change, initial instruction in Turkic or inclusion of Qur’an classes into the curriculum), it remained largely unpopular among the indigenous Muslim population. One reason was economic – additional taxes were levied by the provincial administration in order to fund schools. Another reason was cultural – similarly to traditional Confucian schools, modern schools also required students to wear Chinese dress and style the hair like Qing subjects. This measure incurred bitter opposition of local Muslims. For this reason, the practice of sending substitute children, mostly belonging to poorer neighbors, to Chinese schools instead was quite a frequent phenomenon (Millward 2005: 268-271; Millward 2007: 143-6).

The situation in the sphere of Chinese education underwent only minor changes during early republican administration of Yang Zengxin and Jin Shuren. The modern elementary schools continued to exist as theoretically mandatory and their overt purpose again became educating elite Muslim children with the aim of fostering loyal civil servants. As such, the modern Chinese schools were rather unpopular among local Muslims and purchasing

³¹ The degree of modernity of the new schools has been put into question by assertions that the primary purpose of new education system was to strengthen loyalty of students to the Qing dynasty. Confucianism, seen as one of crucial instruments to promote this goal, was therefore an essential part of the ‘new’ curriculum (Chuzo 180, 182).

substitutes for school attendance remained a frequent practice (Ezizi 1997a: 132). Secondary schools existed only in Urumchi and Ghulja. In 1920, Yang established a school for training Mongol and Kazak civil servants and in 1923, ‘Xinjiang Russian School of Law and Politics’ (新疆俄文法政專門學校 *Xīnjiāng Éwén fǎzhèng zhuānmén xuéxiào*, *Shinjang Rusche Qanun-Siyasi Mektiwi*) was founded in Urumchi. The only official vocational school in the province was technical school for drivers, also in Urumchi. During Jin Shuren’s era, a school for instructing women administrative officials was established (Burhan 214, 271; Ezizi 1997a: 129-30).

Traditional Islamic learning institutions available to Muslims of Xinjiang prior to the emergence of modern Turkic schools functioned in essentially the same way as in Russian Central Asia (Khalid 22-34). Elementary school (*maktab*) was affiliated with mosque in a particular neighborhood (*mehelle*) of a town or city and was run by the imam or another religious notable. There was no standardized curriculum or a central supervising authority and the teacher (*akhunum* or *khelitim*) taught according to his individual knowledge and skills. The arbitrarily fixed curriculum was based on studying Arabic religious and Chaghatay literary works. Students were expected to memorize and recite the texts fluently, often without understanding their meaning or being able to explain it in Turkic. Except for writing and simple math, no technical subjects or skills were taught, because subjects such as simple counting, astronomy, chemistry, history or geography were by clergy considered anti-Islamic. All students shared one classroom regardless of their proficiency level and each proceeded according to his own pace under the supervision of the teacher or one of the older classmates. There was no fixed examination or grading system. No specific time was set for the beginning, duration and end of classes – instruction unfolded according to needs of teacher’s daily agenda. Corporal punishment was frequently used – the parents would turn the child over to the teachers saying ‘*the child’s bones are mine, but his flesh is yours*’ (*balining ustikhini méning, göshi silining*). Tuition was paid every Thursday in cash or kind such as clothes, fabric or food.

Secondary learning institutions (*madrasa*) worked in a similar way. The curriculum was broadened to memorization and reciting of the whole Qur’an, Arabic, counting, Persian, philosophy, Qur’anic exegesis (*tafsir*), more Chaghatay literary works and other subjects. As was the case in other Islamic regions, *madrasas* trained experts in Islamic law and education and thus served as locus of reproduction of fundamentals of Islam (Janishif 89-93; Bellér-Hann 326-33). By the end of Qing dynasty, the traditional, by Jadids and other progressives labeled as old, way of education (Ar. *usul-i qadam*) in Xinjiang utterly failed to respond to objectives of nascent modern era. On the contrary, it augmented the position of conservative religious dignitaries (*qedimchi*) and thus also the power alliance with Qing and Yang anti-modernist establishment. As observed elsewhere, ‘(t)he *maktabs* and *madrasas* of Central Asia were the clearest sign of the stagnation, if not the degeneracy, of Central Asia’ (Khalid 20).

Modern Education in Southern Xinjiang

The earliest promoters of modern Turkic education (*pennyi ma’arip*, literally ‘scientific education’) in Xinjiang were the wealthy and influential Musabay clan of Atush-Kashgar area. Musabays’ first known involvement with education dates from mid-nineteenth century, when Abdurusul Akhun Bay (?) and his son Musabay Haji (1809-1895) sponsored reconstruction of schools and accumulated a large private collection of books. Musabay’s sons - Hüsenbay Haji (1844-1926) and Bawudun Bay (1851-1928) are credited with the pioneering introduction of supplementary secular subjects to the curriculum of the prominent

Khanliq *madrasa* in Kashgar in 1870. The structure of classes was modeled on European examples intercepted via Tatar and Ottoman modern schools and included math, mother language, geography, physical education, art, poetry and other subjects. However, these courses were soon discontinued due to pressure from conservative circles. The Musabays therefore decided to relocate the centre of their activities to their home village Éqsaq near Atush located approximately forty kilometers from Kashgar, where they launched a modern school and pedagogical institute called the Hüseyniye in mid-1880s.

The school taught a number of secular subjects, as well as Qur’anic classes (Table I). On the elementary level, the children started school attendance at the age of nine or ten years and studied for six to seven years, while at the teachers’ college, education took four years. In the first year, there was enrolment of 105 students, including 25 girls. The school had separate classrooms and a system of examination and grading - grades were divided into four degrees: ‘excellent’ (*elyol’ela*), ‘good’ (*ela*), ‘medium’ (*ewse*) and ‘failed’ (*edna*). During graduation, students could receive four kinds of trophies – Certificate of Honor (*Tehsinname*), Certificate of Commendation (*Apirinname*), Certificate of Praise (*Teqdirname*) or Certificate of Enrolment (*Shahadetname*). Students could also apply for scholarships or accommodation. The school compound and teaching equipment was luxurious at the time and included performance stage, library, showers, classrooms with windows, chairs, desks and blackboards. Subsequently, physical education classes based on Ottoman model were also implanted into the curriculum. In 1907, the name of the teachers’ college school was changed to Hebib Zade Pedagogical Institute (Khushtar 2000a: 215-21; Schleussel 386).

	1 st period	2 nd period	3 rd period	4 th period
Saturday	Health	Orthography	Poetry	Mathematics
Sunday	Arabic	History	Geography	Qur’an
Monday	Russian	Mathematics	Ph. Education	Art
Tuesday	Qur’an	Health	Geography	-
Wednesday	Arabic	Orthography	Russian	History
Thursday	Qur’an	Qur’an	Qur’an	Qur’an
Friday	-	-	-	-

Table 1. Schedule at the Hüseyniye school in early years (Khushtar 2000: 221).

A remarkable trait of modern education in Kashgar area was the strong inspiration by Ottoman practice and ideology. In 1913, the Musabay brothers in cooperation with several other progressive scholars managed to contract in Istanbul several Ottoman pedagogues to come to teach at their school in Xinjiang. The leading figures of the Ottoman group was Ahmet Kemal İlkul, other members were Ababekri Ependi, Imir Molla, Abdurakhman Ependi, Mukerrem Qari, Sami Ependi and Amrulla Ependi. All were members of the above mentioned nationalistic and partially pan-Turkist organization Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) and were also affiliated with its paramilitary arm called Special Organization (Tu. *Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*). Kemal and his colleagues were active in Atush and Kashgar since 1914 and implanted principles of pan-Turkism and nationalism into their teaching, such as instruction in

Ottoman Turkish, pledging allegiance to the Sultan, marching, singing of nationalistic marching songs etc. Their activities incurred opposition of the *qedimchi* supported by the provincial administration. The result was swift closure of several modernist schools and proscription of the Ottoman Turks', as well as all other foreign teachers', activities in Xinjiang, on the charges of fomenting pan-Turkism and separatism. Kemal continued contacts with his students in secrecy until 1917, when he was arrested and deported via Shanghai back to the Ottoman empire.³² This ominous clash revealed that modernist activities directly violated the interests of both the Yang administration and conservative clergy (Ezizi 1997a: 146; Burhan 172; Khushtar 2000a: 224; Khushtar 2000b: 252; Shinjiro 25-7; Schleussel 386-7). Vice versa, resistance of influential Islamic establishment to modernism was a recurrent impediment to spread of new education and other attributes of modernity in Muslim communities (not only) in Xinjiang (Ezizi 1997a: 144-5; Janishif 71; Abdusémetov 58; Khalid: 4). One of foremost Uyghur historians and linguists Ibrahim Muti'i relates that bicycles were called 'devil's vehicles' (*sheytan harwa*) by the conservatives and that his older brother Jamal, who was the first person to bring a bicycle from the Soviet Union and ride it on the streets of Urumchi, was hence nicknamed 'Jamal the Devil' (*Jamal Sheytan*; Muti'i 1990: 387). Similarly, the noun 'modernist' (*jedid*) was sometimes used in a derogatory sense (MEP 21).

Hüseyniye was the most progressive institute of learning in southern Xinjiang in the initial stage of early modern era (1884-1933). Its graduates were able to make use of relatively vast knowledge and skills and enjoyed high social prestige. They were the first generation of secular teachers who in turn established modern schools in the whole province. Most of educated prominent Turkic intellectuals and politicians of the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s and later obtained their education at the Hüseyniye or its sequel schools. Due to the Ottoman pan-Turkist influence, the students at these schools also came in contact with ideas of national awakening and national movement. The Musabay clan also provided material support to anti-Qing Ili revolutionaries in 1911 (Schleussel 387). Thus, the Hüseyniye education had a strong impact on emergence of indigenous progressive intelligentsia and Musabay brothers are revered as founders of modern Uyghur education and foremost Uyghur enlighteners.³³ The progressive spirit of Hüseyniye education is well illustrated by the following Ottoman-style marching song sung by the school's athletes on the field during sport events in 1910s:

'Fellow fighters, let us group up to overthrow the smothering ideology,
To rip the curtains of darkness which are covering the eyes of motherland,
Knowledge is what will deliver our people from ignorance,
And also we shall be today delivered by knowledge.' (Khushtar 2000a: 227)

Modern Education in Northern and Eastern Xinjiang

Emergence of modern education in northern and eastern parts of the province was strongly influenced by their geographical proximity to Russian Central Asia. It was easy for prosperous Muslim entrepreneurs to travel from Xinjiang cities such as Ghulja, Chöchek, Urumchi and Turfan to Russian territory and experience local progressive trends. The contact functioned also in the other direction – Russian nationals involved in commerce were

³² Ahmet Kemal İlkul's own account of his Xinjiang and China experience is available in his memoir republished in modern Turkish (Kemal 1997).

³³ High rate of education and cultural standard in the Atush area, undoubtedly caused by long lasting influence by progressive trends, is reflected even today by the high percentage of Atush people among contemporary Xinjiang elites.

increasingly present in northern and eastern Xinjiang since the end of the nineteenth century. This interaction was accelerated by the presence of Russian consulates, all of which, with the exception of Kashgar, were located in northern Xinjiang. As in western Central Asia, the mediators of contact between Russia and Xinjiang Muslims were predominantly Tatar merchants who simultaneously imported their progressive ideas and institutions into Xinjiang. Tatar businessmen started settling in northern Xinjiang cities since 1851 mainly in Ghulja, Chöchek and Urumchi and gradually extended their activities to culture and politics. Hence these cities, especially Ghulja, became cosmopolitan arenas of bustling with commercial, cultural and political interaction of Chinese and Russian Turkic subjects (Burhan 175).

Tatar role in formation of modern Turkic education in Xinjiang was thoroughly analyzed by Xinjiang Tatar scholar Malik Janishif (Janishif 2001). Tatar communities in Xinjiang soon developed practice of founding mosques with affiliated schools as a cultural center of the community. First Tatar *madrassa* was founded in Urumchi in 1880. Traditional Tatar schools started transforming into modern ones around 1900. Owing to close ties of Xinjiang Tatars with their relatives in Russian territory, Tatar schools were able to directly and quickly intercept institutes of Jadidism, which were themselves based on Russian and European models. In particular, Tatar schools in Xinjiang directly adopted curriculum, textbooks and teaching staff from Jadidist schools in Tatar centers such as Kazan, Ufa or Orenburg. Since 1914, Tatar schools for girls were coming into existence. Some of Jadidist schools would also run teacher training courses or libraries on their premises, such as the important Miryusup library in Chöchek or the Hüseyin Taratov library in Ghulja (Muti'i 1990: 385). Apart from Tatar children, the education of Xinjiang Tatars was available also to other ethnic groups, including Turkic Muslims. Many prominent Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals, such as the aforementioned Ibrahim Muti'i, were educated at Tatar Jadidist schools (Janishif 53-76; Schleussel 387).

Tatar teachers contracted from Tatarstan often constituted the core of teaching staff at schools founded by Xinjiang Jadids. A model example of this phenomenon is the cooperation of affluent Turfan businessman and enlightener Mekhsut Muhiti (1885-1932) with Tatar teacher and progressive intellectual Heyder Sayrani (1886-1943), both of whom had been mentioned earlier. The two became acquainted in 1909 during Muhiti's trip to Kazan. Later that year, Sayrani arrived in Turfan and became the family teacher of the Muhiti family. The first Jadidist teachers' college with Sayrani as the main teacher was launched in the Turfan area in 1913 and used teaching materials published in Kazan. In 1918-9, six other Tatar teachers from Russia arrived and started teaching at Jadidist schools founded by the Muhiti family and their associates in the Turfan region. Heyder Sayrani was also involved in other forms of cultural activism, such as secret distribution of Central Asian Jadidist and/or communist periodicals or lobbying for government sponsorship of student exchange between Xinjiang and Soviet Central Asia (Sayrani 58-66).³⁴ Other Tatar Jadids taught at new schools in Ghulja, Chöchek, Qomul, Süydung, Altay, Bortala and other places in northern and eastern Xinjiang in 1910s and 1920s. Tatar Jadids were also present on the Hüseyiniye teaching staff

³⁴ The Turfan group eventually became strongly politicized. Since 1922, both Muhiti and Sayrani took part in actions of secret political societies. Mekhsut Muhiti was killed during the Qomul rebellion of 1931 and his body was dismembered on the battlefield near Lükchün. He is remembered as one of the most influential and accomplished leaders of early modern Uyghur national movement (Ezizi 1997a: 211). His brother Mahmud Muhiti (1887 – 1944) took part in the rebellion as well. After 1933, he became a military officer of provincial army in Kashgar region, where he also promoted modern education. Heyder Sayrani had to move to Chöchek in late 1930s for personal safety reasons, but was arrested in 1938 and together with other political prisoners executed in Ürümchi in 1943.

(Janishif 93-110). In sum, analogously to developments in southern Xinjiang, in the north and east the Tatar Jadidist influence combined with indigenous Turkic progressive initiative and enabled the rise of modern education system that was in turn the key factor behind emergence of new nationally conscious intelligentsia of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims.

Nascent Turkic Periodicals and Social Organizations

Turkic Muslims of Xinjiang first encountered modern printing technology via activities of foreign Christian mission workers. The most extensive efforts were undertaken by the Swedish Mission Society (Sw. *Svenska Missionsförbundet*) which had branches in Kashgar, Yengisar and Yarkend in 1892-1938. Due to the limited success of their proselytizing activities among local Muslims, the missionaries also pursued a number of philanthropic activities, such as medical care, education, training of vocational personnel, gathering of Turkic folklore and literature, compilation of dictionaries etc. Notably, they launched Xinjiang's first printing machine in 1905. Materials printed on this press included firstly missionary materials, such as translation of the Bible into local Turkic. Other type of products were related to the mission's philanthropic activities. A publication title of enormous cultural significance was the missionaries' translation of Holy Qur'an into Turkic in first years of 1900s. They also printed Turkic textbooks for mission-run school on subjects such as natural sciences, mathematics, Turkic grammar and spelling, world geography and Central Asian history, translations of western fiction or the region's first Turkic calendar. Lastly, the mission also printed in trust materials for provincial or insurgent authorities, such as banknotes, leaflets, political pamphlets or nationalist periodicals.³⁵ The Swedish mission's printing, publishing and other activities strongly stimulated cultural development of Turkic Muslim society in southern Xinjiang, and thus also contributed indirectly to the emergence of modern Uyghur ideas of nation and nationalism.

One of the earliest publication enterprises run in Xinjiang by indigenous Turkic Muslims was a lithographic printing house established by the Musabay brothers even earlier than missionary presses. In the 1890s, they reportedly founded a printing house called 'Sunshine Press, Source of Light' (Persian *Metbe-i Khurshid, Metel-i Nuri*) in Atush or Kashgar. The modest project was associated with leading modernist intellectuals and poets of the time, Tejelli (1850-1930), Abduqadir Damolla (1862-1924) and Qutluq Haji Shewqi (1876-1937). Qutluq Haji Shewqi was an illustrative example of early modern Xinjiang Turkic modernist. As a child, he acquired classical education in Kashgar and then continued his studies in Egypt, the Ottoman Empire and Bukhara. He became influenced by Ottoman modernist ideals and pursued them after his return to Xinjiang, becoming a promoter of modern education publishing and author of poems and articles advocating progress and reform. Since 1910 (according to other sources from 1918), Qutluq Haji Shewqi was the editor-in-chief of the *Awareness Newspaper* (Ang *Géziti*) which was published by the Musabay brothers' Sunshine Press.³⁶ Its publication had to be discontinued soon due to economic hardship and pressure of conservative circles. Nevertheless, the Sunshine Press

³⁵ For more information on Swedish mission's activities in southern Xinjiang, see for example PFK 1991. Printing of Christian religious material in Uyghur language was also to a lesser degree undertaken by the British China Inland Mission branch based in Ürümchi (Cable and French 244-7; Himit 44).

³⁶ Qutluq Shewqi's activities are further mentioned in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

continued to produce books and textbooks for modern education throughout the 1920s (Abduljan 172-8; Zaman 95-9).³⁷

Other early publishing attempt in Turkic was the *Ili Vernacular Daily* (伊犁白話報 *Yīlǐ báihuà bào*), which was issued by the aforementioned Ili revolutionaries in Ghulja since March 25, 1910. The main language of the daily was Chinese; however, the paper also appeared in Turkic, Manchu and Mongol mutations.³⁸ Publication of the *Ili Vernacular Daily* was discontinued by Manchu General of Ili (伊犁將軍 *Yīlǐ jiàngjūn*) Zhi Rui (志銳) shortly after he took office on November 15, 1911. In February 1912, the paper was succeeded by the *New Daily* (新報 *Xīnbào*), which also ran a Turkic mutation. Existence of the *New Daily* came to an end shortly after Yang Zengxin eliminated the Ghulja faction in December 1913 (Wei 50-5). The articles published by Ghulja revolutionaries with the aim of targeting Xinjiang Turkic Muslims advocated unity of the all nationalities against Manchu rule. One of their arguments was that the Qing had several times in history resorted to massacres of indigenous populations, be it Hans during the conquest of southern China or Xinjiang Turkic Muslims during post-Ya'qub Beg reconquest (Millward 2007: 166). The revolutionaries also espoused the principle of equality of five Xinjiang nationalities (Han, Mongol, Hui, Turkic and Kazak, 漢蒙回纏哈 *Hàn Méng Huí Chán Hā*) and denounced derogatory labeling of Turkic Muslims used at the time even in official documents ('Turban-Head' Muslim or 'Rag-Head' Muslim, 纏頭 *Chántóu*, or Dog-Muslim, written by the character 回 with the dog radical). Therefore, the Ghulja revolutionary cause is said to have enjoyed a fairly high credibility among Xinjiang non-Han nationalities (Ezizi 1997a: 83, 86-7). Through the *Ili Vernacular Daily* and *New Daily*, Xinjiang *Musulman* for the first time encountered revolutionary ideals and principles of modern Chinese republicanism, which forwarded the idea of a multi-national state comprising several ethnic groups equal in rights and obligations. During Jin's era, there further existed the Chinese language *Tianshan Daily* (天山日報 *Tiānshān rìbào*) published in Urumchi (STH 1:1), which rhetorically embraced ideology of Chinese republicanism. Nevertheless, until 1930s such instances of ideology transfer from China proper to Xinjiang Turkic milieu were isolated and the influence of Chinese republican statecraft on the emergence of modern Uyghur nationalism was therefore limited. It is moreover possible to argue that ideology from China proper spread only in areas of Xinjiang with sizeable Han presence (such as the heavily garrisoned northern Xinjiang or eastern Xinjiang neighboring on China proper), and therefore smaller Turkic presence. On the other hand, the following sections of this chapter will show that some Turkic intellectuals were familiar with ideology of Chinese republican nationalism.

Information on other early printing and publishing attempts by Xinjiang Turkic enlighteners in the period 1884-1933 is scarce. Burhan Shehidi (1894-1989), originally a Russian Tatar who was later to become one of the most influential and remarkable figures of modern Xinjiang history, and his close friend Mirzajan clandestinely published a Turkic language magazine *New Life* (*Yéngi Hayat*) in 1922. Burhan contributed under the pseudonym *Küntughdi*.³⁹ The magazine propagated self-perfection by the means of reading literary works and healthy lifestyle. In total, Burhan and Mirzajan produced mere two issues of over ten

³⁷ At the moment, issues of the above mentioned periodicals are not known to be preserved for research. It is possible that they are kept in regional archives in Xinjiang.

³⁸ According to another source, the Uyghur version of the *Ili Vernacular Daily* was published in 1912 (Burhan 33).

³⁹ *Küntughdi* was a name of one the characters in ancient Uyghur classic *Qutadghu Bilig* (*Happiness-Bringing Wisdom*) written by Yüsüp Khas Hajib in 1069/1070.

pages each and secretly distributed about one hundred copies of each issue in shops of Urumchi (Burhan 226). Further, a newspaper called *Our Voice (Bizning Tawush)* was published from around 1920 in Chöchek (Sayrani 65; Tashbayof 58-9). Another figure active in publishing and printing was Hösiyinbeg Yunusov who purchased printing equipment from western Central Asia and established a printing house in the Ili region in 1918. In 1920, the enterprise was relocated to Ghulja, where it was used for printing schoolbooks. Abduqadir Damolla (1862 – 1924), one of the most influential Turkic modernist intellectuals, installed a lithographic printing machine in Kashgar at the beginning of twentieth century and used it for publishing his essays and school textbooks. The enterprise was destroyed after his assassination in 1924. Another Kashgari, Muhemmet Akhun Khelptim, used self-carved wooden type to print religious materials. Another person involved in printing activities at the time was Haji Nurhaji in Yengissar (Himit 43-4; Abduljan 175-6).

It is likely that the impact of early publishing and printing attempts by Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals from 1880s to 1920s was rather limited. One reason was their restricted circulation; in fact, several contemporary sources specifically remark on total absence of periodicals in Xinjiang at the time (Abdusémetov 95; Ezizi 129; Burhan 214). Another factor was high rate of illiteracy of Turkic Muslim population in early modern era. Nonetheless, the early publishing and printing attempts, augmented by much stronger impact of Turkic periodicals occasionally smuggled into the province from Russia/Soviet Union, did play a role analogous to previously discussed nation-formation processes in Russian Turkic communities – contributing to spread of modernity in Xinjiang, improving cultural standard of local readership, cultivating indigenous progressive intelligentsia and accelerating emergence of national identity of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims.

Another form of nascent modernity in Xinjiang were emerging new social structures and forms of organization. In particular, it was various cultural associations and philanthropic organizations, which promoted cultural activities and thus contributed to emergence of Uyghur national consciousness. One of such structures was a philanthropic *Charity Association (Kheyr-Ihsan Birleshmisi)* established in Kashgar in 1914 in relation with modernist activities of Abduqadir Damolla (Shinjiro 25). Another secret reformist organization was established in August 1922 by Burhan Shehidi and several other progressives, for instance Mekhsut Muhiti, Yunus Beg, Tahir Beg or Heyder Sayrani (who became Shehidi's brother-in-law in 1925; Burhan 226-7, 307-9; Sayrani 64). However, in contrast to modern education, new publishing and organizational initiatives emerged sporadically and clandestinely, as such phenomena were even more closely watched over by Yang than new schools or publications. Turkic progressive organizations' limited impact in Xinjiang was similar to the situation in Soviet Central Asia (Khalid 133-4).

Previously, several scholars researching nation-formation processes taking place elsewhere in the world pointed to the correlation between emergence of modern education, press and social organizations on the one hand, and nation-formation processes on the other hand. Specifically, Ernest Gellner has argued that education generally plays an essential part in effective working of modern society (Gellner 27-7) and Eric Hobsbawm aptly equated the progress of schools throughout the world with spread of nationalism (Hobsbawm 1996: 135-6). Clearly, Xinjiang between 1880 and 1930 the modern Turkic education was by no means wide-spread, standardized or disseminated by state administration. Instead, first progressive education projects were launched by private enthusiasts at their own expenses and intended to culture a society which, despite their efforts, remained largely pre-industrial and agricultural at least until 1949 (Bellér-Hann 11). Similarly, early Turkic printing and publishing in

Xinjiang can by no means be called print capitalism producing hundreds of thousands of volumes and generating financial profit as posited by Benedict Anderson (33-6). On the contrary, first Xinjiang Turkic periodicals circulated most probably free of charge and only within a very limited scope of literate and mutually acquainted readers, while the information contained in the periodicals was further transmitted orally. The impact of modern social structures, such as enlightenment societies and charitable unions, was equally limited.

Nevertheless, the progressive Turkic schools and the albeit sporadic, yet existent, attempts at issuing periodicals and forming philanthropic organizations were the most significant stimulus for the spread of modern knowledge and cultural enlightenment within Xinjiang *Musulman* society between 1880s and late 1920s. Xinjiang modern schools, periodicals, societies and other structures also cultivated and provided organizational basis for activities of progressive activists. Subsequent sections of this dissertation will show that local modern Turkic intelligentsia and elites educated by or affiliated with these structures played a leading role in local Turkic politics and in various ways generated modern Uyghur national consciousness and nationalism. In accordance with John Breuilly's general theory and so-called 'intellectual interpretation' of national movement and nationalism, which views these phenomena as a search for cultural identity and a product mostly of intellectuals who are building on common language, cultural and political heritage, and who are actively designing educational system in order to inculcate nationalist values into the youth, it will be illustrated later in the dissertation that Xinjiang Turkic progressive intelligentsia's literacy, education, awareness of modern developments and other skills acquired in the first wave of new Xinjiang Turkic schools later enabled these figures to become outspoken communal political leaders (Breuilly 48, 149-52). The role of Xinjiang progressive intelligentsia and local correlation between modernism and political aspirations was thus parallel to patterns traced in Arab or other Turkic Muslim communities (Hourani 310, 328-9; Khalid 252-8) or to cases of transition from cultural to political nationalism in non-Islamic regions as exemplified elsewhere on the case of Czech enlightener František Palacký (1798-1876; Breuilly 59-61, 132-3).

Birth of the Idea of Modern Uyghur Nation in Russo-Soviet Central Asia

Besides intercepting contemporary cultural and political trends, Xinjiang Turkic enlighteners were also directly inspired from Turkic milieu in the Ottoman and Russian empire in starting to perceive their community as a modern nation. In fact, they could directly appropriate even the idea of Uyghur modern nation, for it was first in Russo-Soviet Central Asia that this concept came into being. The above passages showed how after founding of the Soviet empire in early 1920s, the Soviets build to a certain degree upon Jadidist cultural reform initiative and took affirmative action of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) towards creating national identities of Central Asia Muslims. This complex strategy also targeted Turkic population of Xinjiang. Soviet propaganda regarded Xinjiang Turkic Muslims as a client group which was supposed to be liberated by communist movement. Such efforts also augmented Xinjiang Turkic Muslims' sense of own ethnic identity and position in Xinjiang power hierarchy.

Initially, the primary target of such Soviet propaganda were seasonal workers from southern Xinjiang who went to work across the border mainly in agriculture, mining or oil, cotton and timber industry. The number of these migrant workers was approximately fifty-two thousand in 1913, while in the 1920s it was estimated at 10-20% of southern Xinjiang Turkic population, or over 200.000 people (Brophy 166; Ezizi 1997a: 151; Bellér-Hann 63). Apart

from these Xinjiang workers directly witnessing the wooing effects of post-1917 indigenization of Central Asian life, they were also subjected to direct communist propaganda. Some even became members of the Communist Party of the USSR and continued work in Xinjiang (Ezizi 1997a: 151). First communist cell in Kashgar was established around 1917⁴⁰ (Khushtar 2000a: 227). Another Soviet-sponsored organization was the Xinjiang Liberation Organization (*Shinjangni Qutuldurush Teshkilati*) established in Soviet Central Asia (Ezizi 1997a: 152). Soviets also published periodicals in Xinjiang Turkic language that specifically addressed the situation in Xinjiang, such as the *Liberation (Qutulush)* issued in Taskent in 1920s (Burhan 148).

Soviet ideological workers were also dispatched from the Soviet Union to carry out pro-communist activities in Xinjiang. These were for example Tatars associated with modern schools in northern Xinjiang. In particular, the Tatars brought news of the Soviet revolution and the allegedly improved living conditions in Soviet Central Asia, clandestinely distributed Soviet press and organized demonstrations (Ezizi 1997a: 149-50; Janishif 67-80). As the Soviets strengthened their ties with the Chinese Communist Party around 1925, the main line of Soviet propaganda in Xinjiang shifted from espousing national liberation to calls for establishing unity of the budding Xinjiang Muslim communist movement with that of Hans and Huis in China proper. That way, a united communist front within the territorial extent of the entire Republic of China would be created. Early Xinjiang communists were thus urged to forge working relationship with Han communists under training in Moscow. Not surprisingly, Yang Zengxin tenaciously opposed infiltration by socialist and communist activity (Ezizi 1997a: 152; Roberts 372-4; Burhan 182-3, 215).

However, a phenomenon of greater interest for research in formation of modern Uyghur national consciousness and nationalism was the emergence of the concept of modern Uyghur nation. The initial stage of this process was the revival of ancient name ‘Uyghur’, which, since fifteenth century gradually fell out of use for a community of people, as showed in Chapter 1 of this dissertation. In the nineteenth century, the name ‘Uyghur’ was revived for labeling Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims, who at the time actually referred to themselves as *Musulman*, as showed also in Chapter 1. First instances of use of the revived name ‘Uyghur’ are found in works of Western and Russian scholars. Notably, German linguist Julius Heinrich Klaproth (1783–1835) in 1820 and Kazakh explorer Chokan Valikhanov (1835-1865) in 1850 pointed to direct genetic, linguistic and cultural connection between ancient Uyghurs and inhabitants of early modern southern Xinjiang (Brophy 169-70). As Central Asian Turkic Jadids and progressives were interested in culture and history of all Turkic nations and ethnic groups, they also became acquainted with this thesis and introduced it into their discourse and activities. This idea also gained popularity among intellectuals of immigrant communities from the territory of Xinjiang. These were firstly those with roots in southern Xinjiang called *Kashgaris* or *Altisheheris* (in English ‘inhabitants of Six Cities’), who lived predominantly in urban areas of today’s Uzbekistan. The second group was the *Taranchis*, who originated in northern Xinjiang and migrated mainly to the western part of the Ili valley (also called Yettisu, Ru. Semirechiye, in English ‘Seven Rivers Region’) and Almaty. At least from early 1910s, some intellectuals and progressive from these two communities increasingly started perceiving Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims as a single ethnic group called Uyghur.

⁴⁰ The communist party cell in Kashgar was thus founded earlier than the Chinese Communist Party, which was established in 1921 in Shanghai. This was again due to the geopolitical proximity of Xinjiang to the Soviet Union.

A good example of a modernist Taranchi intellectual who subscribed to the idea of southern Xinjiang Turkic inhabitants' descent from ancient Uyghurs was Nezerghoja Abdusémet (1887-?), who published under a pseudonym *Uyghur Balisi* ('Uyghur Child'). The details of his personal life are not well known. He was a son of an educated participant in the Taranchi-Tungan uprising in Ghulja in 1860s, mentioned in Chapter 1. Their family migrated to the western part of the Ili valley in the wake its eastern part being returned to the Qing under provisions of the Treaty of St. Petersburg 1881. Abdusémet attended traditional *maktab*, but gradually became involved in Jadidist movement by contributing articles to Jadidist periodicals, such as the very influential progressive Orenburg-published Tatar paper *Council* (Tat. *Shura*), which circulated throughout whole Turkic world including Xinjiang. After 1917, Abdusémet supported the communist movement and wrote for Turkic Soviet periodicals of Central Asia. Besides, he also wrote poetry and prose. He reportedly fled to Xinjiang in the early 1930s after the Soviet ethnic policy shift following Stalin's ominous shift in ethnic policy in 1930s and nothing is further known about him (Roberts 367-8, 374; Brophy 170-1).

A selection of Abdusémet's articles and literary pieces was republished under the title *Bright Shores (Yoruq Sahillar; Abdusémetov 1991)*. It is namely the journalistic works, authored between 1911 and 1923, which provide considerable insight into Taranchi society and mindset of Taranchi progressives in early 20th century. Significant space is devoted to historical issues. In the longest entry in the anthology, the *Taranchi History (Taranchi Tarikhi; Abdusémetov 9-62)*, Abdusémet attempted to draw up a complete history of Taranchis in Ili, the '*all-time residence site of Taranchi people*' (Abdusémetov 10). Similarly to traditional Turko-Islamic historical works, in his initial narrative Abdusémet covers mythical origins of Turkic ethnicity – ancient tribes (including Uyghurs) living in Ili and the Six Cities⁴¹ region and Chinggisid era with Chaghataid and Zungharid periods. Large space is also dedicated to the historical past of Taranchi community. Interestingly, Abdusémet does not mention the fact that the first power to resettle agriculturalists from Six Cities to the north was the Zunghars. Instead, he identifies the origins of Taranchi people with the relocations initiated by the Qing. According to him, Chinese emperor entrusted a certain Emin Wang with the project. Emin Wang sent his son Musa Gong⁴² who had six thousand households of farmers moved to the Ili valley in 1765. Thereupon, these migrants were named 'Taranchi', meaning 'a peasant, cultivator' (Abdusémetov 20-21). The narrative then continues through the 1860s anti-Qing rebellion in Ili and the regions' annexation by Russia to Taranchi migration westwards after the eastern part of Ili was returned to the Qing in 1881.

Other parts of *Taranchi History* and other entries in the anthology deal with contemporary conditions of Taranchis and disclose Abdusémet's modernist ideas with typically Jadidist educative overtones. An illustrative example the following statement: '*We have composed this handbook entitled "Taranchi History" in order to acquaint Taranchi children with events of their own history...*' (Abdusémetov 10). Having in mind that Taranchis were a moderate and not a particularly well-known community within the Turkic world, Abdusémet dedicated a great part of his journalistic articles to descriptions of contemporary life, social issues and dissonances within Taranchi society. One article describes Taranchi people as 'generally civilized' (*umumen medeniy*), living in clean

⁴¹ For Abdusémet, the Six Cities were Kashgar, Yarkend, Aksu, Kucha, Turfan and Khotan (Abdusémet 132).

⁴² The title *gong* probably originated from the rank 公 *gōng* (prince), which was as a part of indirect rule granted by the Qing to local officials in Turfan and Qomul area.

buildings arranged in straight streets. Villages are very peaceful and youth occupy themselves with study. However, since Taranchis did not establish the custom of educating women, the household upbringing of children is deficient and Taranchi women are susceptible to superstitions. Some pre-modern practices also survived in medical care and religion, such as ‘shamanism’ (*pére oyuni*) or ‘Sufism’ (*ishanliq*). However, according to Abdusémet, owing to the spread of periodicals after 1905, Taranchis became more knowledgeable of the world around them, started to notice their ‘various social deficiencies’ (*türlük ijtimaiy kemchilikler*), criticized the old order and worked towards reform. This ensued in tension between the ‘young’ (*yashlar*, i.e. the reformists) and ‘old’ (*qénilar*, i.e. the traditionalists). The latter used to derogatively call the former ‘short coats’ (*kalte chapán*) according to Western-style suit worn by the progressives, as opposed to traditional ‘long coats’ (*uzun chapán*) worn by conservatives. However, as modernity gradually spread throughout the Taranchi society, the term ‘short coat’ actually acquired positive connotations, so the traditionalists stopped using it. Eventually, all *maktabs* transformed to ‘Jadidist schools’ (*usul-jedit mektiwi*) without encountering any opposition within Taranchi society (Abdusémetov 99-106). Abdusémet specifically states that the ‘awakening’ (*oyghinish*) of Taranchis occurred in the twentieth century, as opposed to that of the Tatars which took place in the nineteenth century:

‘...We have said that the Taranchi Turks have entered the stage of awakening. The reason is that after 1905, they started associations bent on reforming *maktabs* and *madrasas*, opening Muslim (*musulmanche*) printing houses, sending children for education to government schools, welcoming national (*milliy*) periodicals, observing other developing nationalities (*millet*), learning from them and caring more about their own situation. In other words, these are some of the signs of their awakening...’ (undated; Abdusémetov 110)

At the same time, Abdusémet did not hesitate to criticize the shortcomings of new educational system. For instance, he identified the absence of standardized curriculum and lack of trained teachers as the two main problems of Taranchi Jadidist education:

‘...It has been written in the newspaper *Ili Prefecture (Ili Wilayiti)* published in the past in Taranchi dialect: “Once a nation enters the world of progress (*tereqqiyat*) and civilization (*medeniyet*), in order to attain knowledge (*ilim*) and education (*ma’arip*) it is primarily in need of elementary school teachers. This is a basic principle. The standard of life, wealth, knowledge and education is measured according to the size of their elementary education system. If a nation does not have elementary school teachers, then this nation is considered ignorant and uneducated...” This means that without elementary school teachers, a nation cannot develop... But at the moment, are there any teachers familiar with teaching methods and procedures of modern education in our Ili prefecture? If we think about it, alas, for sure there are not even five or ten of them...’ (1911; Abdusémetov 121-2)

Abdusémet’s writings feature many other modernist concepts. Indications of his own religious affiliation are rare, neither does he refer to Westerners by the term ‘infidel;’ instead, he uses the emotionally neutral term ‘foreigners’ (*ejnabiylar*; Abdusémetov 26). He also uses Christian calendar, as opposed to Islamic, and system of longitude and latitude coordinates for determining geographic location of the Ili valley (Abdusémetov 11). Abdusémet’s language contains Russian loanwords, such as *moda* (fashion) or *microb* (microbe; Abdusémetov 103). Western and Russian civilization is regarded as advanced and inspiring, whereas Qing administration is described as obstructive to development (Abdusémetov 105, 108-9). Abdusémet frequently uses the old vocabulary in new context. Notably, the word *millet*, which had been previously used by Turkic writers and historians in the sense of an ethnically

undistinguished religious community of an empire (Sayrami 1988: 42, 76), or simply ‘a community’ (Zürcher 68), acquired the meanings ‘nation’ or ‘nationality’ in Abdusémet’s modernist discourse. The word *khelq*, which in late-imperial era texts had the connotation of ‘common people’ (Sayrami 1988: 247), is by Abdusémet used in the sense of ‘a people’ or ‘nation’ (Abdusémetov 32, 42). Similarly, the term *puqra*, which had also meant ‘common people’ in pre-modern texts (Sayrami 1988: 32, 42, 182, 266), starts to be used by Abdusémet in the sense of ‘citizen’ (Abdusémetov 32).

Abdusémet’s texts included in *Bright Shores* illustrate well that their author’s perception of communal identity and interest was very different from that existent in pre-modern era. Abdusémet clearly viewed his people as an ethnically defined nation with clear ethnic boundaries, common name, myth of descent, history, culture, territory, sense of solidarity, political aspirations and other defining traits typical for era of nations. He even retroactively perceived Taranchis as a nation all the way against the current of history up to the Qing resettlement in 1865. By the alternative and frequent use of the label ‘Taranchi Turks’ (*Taranchi Türkler* or *Taranchi Türkliri*; for example Abdusémetov 69, 99, 108, 110 and elsewhere), Abdusémet also simultaneously recognized that Taranchi national community belonged into the broader family of Turkic nations. It is therefore likely that at the moment of communist takeover of Central Asia by mid-1918, the identity of Taranchi nation in the Yettisu-Almaty region was firmly consolidated in minds of Taranchi intellectual elites. This is also attested by the fact that some Taranchis opposed the Bolsheviks by forming autonomous administration and publishing their own paper called *Taranchi Voice* (*Sada-i Taranchi*; Brophy 167).

Apart from articles describing Taranchi contemporary social reality in the territory of Czarist Russia, Abdusémet also authored pieces dedicated to problems of Xinjiang. His close attention to the fate of his Turkic compatriots across the border was perpetuated by general Jadidists interest in history and culture of Turkic nations, by the Taranchi origins in Xinjiang and by the remarkable fate of his father during late Qing insurgency. Abdusémet’s knowledge of Xinjiang and enthusiastic advocacy of local Turkic people’s cause increased especially after his journey to Aksu in 1914. Again, Abdusémet’s writings about Xinjiang feature typical Jadidist discourse, namely history lessons and condemnations of social problems. Xinjiang, or in Abdusémet’s terminology *Chinese Turkestan* (*Chiniy Türkistan*; Abdusémetov 67, 70 and elsewhere) or *East Turkestan* (*Sherqiy Türkistan*; Abdusémetov 94, 96 and elsewhere), is portrayed as a very backward territory lacking even the most basic cultural institutions and practices. In Abdusémet’ view, this is naturally because of mismanagement by Chinese administration. In an article written in 1911, Abdusémet notes that affairs of East Turkestanis are run by religious establishment and that there are no Turkic schools or press. Modern Chinese schools founded by the Xinjiang government are too few and the instruction is in Chinese, therefore the schools are largely useless for Muslims (Abdusémetov 69-70). He also remarks that the condition of education in Chinese Turkestan did not change since Noah’s times, that the people in East Turkestan are living as they lived a thousand years ago and that their future is dark and hazy (Abdusémetov 94-5). He also notes the smothering authority of clergy, wide-spread prostitution and isolation from changes taking place even in inner China (Abdusémetov 132-42). In Abdusémet’s depiction, when compared to the situation of Taranchis living in Russia, Xinjiang Turkic Muslims are living in a whole different world:

‘...One Uyghur owed 15 *som* to a Han and was not able to repay, so he gave up his child instead of the money. This is our life... This is the situation all over the place. Whoremongers, vagabonds, beggars and gamblers have the strongest say in the

society. Patriots and modernists are second-class people...’ (undated; Abdusémetov 96)

Similarly to efforts at fostering Taranchi ethnic identity and national consciousness, Abdusémet also articulated the idea of modern Uyghur nation. David Brophy’s and Sean Roberts’ research (Brophy 2005; Roberts 2009) suggests that Abdusémet is one of the very first Turkic enlighteners known to intercept the academic thesis of direct connection between the ancient Uyghurs and contemporary Turkic sedentary population of eastern and southern Xinjiang oases. Throughout his works, Abdusémet views Turkic Muslims of Seven Cities as a distinct community who, despite the fact that they do not possess their own ethnic name, are genetic descendants of ancient Uyghur people:

‘..Above we have said that the Uyghurs of East Turkestan used to be called “Uyghurs” in the past and that they became nameless afterwards. Why is that? If you ask a local Turk who he is, he will answer: “A Kashgari” or “A Khotani.” If you tell him that this is a toponym, he will immediately say: “I am a Muslim.” If you tell him that you were not asking about his religion, he will say with a fright: “I am a Rag-Head.” The ones who come to contact with Kazaks and Kyrghyz will tell you they are Sarts.⁴³ It means that they do not know who they really are. What ignorance!..’ (undated; Abdusémetov 96)

‘...In the past called “Uyghur,” now nameless Turkic people of East Turkestan, are very unfortunate and miserable as regards their lives. We have seen it during our journey to Aksu in 1914...’ (undated; Abdusémetov 94)

Although Abdusémet predominantly uses labels ‘Six Cities Turks’ (*Altisheher Türkleri*; Abdusémetov 25 and elsewhere), ‘Six City residents’ (*Altisheherlik*; Abdusémetov 54 and elsewhere), ‘Kashgar Turks’ (*Kashgar Türkleri*; Abdusémetov 117 and elsewhere) or ‘Chinese Turkestan Turks’ (*Türkstan Chiniy Türkleri*; Abdusémetov 84 and elsewhere) for south Xinjiang Turkic population, on several occasions he directly calls the contemporary Turkic inhabitants of southern Xinjiang by the name ‘Uyghur,’ which actually somewhat contradicts his own claim of their namelessness. Nevertheless, such instances in Abdusémet’s early 1910s’ writings are the first known instances of a progressive Turkic intellectual wielding the ancient ethnonym ‘Uyghur’ with the aim of disseminating the idea of modern Uyghur nation:

‘...Ninety-nine percent of people living now in the province of Six Cities in Chinese Turkestan are Uyghurs...’ (undated; Abdusémetov 62)

‘...The Turks (Uyghurs) of East Turkestan use the name “Chinggis” until now, meaning “strong,” “thorough,” “persevering,” “tough” or “joyous...” (1912; Abdusémetov 84)

‘...We noticed that future prospects of East Turkestan’s Uyghurs are dark, hazy and scary...’ (undated; Abdusémetov 95)

⁴³ Sart was a name used in pre-modern period to refer to sedentary inhabitants of Central Asian oases. In Xinjiang, it invariably designated Turkic population, while in Russian Central Asia it also pointed to non-Turkic, i.e. Persian speaking urbanites. The term Sart is today still occasionally used in Xinjiang by pastoral Turkic nationalities (i.e. Kazaks and Kyrghyz), to refer to sedentary Turkic nationalities (i.e. Uyghurs, Uzbeks and Tatars). Sometimes the term carries slightly derogatory connotations, such as in the Kazak saying ‘*There is poison in the last bite of Sart’s meal*’, which mocks relatively complicated Uyghur social practice that includes ritualized refusing the last piece of a festive meal.

‘...After Uyghurs in Russia developed their printing and various newspapers were published, Taranchi Turks also started reading newspapers in greater numbers...’ (undated; Abdusémetov 104)

‘...Where is the motherland of our ancestors, the homeland of our cultured Uyghur forefathers? The great and strong Uyghur khanate established by Islamic holy warriors vanished so quickly only because of the shadowy steps taken by traitors...’ (1914; Abdusémetov 132)

‘...When the official found out that we were Russian citizens, he immediately let us enter. Inside the fortress, a Uyghur official came forth...’ (1914; Abdusémetov 136)

Additionally, as the choice of his penname ‘Uyghur Boy’ suggests, Abdusémet also made a point articulating that Taranchis are also descendants of ancient Uyghurs:

‘...Forty-five percent of people in Zungharia and Ghulja region are Taranchi (Uyghur)...’ (undated; Abdusémetov 62)

‘...For us, descendants of Uyghurs, it is very important to know this...’ (undated; Abdusémetov 116)

Apart from using the name ‘Uyghur’ as a modern ethnonym and depicting significant aspects of current social reality of the Uyghur nation, Abdusémet also covered the topic of Uyghur history in his articles. He calls the Qing mismanagement of Heptapolis in early 19th century ‘Chinese oppression of Uyghur people’ (*Uyghur khelqi üstidiki Khitay zulumi*; Abdusémetov 25). In the same way, the set of late nineteenth century uprisings in Xinjiang is portrayed as an Uyghur undertaking and even Ya’qub Beg’s administration is labeled ‘Uyghur khanate’ (*Uyghur khanliqi*; Abdusémetov 70-1, 76, 79, 148). Similarly, Turkic Muslims active in the Ili rebellion in 1911 are called ‘Uyghurs’ and native Turkic officials in 1910s are called ‘Uyghurs begs’ (Abdusémetov 60). In these and other similar instances, Abdusémet retroactively applied the modern ethnonym ‘Uyghur’ on a community which at the time used a different autonym and did not consider itself a modern nation.

Abdusémet’s slight inconsistency in labeling south Xinjiang Turkic population and unclear degree of ‘Uyghurness’ of Taranchis in his perception foreshadowed the vigorous discussion within Soviet Taranchi and Kashgari communities about the meaning of the ethnonym ‘Uyghur’, as well as negotiation of the meaning of the ethnonym with Soviet authorities during the 1920s. This intriguing process has been described in path-breaking article authored by David Brophy (Brophy 2005), later also by Sean R. Roberts (Roberts 2009). One of the main perpetrators of discussion was Abdulla Rozibakiev (1897-1938), one of the first Taranchi communists and a foremost Uyghur activist, who first used the term ‘Uyghur’ to name a revolutionary organization in Almaty in 1918 or 1919. Another activist, Ismail Tairov, founded a ‘Uyghur’ association (*Uyghur uyushmisi*) in Tashkent in 1920 for the purpose of fund-raising and supporting approximately two-hundred students from Xinjiang. In 1921, a meeting of the ‘Revolutionary Union of Altishahri-Zungharian Workers’⁴⁴ took place in Tashkent where it was proposed that its name be changed to ‘Uyghur Revolutionary Union of Altisheheri and Zungharian Workers,’ later shortly ‘Uyghur Revolutionary Union’ (*Uyghur Revsoyuz*). However, as David Brophy persuasively

⁴⁴ The organization is elsewhere called ‘Organization of Workers and Peasants of Altisheher and Zungharia’ (*Altisheher-Junghar Ishchi Déhqanlar Teshkilati*; Millward and Tursun 2004: 73).

demonstrated, the term ‘Uyghur’ in the body’s title did not point to a homogenous ethnic composition of its members, among whom there were Taranchis, Kashgaris, Tungans, Han Chinese, Kyrgyz, Tatars and one unspecified Turk. Rather, here the name ‘Uyghur’ denoted common origin of the members in Xinjiang (Brophy 173-4).

Disputability of ethnic content of the label ‘Uyghur’ was not satisfactorily clarified for over a decade. On the pages of Uyghur language periodicals and publications published in Soviet Central Asia, such as *Voice of the Poor* (*Kembegheller Awazi*; issued 1921-1932), *Salvation* (*Qutulush*; 1927-?), *Young Uyghur* (*Yash Uyghur*; 1922), *First Step* (*Birinchi Chamdam*, 1924), *Literature of Uyghur Country* (*Uyghur El Edebiyati*; 1925) or *Red Dawn* (*Qizil Tang*; 1931-1932), Taranchi and Kashgari activists staged a turbulent debate about their ethnicity and national identity. The main point of dispute was whether these two groups formed a single Uyghur nationality. In particular, vibrant argumentations occurred over the issue of linguistic differences (or similarities, depending on the point of view) between Taranchis and Kashgaris. Furthermore, apart from disagreements within the Taranchi and Kashgari community, the third party having a decisive say in the debate was the Soviet administration. For example, despite the fact that in 1922 the CPSU instituted a body called ‘Provincial Bureau of Uyghur Communists in Yettisu’ with Abdulla Rozibakiyev as its general secretary, which was a measure suggesting that the administration perceived Taranchis and Kashgaris as a single nationality (Brophy 173-81), the census of 1926 listed Taranchis, Kashgaris and Uyghurs as three separate ethnic groups (Matley 106). This was arguably because the Soviet authorities were not yet fully convinced that Taranchis and Kashgaris could technically form one ethnic group. At the same time, Soviets made clear that they would not support the idea of independent Uyghurstan across the border in Xinjiang (Roberts 372-3). The ‘Uyghur question’ (Brophy 163) was solved only after 1930 at a convention of Uyghur intellectuals in Almaty where Abdulla Rozibakiev strongly advocated the idea of unified Uyghur nation and a new Uyghur modified Latin script was adopted that remained in use until 1940s. Uyghurs were officially designated as a Soviet ethnic group in 1935. Subsequently, all discussions were silenced by Stalin’s late 1930s’ crackdown on all issues smacking of ‘nationalist deviations’, which sent a number of Central Asian Uyghurs fleeing to Xinjiang, to gulags or to execution ground (Roberts 373-5).

Thus, delimitation of Uyghur nationality in Soviet Central Asia was obviously neither a single-step nor a top-down move made by Soviet authorities, and the 1921 Tashkent conference did not mark the moment of emergence of modern Uyghur nation, as previously argued by some scholars (Gladney 1990). Rather, it was a complex process which spanned from resuscitation of the ancient ethnonym ‘Uyghur’ by nineteenth century academicians through discussions about its contents within Taranchi and Kashgari communities in 1920s up to official recognition of Uyghurs by Soviet authorities in 1935. What is, however, certain is that the Taranchi and Kashgari embrace of the notion of modern Uyghur nation provided a crucial external impetus for subsequent formation of modern Uyghur national consciousness in Xinjiang.

National Agitation by Enlightened Turkic Intelligentsia in Xinjiang

The above sections of this chapter showed how in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Turkic Muslim awakening spread from Russo-Soviet Central Asia to Xinjiang. In the same way, Xinjiang Turkic Muslim intellectuals were inspired by emergence and construction of national identities of Central Asian Muslims, including the concept of Uyghur nation of Xinjiang. As a result, some Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals and activists also embarked on

agitation which directly aimed at awakening national consciousness of *Musulman* in Xinjiang. These enlighteners also sought to uplift cultural and social standing of their nation, and thus to form grounds for its eventual mobilization into political movement. The following sections of this chapter illustrate such national agitation on lives and works of Abdukhaliq Uyghur and Memtili Tewpiq, two Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals who were among the very first indigenous individuals to view the *Musulman* community through the national prism and to call their nation to stand up for its national interest. Due to the scarcity of indigenous Turkic primary sources on Xinjiang history from 1880s to late 1920s, this part of the dissertation is unfortunately obliged to draw on examination of Abdukhaliq's and Memtili's poems; this being in spite of the fact that poetry as a traditionally very elite discipline of Central Asian Turko-Islamic cultural is not the most suitable genre for articulating modern ideas of nation and nationalism.

Abdukhalig Uyghur, by his own name Abdukhalig Abdurakhman Oghli, was born in an educated merchant family in Turfan in 1896 (Muhemmed'immin 375) or in 1901 (AUP 1; Ekhmidi 346). He acquired classical education and mastered Arabic, Persian and Chaghatay. In 1916, he traveled with his grandfather to Semey in today's Kazakhstan where he learned Russian. After return to Xinjiang, Abdukhalig studied at a modern Chinese school where he learned classical and modern Chinese; he chose a Chinese name Hā Wéncái (哈文才, in English 'Abdukhalig – Literary Talent'). In 1923, Abdukhalig traveled with the aforementioned enlightener Mekhsut Muhiti and other activists to the Soviet Union where he stayed for three years. During this stay, he studied Russian and Tatar literature. Education in several languages and cultural environments, as well as exposure to modernist trends in Russia/Soviet Union, later greatly benefited Abdukhalig in his role of an intellectual and educator who agitates his community to national consciousness and national movement.

In 1926, Abdukhalig returned to Turfan and became a publicly active figure. He cooperated with the Muhiti family and Heyder Sayrani in introducing modern education into the Turfan area. In some instances, Abdukhalig's house would be used as the teaching facility for Sayrani's classes. He also founded a well supplied library that became one the most influential source of knowledge in eastern and northern Xinjiang. In 1927, he and several other local activists founded a philanthropic modernist organization called the 'Enlightenment Union' (*Aqartish Birleshmisi*), which assembled funds and used them to open modern schools around Turfan. Abdukhalig's plan to establish a printing shop and publish a newspaper in Turfan was not unfortunately granted official permission. He also attended a Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles workshop held in Karashahr in 1928, about which unfortunately nothing is known besides the fact that it existed. Eventually, Abdukhalig also participated in political and insurgent activities. After the Komul uprising breakout in 1931, he successfully arranged for a Tatar mechanic to travel to Komul to teach the rebels how to operate and repair modern rifles. In November 1932, Abdukhalig wrote the text of his poems 'Awaken!' and 'Open!' on cloth banners and brandished them while marching through the streets of Turfan in protest against government oppression. In December 1932, an uprising broke out in Turfan during which the insurgents seized the seat of Turfan government. At the beginning of 1933, Abdukhalig Uyghur, along with seventeen of his associates, was arrested and imprisoned. On March 13, 1933, the group was paraded in shackles through Turfan to the execution ground. Shouting the slogan 'Long live the liberation!' in both Uyghur and Chinese, Abdukhalig and his colleagues were executed (AUP 1-13; Muti'i 1990: 384-7; Ekhmidi 346-9, Muhemmed'immin 376).

Even though only about sixty of Abdukhaliq's poems survive today, his contribution to Uyghur literature is enormous. He was the first writer to remold classical literary tradition into modern Uyghur poetry. He wrote his poems in vernacular, although he retained many non-colloquial words from Chaghatay which were probably not used in spoken language of the time. Although he wrote many pieces in classical genres, such as the metre *arzu wezni* or *ruba'i*, he implanted many elements of popular culture, such as folk songs, saws, fairy tales or popular myths. At the same time, his works are strongly committed to relevant social issues and show deep concern about the fate of his people and homeland. He was the first Xinjiang Turkic Muslim author to reflect on contemporary social, political and cultural issues and to implant features of modernity into poetry. His familiarity with current affairs and ideas in Russia/Soviet Union and China proper enabled him to disseminate ideas of Jadidism, the May Fourth movement and Three People's Principles by his works. Similarly to his personal activities, Abdukhaliq's poetry had an enormous communal impact. A large part of his poems became popular by first circulating in oral form among people and only eventually being recorded in written form. Abdukhaliq is rightfully famed as the founder of modern Uyghur literature, whose work and ideas are comparable to figures such as the Tatar poet Abdulla Tuqay (1886-1913), Uzbek writer and activist Mustafa Choqay (1890-1941) or Chinese writer and thinker Lu Xun (鲁迅, 1881-1936). Abdukhaliq's poetry is exemplified by the below translations. Notably, the first poem that follows is one of the most influential and beautiful works of modern Uyghur literature:

Awaken!

Hey awaken, miserable Uyghur, enough of your slumber,
You own nothing! The next thing to lose would be your life.
If you don't deliver yourself from the decline,
Oh, your situation will be troublesome, so troublesome.

Rise! I said, raise your head! Awaken!
Cut off your enemy's head, spill his blood!
If you don't open your eyes and look around carefully,
One day you will die helpless with your wishes.

Your body still looks as if lifeless,
Is that why you are not worried much about your death?
I shout and you keep lying still,
Do you want to die asleep?

Open your eyes wide and look around you,
And ponder long on your future.
Should this precious chance slip out of your hands,
Problems, only problems are there for you to come.

My heart worries about you, oh Uyghur,
My fellow fighter, my brother, my family.
I care about your situation; I call to wake you,
But you still don't hear, what's wrong with you?

One day your regret will come,
That day you will understand the point.
You will curse, but it will be too late,
Only then, Uyghur, will you give into my words. (1920; AUP 8-9)

We

Because of our ignorance we suffer many hardships every day,
Say, which one of us benefits from today's situation?

We keep lagging behind the current trends,
We elect officials, and then we file allegations.

We are not devoted to knowledge and studiousness,
Thinking about study or teaching while chewing on pinesap.

Where there is no unity, difficult is the dispute over the benefits for the motherland,
Wherever there is a celebration, we feel like joining and spending an evening.

Even in a hundred years, we will not understand the common benefit,
When it comes to doing harm, amazingly dexterous we are.

Whenever someone does a good deed, he is not remembered,
Whenever we feel like it, we expose the bodily parts we should not expose.

For the nation we aren't able to donate a penny,
We don't think it's necessary, and keep on building our eaves.

Our aim is neither brotherhood nor comradeship,
And if we are originally friends, we will still pursue our own goals.

If a friend of ours accidentally happens to make a mistake,
Openly we find and point out ten more flaws.

We don't long for fame or for strength of our ancestors,
Illiterate and ignorant with blindfolded eyes we brag.

We devote our lives to useless and laudable favors,
But when it comes to collecting the *hajj* tax, off we flee.

When we become infuriated at each other during games and jokes,
Reconciliation is nowhere to be seen and flames keep burning among us.

In flattery there is none above us,
Sly and tricky, we tell all kinds of lies.

There used to be a saying: 'A dog remembers the one who beats it.'
We feed all our dignitaries, officials and magistrates fat.

Those who are after knowledge are soaring in the sky and floating in the stream,
We don't even have a mangy donkey, on foot we are walking.

When a car comes grunting, 'oh God, what is this?' we say,
Not using our brains, we are standing dumbfounded.

In technology and craftsmanship we say that 'we've done enough,' and that is it for us,
We sit in our kilns and pour porridge in our clay bowls.

There is none to make the mountains and rivers a paradise on Earth,

We mold our pillows and lay care freely.

Instead of astronomers, engineers and scholars
We have greedy clergy and aristocracy.

When we want something, we pretend not to see or not to be able to accomplish it,
We slander with thousands names those who are determined and say ‘I’ll do it.’

We don’t care a bit about our homeland and land,
A day will come since when worries will be pointless.

‘Shush now, Abdukhaliq, enough, don’t worry, stop grumbling,’
Then we will be remorseful because we made ourselves suffer. (1921; AUP 13-5)

Gog – Magog

Manchus are down,
Ended up with empty hands.
The cruel became the rulers
Laughing from all around.

Military governors in every province,
Run the politics as they please.
Zhongshan’s⁴⁵ words
Were ignored.

Sanmin zhuyi was shut off,
Without real actions and effect.
At the end China (*Zhongguo*)
Separated into twenty-two parts.

One of the parts
Was our motherland Xinjiang.
Its population was Uyghur,
But this notion did not exist.

We didn’t notice anything,
From summer until winter,
Yang Zengxin became the Governor
And began to massacre.

There were judges and mallas,
Clad in ceremonious turbans and coats.
‘To abide by his orders is a duty,’
Was their religious ruling.

Yang was very skilled
At various schemes
And at creating
All kinds of contentions.

This fact was good for Yang,

⁴⁵ Refers to Sun Yat-sen’s name Sun Zhongshan.

Exceptionally useful.
As if for a wolf that had seized a lamb
And began to devour it with its skin.

Seven headed monster
Sat permanently in his post.
Stole gold and silver,
Built houses in Tianjin.⁴⁶

The homeland's fame was gone,
So was the gold and silver ore.
Monsters multiplied,
In number day by day.

They stationed troops at Qomul
And sealed shut the Xingxing Gorge.⁴⁷
'Should companions rise they'll be afraid,
Hurry, this is simple.'

The army lay at Qomul,
Wasting all the taxes.
Annoyed the people of Qomul
Till they said 'Enough!'

More soldiers – thieves
Came to Qomul,
Finally became in charge
The murderer of Fan Yaonan.

Uyghur wrote songs,
Unveiling his hearts and souls.
In which the arrogant general,
Was compared to a monster. (1928; AUP 40-3)

I can see

The sun's long risen
The whole world is lit,
But only our Xinjiang
I see as the blackest soot. (1930; AUP 72)

Untitled

In what a state this nation,
Uyghurs' grandsons, open your eyes
Use your strength and do a good thing.

⁴⁶ This line refers to the fact that a vast majority of successful Chinese merchants operating in Xinjiang originated in Tianjin (天津) and came to the province following the Qing reconquest (Lattimore 1950: 51, 140).

⁴⁷ The Orangutan Gorge (猩猩峡 *Xīngxīng xiá*), located at the western end of the Hexi Corridor (河西走廊 *Héxī zǒuláng*), is the gate from China proper to Xinjiang.

Stand up! Stop all useless talk.

By enduring unprecedented abuse,
We reached today's state of affairs.
Strangers come and run our affairs,
Acting with cruelty towards these mountains. (undated; AUP 90-1)

Abdulkhaliq's poems reveal his dedication to promoting modernity and progressive institutions. His vivid imagery depicting desolate sceneries of Xinjiang landscape or rough weather conditions points to the oppressive political reality of Xinjiang and to the difficult fate of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims. Similarly, Abdulkhaliq widely employs a theme of an abandoned lover who weeps for his partners who had abandoned him/her. As one traveler's report from 1905 shows, such folk songs were quite common around Turfan at the time (Le Coq 69). In Persian literature and Sufi poetry, this theme was a metaphor for a believer's love for God. Abdulkhaliq uses this device in a modernized way, when love for the departed one articulates his people's desire for improvement of conditions, reform, progress and development, e.g. in poems 'Shattered Heart' (AUP 6), 'Longing' (AUP 10-2) or 'Where Are You?' (AUP 23). The poem 'Memorial of Hope' (AUP 63-4) compares the abandoned lover to a nightingale in cage.

Abdulkhaliq also espoused the principles of cultural enlightenment by often featuring metaphors of darkness (symbolizing Xinjiang Turkic Muslims' decline, illiteracy and oppression) and light (meaning progress, modernity and development) – the poem 'Lamp' uses the metaphor of light for knowledge that guides the poet on his path through darkness of ignorance (AUP 80). Modern inventions and technology are regarded as means to soar high in the sky and float in water ('We', AUP 13-5). Abdulkhaliq also introduced Russian loanwords into poetry, such as 'engineer' (*inzhénér*; AUP 15), 'train' (*poyiz*; AUP 67), 'steamboat' (*parakhot*; AUP 67) or 'automobile' (*aptomobil*; 88). Many pieces directly describe Yang Zengxin's dysfunctional administration, openly call for a rebellion or extol revolutionary victories, such as 'Anger and Lament' (AUP 34-5), 'Untitled' (AUP 86), 'Lamentation' (AUP 88-9), 'Curses to You, Brutes!' (AUP 99), 'Disillusioned' (AUP 106-8) or 'Frost' (AUP 100-2). Even though the path to progress and change is portrayed by metaphors of rough nature as arduous and often makes the author feel disturbed and unsure, Abdulkhaliq often expresses his hope that the situation in Xinjiang will eventually change, e.g. 'Mountains in Sight Are Not Far' (AUP 69), 'Endless Hope' (AUP 36-7). The poem 'Shouts before Death' contains Abdulkhaliq's hopes that the flowers of his efforts will bloom after his death (AUP 112).

Importantly for research in emergence of Uyghur national consciousness and nationalism, Abdulkhaliq is the first known Xinjiang Turkic Muslim intellectual who perceived his community as a modern nation. Many of his poems feature the words 'nation' (*millet*) or 'people' (*khelq*) used in modern sense, for example in pieces 'Endless Hope' (AUP 36-7), 'Hope' (AUP 67-8) or 'Untitled' (AUP 90-1). This concept also appears in works of acerbic admonition when he reprimands and mocks his nation for being 'asleep' or 'blind,' i.e. acquiescent and passive in their decline – 'Soon to Come' (AUP 51-2). The poem 'To Molla Rozi' (AUP 65) denounces Xinjiang Turkic elites collaborating with Chinese administration, or in other words, do not represent interests of their nation. These references in Abdulkhaliq's poems point to persistence of the dynamics of discord examined in previous chapter of this dissertation.

Abdulkhaliq's poems are also the first currently known record of an indigenous Xinjiang Turkic Muslim referring to himself and his nation by the name 'Uyghur'. It was

probably during contact with Russian Turkic intellectuals in 1910s, explained in previous sections of this chapter, when Abdukhaliq became acquainted with the idea and practice of calling the indigenous Turkic Muslim oasis dwellers of Xinjiang by the name ‘Uyghur’. Following the re-appearance of the term as a modern ethnonym, some progressive Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals, such as Abdukhaliq, realized that this construct could be used to awaken national consciousness of their proto-national *Musulman* community. Abdukhaliq’s choice of this term as his penname (*tekhellus*) and inclusion of this idea into his poems were instances of such agitation toward new ‘Uyghur’ national consciousness. Besides the need for unification and establishing a common name for a nation, Abdukhaliq’s adoption of the term ‘Uyghur’ as his penname also alluded to one interpretation of the name’s meaning as ‘cultured’, ‘civilized’,⁴⁸ and reflected the modernist embrace of knowledge and science as key to national well-being (Muti’i 1990: 379-82). At this moment, it is not clear precisely when Abdukhaliq started to use the term ‘Uyghur’ in his works. The first currently known poem to feature this word is ‘Uyghur Girl’ (*Uyghur Qizi*; AUP 1-2) written in 1917; however, it appears only in the title, the authenticity of which has been disputed. The first undisputed instance of the use by a native Xinjiang Turkic intellectual of the term ‘Uyghur’ in the sense of a national name for the *Musulman* community is in the above poem ‘Awaken!’ written in 1920.⁴⁹

In his poems, Abdukhaliq also clearly defined several traits of the Uyghur nation. In his view, one shared characteristic was the national decline and misery caused by the dysfunctional Chinese rule over Xinjiang indigenous Turkic Muslims in combination with their own passivity and indolence (‘The Anguish of the Era’, AUP 75-6). Abdukhaliq further pointed to shared and special lineage of his nation by calling it ‘Uyghur grandsons’ (*Uyghur ewladi*; ‘Untitled’, AUP 90-1). He referred to ancient Uyghurs as to people of ‘fame’ (*shöhret*) and ‘vigor’ (*gheyret*; ‘We’, AUP 14), and also regarded highly the ethnonym itself as ‘Uyghur – our renowned and famous name in world history’ (*jahan tarikhida meshhur atalghan namimiz Uyghur*; ‘Disillusioned’, AUP 106). Uyghurs are also said to be as distinct from the Han as ‘white from black, which will never become white; let pure gold separate from copper and let it withstand fire’ (‘Mountains in Sight Are Not Far’, AUP 69). The concept of homeland (*el, yurt, weten*) as one of national traits also appears in Abdukhaliq’s poems – (‘We’, AUP 15; ‘My Wish’, AUP 98; ‘Untitled’, AUP 87). Homeland is sometimes called by the term ‘mountains’ (*taghlar*; ‘Untitled’, AUP 90-1), referring to tall mountain ranges surrounding eastern and southern Xinjiang. In places, the homeland is referred to by Chinese loanword ‘Xinjiang’ (*Shinjang*; ‘Gog – Magog’, AUP 40-3; ‘Untitled’ AUP 72).

Abdukhalig was also the first indigenous Xinjiang Turkic thinker to ponder Uyghur national interests. He specifically used concepts such as ‘common benefit’ (*omumning paydisi*; ‘We’, AUP 13), ‘for the nation’ (*millet üchün*; ‘We’, AUP 13), ‘happy future of Uyghur nation’ (*Uyghurning iqbali*; ‘The Anguish of the Age’, AUP 76), ‘to speak of the nation’

⁴⁸ For more on the meanings of the name ‘Uyghur’, see for Chapter 1.

⁴⁹ There are other instances of the early use of the term ‘Uyghur’. Abdukhaliq frequently used the term ‘Uyghur’ in the last stanzas of his poems. However, in these cases the word referred to the author himself. This practice, typical for Persian poetry and originating probably in pre-Islamic times (Rypka 84), was designed to cause the audience listening to an orally recited poem to better remember the author’s name. It is also known that the aforementioned Tatar enlightener Heyder Sayrani, who was closely acquainted with Abdukhaliq and involved in many progressive activities in Turfan, Urumchi and Chöchek, named his son ‘Uyghur’ in 1919 and further propagandized the use of the term as a nation name for Xinjiang *Musulman* throughout the 1920s in the newspaper *Our Voice* (Sayrani 65).

(*millet démek*; ‘Untitled’, AUP 87), or ‘disappearance of the nation’ (*millet yoqalmaq*; ‘Endless Hope’, AUP 37). However, Abdukhaliq did not primarily concentrate on propagandizing political national interest. His poems and activities reveal that the overwhelming part of his effort aimed at *agitation* of his fellow nationals from detrimental passivity to proactive pursuit of national interest – hence his frequent use of metaphors of awakening from sleep, opening one’s eyes, looking around at the progress of surrounding world, urgency of realizing the needs of the age etc. The above translated poem ‘Awaken!’ is the best example of such poetics. Similarly to dictum of Jadids in Russia, for Abdukhaliq modern knowledge and education (*pen ma’arip*) are among highest priorities and serve as a ‘key to awakening’ (*oyghinish achquchi*) of ‘my Uyghur’ (*Uyghurum*; ‘Greeting Letter’, AUP 49-50). Abdukhaliq made it very clear that under oppressive Chinese heteronomy, his nation has to exert its own effort to uplift its status and regain national prestige. Abdukhaliq specifically regarded passivity as the chief cause of national misery (‘Disillusioned’, AUP 106-8). He also reflected to factionalism within the Musulman society, previously in this dissertation called the disparity principle, by extolling the virtues of ‘unity’ (*jem’iy bolush*), ‘brotherhood’ (*ikhwan*) and ‘fellowship’ (*buraderlik*) of the nation as one important preconditions of national well-being (‘We’, AUP 14).

Even though Abdukhaliq’s poems and actions largely sought to promote cultural national values and economic mobilization, he also occasionally discussed and propagandized political aspects of national interests. Some of these were for instance ‘freedom’ (*hürlik*) of the ‘homeland’ (*weten*), to enable Uyghurs’ descendants to catch up on the progress of the surrounding world, to become rid of slavery just like European nations, to restore the connotations of ‘glory and honor’ (*sherep-shan*) the ancient name Uyghur used to have in the past or the ‘homeland’s fame’ (*yurtning dangqi*; ‘We’, AUP 13-5; Gog – Magog, AUP 40-3; ‘Hoping’, AUP 67-8; ‘Untitled’, AUP 87, ‘Untitled’ AUP 93). Abdukhaliq’s poems also show influence of Chinese republicanism and Kuomintang ideology stemming from China proper – they contain passages endorsing Sun Yat-sen’s Three People’s Principles, i.e. ‘nationalism’ (*khelqchil*), ‘people’s authority’ (*hoquq*, literally ‘law’) and ‘people’s livelihood’ (*turmush*, literally ‘living’). In one piece, Abdukhaliq specifically referred to Three People’s Principle as to a precious ‘star of hope’ (*ümid yultuzi*) which unifies Uyghurs, Mongols and Tungans (‘Greeting Letter’, AUP 49-50). Abdukhaliq declared his devotion to struggle for his ideals even at the price of life (‘My Wish’, AUP 98). His execution for participation in revolution shows that those were not empty words. Abdukhaliq Uyghur’s life and work is therefore a highly illuminating case study of a progressive cultural activist who did not hesitate to sacrifice his life in politically oriented nationalist movement stemming from national agitation.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Although Abdukhaliq’s poems are widely read and officially published in Xinjiang today, he remains to be a controversial figure of modern Uyghur history. The stance of his life and work continues to carry a strong appeal to today’s national-minded Uyghurs. In 1981, several Uyghurs wrote the text of Abdukhaliq’s poem ‘Awaken!’ in the wall in Kashgar. The police then spent a lot of energy in trying to find the author of the subversive poem, not realizing it had been written sixty years ago. Stanzas of this poem were also chanted by Uyghur protesters during demonstrations in Urumchi in late 1980s. Official representation of Abdukhaliq ranges from that of a patriotic figure to a dangerous nationalist (Rudelson 149-153). As in the case of Lu Xun, by post-humous glorification of Abdukhaliq as the founder of modern literature, the PRC authorities are striving to eliminate his anti-totalitarian message: ‘*Suppress those you can and stand those who remain on a pedestal. By lifting them up on a pedestal, you can rein even them.*’ (Lu Xun: ‘On Great People.’ Lu 273)

Another Xinjiang Turkic intellectual involved in national agitation was Memtili Tokhtaji Tewpiq,⁵¹ whose life and work bears a lot of similarities to those of Abdukhaliq Uyghur. He was born in 1901 in Boyamet village in Atush county in southwestern Xinjiang in a family of a doctor and a progressive activist. He attended the Hebib Zade modernist school in Éksaq village, where he was a student of the Ottoman activist Ahmet Kemal. The cultured and well educated milieu of Kashgar-Atush area made Memtili realize the importance of new education and modern trends. He started writing poetry, composing songs and playing musical instruments already in early childhood. In 1920, he accompanied his father on professional travels throughout northern Xinjiang and made a living as a barber.

During these travels, he was able to witness the poor material conditions of his people and homeland. At this time, he wrote a poem ‘Studied and Surpassed’ commemorating the assassination of progressive activist Abduqadir Damolla (translated below). Because of the critical tone of the poem and because it immediately became widely popular among widest strata of people, Memtili was placed under government surveillance. Upon advice of his friends, he left for the Soviet Union in 1921. There, he learned Russian and studied for one and a half year at a pedagogical institute in Moscow. After that, he left Moscow and made a living as a cook and *kebab* seller in the ports along the Black Sea coast, performing Xinjiang folksongs. With the help of Turkish acquaintances he made during this period, he arrived in Istanbul around 1927 and took up a job of janitor at a pedagogical institute. He eavesdropped on classes and studied in his free time, and eventually was allowed to take the entrance tests. He was accepted as a student and studied at the institute with superb performance. After graduation, he was a teacher at an elementary school on the outskirts of Istanbul. At the same time, he affiliated himself with a Turkish nationalist organization *Turk Youth Union* (Tu. *Türk Gençler Birliği*).

In 1932, the news of Turkic uprising in Xinjiang reached him in Istanbul, which upon he promptly returned to Xinjiang. He immediately became involved in promoting and organizing modern education in Atush and Kashgar. He founded the ‘County Education Council’, an organization involved in fundraising and founding schools. He also launched a two month’s pedagogical course which trained some sixty teachers. Albeit modest in scope, Memtili’s activities nevertheless triggered a wave of modern education in Atush and strongly contributed to nation-formation process in southwestern Xinjiang. Within six months, some twenty-four modern schools were allegedly founded by Memtili and his associates, which in total educated several thousand students who were the first of several successive generations of Xinjiang elites.

Memtili also gradually became closely involved in political activities. In 1935, he formed a so-called ‘Scout Force’ (*Izchilar Etriti*) out of about one hundred students. The group somewhat resembled an army unit – they dressed in light-green uniforms and carried military-style bags. Under Memtili’s leadership, the Scouts marched through villages and towns around Kashgar and sung marching songs propagandizing modern education. The group enjoyed support of Turfan enlightener Mehmud Muhiti, who after installation of new government in Urumchi in 1934 ended up being a military commander of Turkic army forces stationed in Kashgar.⁵² Muhiti sent military personnel to protect the Scouts’ marches and modern education activities, and also effectively lobbied on all levels of provincial

⁵¹ ‘Tewpiq’ is a penname meaning in Uyghur ‘one who chooses the right path’ (MEP 11).

⁵² For more on the events leading to Jin Shuren’s fall and on Turkic insurgency in 1930s, see Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

administration in favor of new Turkic education. The spread of modern education in southern Xinjiang is to a large degree due to Muhiti's support.

Memtili's dedication to education and modernity was also similar to Abdukhaliq's. On one occasion, Memtili allegedly declared: *'In order to free the people of my motherland from shackles of enslavement, I have chosen the noblest of professions – teaching. Maybe one day a lead bullet worth some six cents will send me off to the netherworld. But I am ready for such a day. Walking the path of the motherland and the path of knowledge, I will not yield one bit from shedding my hot blood.'* Memtili's national agitation and involvement in affairs bordering on politics gradually became viewed unfavorably by the provincial authorities. In April 1937, Memtili was arrested during teaching a class and imprisoned in Kashgar. In his cell, he continued to write nationalistic poetry on the walls. He was executed probably sometime later that year along with several relatives and other intellectuals (MEP 1-14; Ekhmidi 350-4; Ezizi 1997a: 396-420; Schleussel 388-9).

Although Memtili's poems are not as innovative and ground-breaking as Abdukhaliq's from the literary point of view, the message of his national agitation had a very strong social impact in the Kashgar area and contributed strongly to the emergence of southern Xinjiang Turkic Muslims' national consciousness. The tone of Memtili's poetry is well exemplified by several pieces translated below:

Decay

Plague has come to Kashgar,
The irrigation ditches are without water,
Oppression covers everything like a cloak,
Faces are as yellow as wax.

To move freely around is impossible,
The fierce stench of decay is everywhere,
Craving for food overlaid the land,
No millet to eat is left.

Taxation and toil grew heavy,
Breaths and sighs are strangled in throats,
People's turned into wounds,
Do you see that, Tāwpiq?

The mercy of God will come,
Faces will light up enthusiastically. (1920; MEP 1)

Studied and Surpassed

The others have studied and surpassed us, oh brothers!
It looks as if their conscience was firing up their perseverance.

Other nations are fluttering like falcons in the air,
Think, disciples of Muhammad! We are lagging far behind!

Scholars who know the words of truth don't teach us,
Our cruel rulers are selling out virtues for lousy money.

Where there is religious teaching, to there they rush restlessly like light grapes,
Turbans on their heads, rosaries in hands, they are shunning the truth.

Think! To whom go all the taxes and levies, who takes them?
Those who committed so many treacheries and hide in respectable attires.

They gained some knowledge in other countries,
And God gave them their good reputation.

We read but don't understand Arabic which is difficult for us,
They have left us not a speck of knowledge.

Orphans lie in the ashes beneath the public baths in Kashgar,
Without education, they gamble and smoke hashish.

Late Abduqadir Damolla is gone unjustly.
His sin? He only taught the truth to us. (1920; MEP 4)

Sayram Lake

Small you are, Sayram Lake, but your distress is immense,
Even if your waters surge, they still cannot overflow the banks,
Tall peaks surround you,
Even though you wish to, you cannot surpass these slopes. (1921; MEP 5)

We Are Uyghurs' Children

We are Uyghur children, our hearts are bright,
We've lived long lives and come along a noble path.

In many eras we found ourselves under domination of tyrants,
We shed rivers and rivers of blood on our way to freedom.

Now our motherland's become a hell for us,
We became prisoners and captives, our situation is grave.

A century has passed in wars, our glory is immense,
That is why abuse and slavery don't suit us. (1930; MEP 12)

Awaken, People!

Awaken, people! It's you, who will liberate the motherland,
By the means of schools light the lamps and fill it with brightness.

Let the era of oppression and cruelty be over now,
Be free from fatal destiny and dark times.

Be diligent and strive for your well-being,
And work towards enlightening children.

Stand up straight and start walking the path of work,
Let the Bird of Fortune perch over your descendants' heads. (1934; MEP 37)

On the Path to Liberation

For you, oh our homeland, we sacrifice our lives to you,
On the path to liberation, our blood has flowed like a river.

We shed blood and gave lives; finally we set you free,
There was faith in liberation in our hearts.

We cleaned the face of our homeland with blood,
Perhaps our name too was cleansed by blazing flames.

Our good deeds became companions to you,
Our forefathers were reputable for such merits.

Our fathers' wars will not disappear from pages of history,
Their brave pedigree will continue – we are their descendants.

The militarists collapsed, the country is in peace,
Live, long live our beautiful future prospects. (undated; MEP 28)

I Am Little

I am little, my words are sweet,
I am a refined blossom, which is blooming.
Those who do not study are empty and useless,
Their vigor often goes out.

I am a little Uyghur son,
I am so good, so good.
As I go to school my face shines brightly,
Immortality is something distant to me. (undated; MEP 20)

The above and other Memtili's poems articulate many ideas discussed in Abdukhaliq's case. In poetics and symbology, Memtili's depictions of desolate natural sceneries are metaphors for suffering of his nation and motherland. The poem 'Not Coming' contains description of desolate southern Xinjiang in dry, snowless and freezing winter, which symbolized the stuffy political climate (MEP 15). Similar metaphors are used elsewhere – the poem 'Homesick', written presumably abroad, recalls Xinjiang as a land of eternal winter clad in haze (MEP 10-1), whereas 'Telke Mountains' depicts a parched and forbidding range around Atush (MEP 2). Other poems also use rich vocabulary of darkness in portrayals and denunciations of oppressive government, negative national traits and corrupt Turkic elites, such as poems 'Fragment' (MEP 6) or 'Fragment' (MEP 8). Analogously, vocabulary of light, for instance in the poems 'At Dawn' (MEP 17) or 'Brothers' (MEP 23), expresses hope for better future symbolized by bright sun shining over the homeland and oppressed people.

Many of Memtili's poems convey his perception of his community as a 'nation' (*millet*) or 'a people' (*khelq*), defined mainly by noble and famed ancient Uyghur ancestry, possession of a 'homeland' (*yurt*, *el*, *ana diyar*, *ana yer*, *ana makan* or *weten*) and communal interest of 'well-being' (*sa'adet*; 'Studied and Surpassed', MEP 4; 'Homesick' MEP 10-1; 'We Are Uyghurs' Children', MEP 12; 'At Dawn', MEP 17; 'For the Homeland', MEP 21-2;

‘Surpassed’, MEP 27; ‘On the Path to Liberation’, MEP 28; ‘Awaken People!’, MEP 37). The primary communal interest articulated by Memtili is national awakening and action eventually leading to revival of freedom, prestige and prosperity of the nation and its homeland, and thus also to equal position with other modern nations. For Memtili, a radical way to forward such national revival is by action aiming at political goals. Many of his poems call for overthrowing the dysfunctional Chinese administration (‘Not Coming’, MEP 15; ‘Let Us Set Slavery on Fire’, MEP 24) and even specifically advocate the use of force in struggle for freedom of the homeland (‘Whose Son Are You?’, MEP 19). ‘Revolution’ (*inqilab*) is seen as a shining flower (‘At Dawn’, MEP 17) or an erupting ‘volcano’ (*wolqan*) which melts down the ‘chains of slavery’ (*qulluq kishen-zenjiri*; ‘Cries’, MEP 18). ‘Unity’ (*birlishish*) in strength and action will result in the nation becoming again the master of its homeland (‘Surpassed’, MEP 27).

Owing to his profession of a teacher, in his poems Memtili frequently emphasized the role of modern education and knowledge in national revival, which he perceived as avenues to freedom and prosperity of the nation (‘Knowledge’, MEP 9). Knowledge and progress is compared to wings with which developed nations are able to fly high in the air (‘Studied and Surpassed’, MEP 20). Memtili also stressed the importance of a teacher in society – teachers and activists in education who establish schools radiate the light of knowledge, whereas people without education are blind. Education is portrayed as a means to attain national well-being, while teachers are flowers of the homeland and Atush is the ‘source of education’ (*érpan menbesi*; ‘We Teachers’, MEP 38). The work of teachers was regarded difficult because promotion of modern knowledge is obstructed by conservative Turkic clergy (*molla*), Sufi aristocracy (*ishan*) and native officials collaborating with provincial administration (*begs*). Teachers’ and women teachers’ work is occasionally even despised and the word ‘modernist, progressive’ (*jedid*) is used as a curse. Yet for Memtili, the meaningfulness of teaching shines as the truth in the darkness of oppression. Therefore, it is in the homeland’s interest for the teachers not to go astray from the path of ‘modern knowledge’ or ‘science’ (*pen*; ‘For the Homeland’, MEP 21-2). Notably, the above translated poem ‘I Am Little’ translated above is in fact a nursery rhyme and excellently illustrates how the concept of modern Uyghur nation was being disseminated among children in Memtili’s classes.

In sum, the message of Memtili’s activities and poems, as well as his untimely arrest and execution, suggest that his impact on social life of Turkic Muslims of Kashgar was arguably both strong and inflammatory.⁵³ But apart from the fact that Memtili Tewpiq was another enlightened activist willing to pave way for his nation towards modernity and progress by sacrificing his own life, his ideas also reveal that throughout 1920s at least some of Xinjiang Turkic Muslim new intelligentsia perceived their community as a modern nation defined by shared descent from ancient Uyghurs, national homeland and a set of interests that eventually aimed at reviving national prestige.

Both Abdukhaliq Uyghur and Memtili Tewpiq started their activities at the turn of 1910s and 1920s, i.e. within months after they could have personally met Molla Musa Sayrami, the accomplished representative of classical Turko-Islamic literary tradition who passed in 1917. Yet their writings and mindsets are very different from those of Sayrami and signify a marked intellectual departure of Xinjiang Turkic elites from the era of religion and

⁵³ Similarly to Abdukhaliq’s case, Memtili’s timeless message retained relevancy for the future and inadvertently addressed very well the situation of Uyghurs after 1949. The location of burial of Memtili’s remnants was kept secret by the authorities until 1986. After it became widely known, it immediately started to be frequented by Memtili’s admirers (Ekhmidid 354).

empire towards the modern era of nation and state. In other words, Abdukhaliq's and Memtili's activities present an excellent case study of how new progressive Turkic intelligentsia with an extensive foreign experience played a key role in emergence of modernity in Xinjiang and national consciousness of indigenous sedentary Xinjiang Turkic Muslims in late imperial and early republican era.

As pointed out by Anthony Smith in his general theory of nation-formation, in the sphere of culture the new class of intellectuals tends to eliminate the knowledge monopoly of traditional clergy and to become the 'new priesthood' associated around new schools which disseminated notions of modernity. Even though Xinjiang Turkic progressive intellectuals did not produce systematic and extensive historical, philological and anthropological research in their communal identity, their enlightenment activities and artistic achievements in poetry generated national awakening (Smith 1986: 157-1). Similarly, Abdukhaliq Uyghur's and Memtili Tewpiq' promotion of mother-tongue education and introduction of vernacular into the high genre of poetry also inculcated national consciousness in a way pointed previously by several scholars in other settings (Seton-Watson 11; Anderson 71-5). In fact, as language is one of primary criteria of national identity, Abdukhaliq's and Memtili's use of vernacular embodied their will to be part of nation, which is a model also ascertained in other contexts (Gellner 43). The foreign inspiration of Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals' ideas and activities also resembles the importance of foreign models for nation-forming processes traced elsewhere (Smith 1986: 142). Finally, activities and writings of early modern Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals correspond to some principles ascertained in phases A and B of some nation-formation processes researched by Miroslav Hroch – namely scholarly dissemination of awareness of linguistic, cultural, social and other attributes of a proto-national community, and dedicated agitation towards awakening its consciousness (Hroch 1996: 81, 85).

Xinjiang new intelligentsia's and progressive strata's efforts were a formidable stimulus to later emergence of modern Uyghur national consciousness. Writings of Abdukhaliq Uyghur and Memtili Tewpiq show how in late imperial and early republican era, sedentary Xinjiang Turkic elites increasingly started to perceive their community not as a group defined largely by religion but as a modern nation. In this way, the nascent national idea was able to build on previously existing notions of *Musulman* identity as community defined by shared religion, descent origin, place of residence, mode of life, culture, political tradition and other markers valid in late imperial era, which altogether defined the community as indigenous Turkic Muslim oasis-dwellers of southern and eastern Xinjiang. However, in perception of progressive Xinjiang Turkic elites influenced by foreign models, the national criterion gained prominence over the religious one – they increasingly started to see their community as 'nation' (*millet*). Sometimes, the community was envisioned as a nation of 'Uyghurs' descendants' (*Uyghur ewladliri*) or 'Uyghurs' children' (*Uyghur baliliri*), thus invoking images of a common ancient ethnonym, culture and prestige. Indeed, according to some interpretations, due to the Ottoman and Tatar Jadidist connection with certain pan-Turkist inclinations Xinjiang Turkic Muslim elites rather perceived themselves as belonging to trans-state Turkic nation than to nation of exclusively Xinjiang Turks (Millward 2005: 275-7).

It was also shown that between 1880 and 1930, Xinjiang Turkic elites also commenced the process of creating modern Uyghur national symbology and inventing national traditions. They articulated several defining features of their nation, some of which were either entirely missing or not as prominent during the late imperial era. One of the identity markers which gained prominence was the concept of 'homeland' expressed in a

variety of ways (e.g. by words *yurt*, *el*, *ana makan*, *ana yer*, *ana diyar*, *weten* or by portrayals of homeland's natural sceneries), to which the nation was indigenous since time immemorial. Notably, the homeland is not referred to by these intellectuals by a specific name, or even by the name 'Turkestan' or 'East Turkestan', i.e. the homeland of speakers of East Turki language, a term known in this period to be used by the Swedish missionaries to denote southern and eastern Xinjiang (as illustrated for instance by the title of *Turkestan Calendar [Teqwiym Türkistan]* of AH 1327 [AD 1909]; PFK 1908: 1, Fig. 4). Occasionally, Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia even used the Chinese 'Xinjiang' to name their homeland. Often, the beloved homeland was depicted as natural sceneries and landscapes, such as mountains or lakes, which is a technique traced in other nation-formation processes (e.g. Smith 1986: 183). Portrayals of desolate Xinjiang landscape, harsh weather and climatic conditions and frequent references to darkness and night were wielded by the authors to articulate another new important national symbol – national misery caused by the oppressive Chinese administration and exploitation of Uyghur homeland. This way, common name, homeland, glorious past and current misery newly emerged as 'primordial' attributes and invented 'traditions' of nascent Uyghur nation (Hobsbawm 1983: 14; Smith 1986: 177). In this way, Nezerghoja Abdusémet, Abdukhaliq Uyghur, Memtili Tewpiq and other late imperial and early republican Xinjiang Turkic activists took the first steps in genesis of modern Uyghur national symbology.

At the same time, new Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia's idea of national well-being gradually replaced religious virtue in the position of fundamental social value and primary communal interest. In fact, Abdukhaliq Uyghur, Memtili Tewpiq and other early modern Uyghur enlighteners were the first indigenous intellectuals to clearly formulate communal interests in national vocabulary. In contrast to e.g. Tatar or Kazak Jadids, Xinjiang Turkic elites were not concerned with physical survival of their community. Instead, their primary aim activity was to mobilize their fellow compatriots to movement eventually aiming at rehabilitation of national prestige in their homeland. By bitter criticism of negative national characteristics, such as passivity, disunity and inadequate drive toward modernity and education, they were trying to awaken their nation from sleep and darkness into enlightened effort at self-improvement. Embracing modern education, technology and information were the most significant keywords of such progressive discourse. Importantly, the national agitation and call to action advocated proactive self-improvement by the nation itself. This was due to the fact that the progressive initiative clearly collided with the interests of Chinese heteronomy and conservative clergy. Therefore, the state and traditional society not only could not be counted by the progressives for defending national interests – they were even severely obstructing the modernization efforts.

Beyond doubt, modern Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia's modernization initiative was ultimately pointed toward restoring political rights of a previously advanced but gradually declined nation of Uyghur descendants. In other words, the enlighteners' goal was to effectively remold their nation from imperial subjects into citizens of a modern republic that exercises representative government and defends national interests. However, from rhetoric by Abdukhaliq Uyghur and Memtili Tewpiq's writings it appears that from 1880s to 1920s sovereignty and other political objectives were at least as important as (if not outright secondary to) main cultural and social objectives, such as modern education and technical progress. In other words, for the most part their actions and writings did not suggest that political objectives prevailed over other national interests (such as culture and welfare). Due to this low degree of politicization of majority of their efforts, Abdukhaliq Uyghur, Memtili Tewpiq and other early Xinjiang Turkic modern elites' modernist enterprise should perhaps not be called a nationalist movement. However, as the enlighteners' actions strived to endow

their nation with all characteristics of a full-fledged nation, their national agitation commenced a potent national movement similar to phenomena illustrated elsewhere (Hroch 1996: 80-1; Smith 1986: 162-3). It was in the following decade that this national agitation massively spilled into political arena.

Although there are currently no data available from which we can reliably assess the extent and manner of social penetration of Xinjiang Turkic elite notions of national identity and interest in this period, it is reasonable to argue that such ideas were not shared by a significant portion of southern and eastern Xinjiang population. Several reports by foreign travelers to the region in 1910s and 1920s do not contain any mention about the local Turkic population referring to themselves as ‘Uyghurs’ or ‘Uyghur descendants’. On the contrary, there are numerous accounts of the people referring to themselves as ‘Turkic’ or by toponyms (Abdusémetov 1991; Stein 1992; Cable and French 1927; Lattimore 1930; Lattimore 1995; Schomberg 1996). Thus, the term Uyghur wielded by the Turkic enlighteners reflected more of an envisioned mode of communal perception by nationally-conscious intelligentsia than an actual national practice. All of the above sources also describe contemporary Xinjiang as an underdeveloped region lacking means of mass communication and transportation infrastructure, by which such ideas could be spread. Even if such means had technically existed, large-scale dissemination of ideology would have been impossible due to restrictions of Yang Zengxin’s ‘ignorant people policy’. Of the three aforementioned attributes of modernity, i.e. progressive schools, press and organizations, only the first one did to a certain, yet unknown extent penetrate Xinjiang Turkic society. However, as the following chapter of this dissertation will illustrate, the nascent Xinjiang modernity and national agitation by Xinjiang Turkic enlighteners potently accelerated the community principle that acted towards formation of modern Uyghur national consciousness and emergency of politicized national movement. Moreover, the nationally conscious Turkic elites which were educated in new schools that appeared after 1880 were to play a leading role in cultural and political life of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims all the way (and beyond) 1949.

3. Politicization of National Movement (1930s)

The third chapter shows how the national agitation of early modern Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia and nascent national consciousness of indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims of late imperial and early republican period, scrutinized in previous chapter, transformed into a turbulent and highly politicized national movement that swept through the region in 1930s. The first line of ideology under research in this chapter originated from Turkic insurgency and secessionist movement that broke out in 1931 in the easternmost Xinjiang oasis of Komul. The movement spread throughout the entire southern Xinjiang and culminated in the proclamation of the first East Turkestan Republic in Kashgar in late 1933. The insurgency was accompanied by a wave of Turkic nationalist publications that provide us with a comparatively rich spring of first-hand information on contemporary Turkic elites' ideas of nation and nationalism. In particular, sources exploited in this chapter are magazines *Life of East Turkestan* (*Sherqiy Türkistan Hayati*), *Free Turkestan* (*Erkin Türkistan*) and *Independence* (*Istiqlal*), an unpublished text *Memoir of the Revolution* (*Inqilab Khatirisi*) of Emin Wahidi, who was an eye witness to contemporary events, and *History of East Turkestan* (*Sherqiy Türkistan Tarikhi*), the first modern history of the region written by Muhemmed Imin Bughra, a very important figure of early modern intellectual and political history of Xinjiang Turks.

It will be explained that intellectuals and politicians associated with the Turkic insurgency of the early 1930s perceived their community as East Turkestani nation (*millet*), defined by a number of shared characteristics, such as religious denomination, ancestry, homeland or language. In a much greater extent than their predecessors in the previous period, Turkic activists engaged in complex construction of national attributes and symbology of their nation. In this way, they wrote history of their 'primordial' East Turkestani homeland, formulated rich discourse of national misery inflicted by Chinese oppression and established other important national symbols, such as national flag, admired figures of national liberation movement or national capital. Also, Turkic intellectuals and politicians articulated in great detail national interests of East Turkestanis. The highest goal of the Turkic nationalist uprising was naturally winning political independence from China and founding a nation-state – the East Turkestan Republic. This state was to be based on religious law, but also on principles of modern representative government and republicanism. East Turkestani nation-state was also entrusted by nation with following a so-called modernization directive, or introducing into lives of East Turkestanis attributes of modernity, such as new education and knowledge, publishing and printing, new social organizations, modern technology, public healthcare system, hygiene norms or care for disadvantaged members of society. Altogether, the nation-state was responsible for satisfying East Turkestanis' need of progress and well-being.

The second stream of ideology under research in this chapter is the concept of nation and national interest devised by the Xinjiang provincial administration of Sheng Shicai, who suppressed the Turkic insurgency in mid-1934 and thus became the ruler of the province. The primary source of this section is the periodical *New Life* (*Yéngi Hayat*) published in Kashgar from July 1933 to May 1937. It will be described that upon inspiration by socialist nationality policy enforced in Soviet Central Asia, Sheng replaced the concept of East Turkestani nation with the theory of several Turkic nationalities (*millet*) of Xinjiang, namely Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis, Uzbeks and Tatars. This measure effectively fragmented the united front of Turkic opposition to Chinese rule. In a similar way, Sheng replaced the primary insurgent

goal of political independence of East Turkestan with the idea of unity of all Xinjiang's nationalities and unity of Xinjiang with the homeland, i.e. with the Republic of China. Emulating the Soviet model, Sheng's discourse eventually refrained from verbatim mentions of respective ethnic groups and instead propagandized anonymous 'Xinjiang nationalities.'

This section will also assert that as a legitimization measure, Sheng incorporated a large part of Turkic insurgents' ideas of nation and national interest into his policy. Namely, he embraced the Turkic nationalist concept of East Turkestan as homeland of all Turkic nationalities. He also promoted other recently designed national symbols (such as history, identity sites, national misery and liberation struggle) of Turkic nationalities, as well as the discourse of representative government and modernization directive. Despite the fact that Sheng's nationally oriented rhetoric eventually proved to be a mere legitimization measure and was soon terminated to the disadvantage of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims, Sheng's initial dictum articulated numerous ideas of nation and national interest that were directly intercepted from the previous national discourse of East Turkestani insurgent theoreticians.

Due to lack of primary sources and field research data pertaining to the time period between 1880s and late 1920s, it is again difficult to show how exactly the national agitation of early progressive activists, researched in Chapter 2, spread through and affected Turkic society. However, this chapter will suggest that judging by Xinjiang Turkic Muslims' extensive insurgency in eastern and southern Xinjiang, proclamation of East Turkestani nation-state, coordinated defense of national interests even during Sheng Shicai's renewed heteronomy in 1930s and other mass phenomena, it is obvious that the seemingly modest progressive efforts of Xinjiang Turkic modernizers explored in previous chapter had considerable effect and that the idea of nation and national interest did apparently take roots among substantial numbers of sedentary Turkic Muslims of Xinjiang. Similarly to patterns illustrated by specialists on nation-forming processes elsewhere, the 1930s' politicization of previously largely culturally and socially defined interests of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims aimed in an organized manner to endow their nation with all attributes of a modern nation. In wording of general theories, the politicized national interest had a markedly higher priority than other, non-national (such as for instance local or social objectives pointed out in Chapter 1) communal interests (Hroch 1996: 80; Breuilly 2). As explained on other models, the politicized national movement of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims prevailed over dynamics of discord sown by local and social ruptures, and generated a sense of broad and deep solidarity within the nation as large numbers of Turkic society were 'invited' by the elite strata to actively join in creating history (Smith 1986: 137). In other words, mobilization and politicization of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims' movement in 1930s generated strong popular support that was crucial for nationalist movement (Breuilly 19, 132; Smith 1986: 154-6). At the same time, the fact that a significant role in the insurgency was played by a new class of modern intelligentsia points yet again to the validity of the aforementioned 'intellectual interpretation' of nationalism (Breuilly 149-50) for the case of modern Uyghur national identity and nationalism.

3.1. Native Turkic Insurgency (1930 – 1934)

The mismanagement of Xinjiang affairs by Jin Shuren, outlined in previous chapter, caused grave deterioration of relations between the provincial administration and native Turkic Muslims. The situation was especially tense in Komul, one of the last remaining semi-autonomous Muslim khanates ruled by autochthonous aristocracy and also a strategically important location at the gate to China proper. After abolition of even the formal

political power of the Komul khan in 1930, and after the city was receiving waves of Han refugees from neighboring Gansu province, Jin imposed direct taxes on local Muslims and expropriated, or compensated with land, number of Turkic Muslim families in order to accommodate the Gansu newcomers. The Han settlers were to be exempt from taxation for two years while one year's tax amount was to be levied retroactively from local Muslims. The growing popular discontent of Muslims was ignored by Jin and even grew due to misconduct of a local Han official. As in the case of the late Qing Turkic uprising in Xinjiang, economic disparity and communal conflict between indigenous Turkic and exogenous Han population and ruling strata, in which both sides were distinct as regards religion, language, culture and other identity markers, quickly bred a large-scale native Turkic insurgency. The spark of rebellion was struck in the village of Shopul in early April, 1931, when local Han administrators, their bodyguards and some Gansu Han immigrant families were massacred by local Turkic Muslims. The rebels then fled to nearby mountains and Khoja Niyaz Haji (1889-1937) and Yolwas (1888-1971) became leaders of the uprising.

Pressed hard by provincial troops, the rebels were by a coincidence assisted by troops of a young and ambitious Gansu Tungan warlord Ma Zhongying (馬仲英; 1910). As a result, the rebels held out and during 1931 and 1932 the uprising gradually spread throughout the whole Heptapolis region. In the Turfan area, a large portion of insurgent activities were carried out by a secret organization led by Mahmud Muhiti (1887-1944), the brother of the Jadidist activist Mekhsut, who himself was killed in the warfare and his body was dismembered on the battlefield near Lükchün. Later, Tungans and Kazaks in northern Xinjiang also rebelled. In winter of 1932, some rebel troops were preparing an attack on Urumchi. One of the two most powerful factions there were White Russians, who made up a small but influential minority after the 1917 Bolshevik revolution and were paradoxically supported by the Soviets by 1930s. Another major power in the provincial capital were Chinese troops originally based in northeastern China, who arrived in Xinjiang via Siberia after Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1931. This well trained Chinese force was commanded by Sheng Shicai (1895-1970), a graduate of military academies who was charged by Jin Shuren with suppressing the Turkic rebellion in eastern Xinjiang. However, Jin was deposed in a coup by White Russians on April 12, 1933, and eventually Sheng Shicai took over Jin's position. At the same time, he pleaded for Soviet help against Ma Zhongying's Tungan troops who were pressing Urumchi from both east and north. The Soviet military intervention in early 1934 cemented Sheng Shicai's position of the ruler of Xinjiang (Forbes 52-62; 97-106).

Meanwhile, the situation in southern Xinjiang was complex. The most significant events occurred simultaneously along the southern and northern edges of the Taklamakan. A set of uprisings erupted in the Khotan area in spring of 1933 and was eventually brought under leadership of the three Bughra brothers – Muhemmed Imin (1901-1965), Abdulla (?-1934) and Nur Ahmadjan (?-1934). The Bughras were a clan of Muslim notables with hereditary political power; hence they are in some sources referred to as the Khotan *emirs*. The Bughra brothers established themselves as leaders of the Khotanese rebellion and even proclaimed an independent government in Khotan in March 1933. After that, Khotanese forces advanced westwards, where they allied with simultaneously erupting local risings and took control of Yarkend and Yangissar. At the same time, other Tungan and Turkic troops from Komul and Turfan advanced from the Urumchi region westwards along the northern road around the Taklamakan and, jointly with rebelling Kyrgyz forces, arrived in Kashgar where the two chains of uprisings merged. Fighting ensued among various Tungan and Turkic factions, while Khoja Niyaz Haji, who had stayed behind his forces at the northern section of

the Taklamakan, formed an anti-Tungan alliance with provincial forces. Eventually, in May 1933 the events ended up in stalemate as the Kashgar New City was in hands of well armed and trained Tungan troops of Ma Zhongying, whereas Turkic forces held Kashgar Old City. Moreover, Khotan, Aksu and Kucha regions were administered by separate Turkic factions. As a result, the whole eastern and southern Xinjiang slipped out of Han Chinese control (Forbes 38-121; Millward 2007: 192-8; Shehidi 278-82, Ezizi 1997a: 292-7).

Thus, the Kashgar Old City became the center of native Turkic insurgency, in which the Khotan faction gradually gained supremacy over other groups. Abdulla Bughra and Sabit Abdulbaqi Damolla (1883-1934), the Prime Minister and supreme religious authority (Ar. *shaykh ul-Islam*) of the Khotanese government, arrived in Kashgar in July 1933 and founded a 'Kashgar Affairs Office of the Khotan Government' (*Khotan Idarisi*), which subsequently transformed into an 'East Turkestan Independence Association' (ETIA, *Sherqiy Türkistan Istiqlal Jemi'iti*; Millward 2007: 198). Finally, the insurgency culminated in proclamation of the 'East Turkestan Republic' (*Sherqiy Türkistan Jumhuriyiti*, ETIR)⁵⁴ on November 12, 1933 (AH 24 *rajab* 1352;), a move allegedly initiated mainly by Sabit Damolla (Istiqlal 12; Bughra 1998: 426).

The Turkic insurgency of 1930s and establishment of the ETIR have so far not been sufficiently researched. Nevertheless, all presently available scholarship agrees that the new republic struggled in virtually all fields of its existence. The administration failed to extend its factual influence beyond oases along the southwestern rim of the Taklamakan and even to take control of the nearby Kashgar New City where Tungan armies continued to hold out. The ETIR's economy was plagued by lack of resources and high inflation. In international relations, despite its manifest anti-Chinese and anti-Soviet orientation, the ETIR failed to enlist even rhetorical support of Great Britain or Turkey, who both recognized the Republic of China's sovereignty over Xinjiang. The promised support of Afghanistan also did not materialize (Millward 206; Forbes 112-6). The existence of the ETIR in Kashgar Old City lasted only for several weeks before it was run over by the Tungans in early February 1934. It is the failure of the state that is one of the bases for dismissals of the ETIR by PRC's scholarship. As a whole, the movement is vilified as an originally legitimate peasant uprising that unfortunately turned into 'separatist power' (分裂政权 *fēnliè zhèngquán*) soiled by narrow nationalism, pan-Turkism and pan-Islamism, religious extremism and foreign

⁵⁴ It is worth stressing that both independent states declared by Xinjiang indigenous Turkic Muslims prior to 1949 are consistently termed in primary historical sources by the same official name – 'East Turkestan Republic' (*Sherqiy Türkistan Jumhuriyiti*). In order to distinguish between these two authorities, the acronym 'ETIR' (East Turkestan Islamic Republic) is used in this dissertation for the first one (existed in 1933-4 and was centered in Kashgar), while the acronym ETR is used to refer to the second one (existed in 1944-9, was centered in Ghulja and is approached in greater detail in Chapter 4 of this dissertation). The acronym 'ETIR' refers to the occasional term used in primary sources for its authority as 'Islamic government' (*hökümet Islamiye*; I 54, 59; NL 3) and is adopted in this dissertation due to higher prominence of religion in the first East Turkestan Republic (or ETIR) than in the second East Turkestan Republic (or ETR). However, it is worth re-emphasizing here that the official and widely used official name for the ETIR appears in all primary sources as the 'East Turkestan Republic.' In other words, terms such as 'Turkish Islamic Republic of East Turkestan' (TIRET; Forbes 112; Wang 467), or 'East Turkestan Islamic Republic' (*Sherqiy Türkistan Islam Jumhuriyiti*, 东突厥斯坦伊斯兰共和国 *Dōng Tūjuésītān yīslān gònghéguó*; Burhan 430; Chen 277;) or even 'East Turkestan Independent Republic' (*Sherqiy Türkistan Istiqlaliyet Jumhuriyiti*; Ezizi 1997a: 298), which are used by a large number amount of currently available literature, do not exist in any of the indigenous primary sources examined in this dissertation.

imperialists' intrigue (e.g. Chen and Chen 277-85; Li 172-91; Ezizi 1997a: 216-220; Burhan 492-503, 605). Providing an excellent example of republican China's official view of the affair, Zhang Dajun disregards the fact of proclamation of the ETIR and describes the insurgency in relatively brief manner as 'turmoil' or 'chaos' (變亂 *biànlùn*; Zhang 2727-812).

From among the few Western works dealing with the insurgency, Andrew Forbes interprets the ETIR (which he calls 'TIRET', Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan), as a state committed to application of Islamic law with an apparent preparedness to adapt or reform Islamic custom to fit contemporary political and social conditions. Thus, besides the Islamic law, the ETIR also sought to institute educational, economic and social reforms. As regards foreign affairs, Forbes opines that the state was anti-Soviet, anti-Han, anti-Tungan and had, in contrast to its spiritual predecessor (i.e. Ya'qub Beg's emirate), considerably smaller success at lobbying for support of great powers and Islamic countries. In fact, by adopting 'an uncompromisingly' Turkic-Islamic stance, the ETIR made enemies of all the major players in the region (i.e. the provincial government, the central government, the Tungans and the Soviets), and was therefore 'doomed from the moment of its inception' (Forbes 112-6). Laura Newby opined that the republic was shaped by the two forces of ultra-nationalism and Islamism. Despite the fact that the administration apparently intended to modernize schools, the state was plagued by lack of competent leadership, absence of binding ideology, persisting tribal loyalties and social fragmentation. Nevertheless, according to Newby, in founding the ETIR Islam was for the first time in Xinjiang employed as a modern mobilizing force endowed with a view to creating the basis of national identity of East Turkestanis (Newby 1986: 74, 78, 84, 187-96, 220-3). Shinmen Yasushi's excellent research supports the intellectual interpretation of nationalism, mentioned in Chapter 2, and shows how the nationalist insurgency of the 1930s stemmed from Turkic cultural modernism from late nineteenth to early twentieth century: '...the proclamation of Eastern Turkistan Republic should be considered as the direct result of nationalistic movements carried on under the leadership of those intellectuals and merchants who had devoted themselves to reformist activities with the promotion of the New-Method educational system as its central axis.' Founding of the ETIR is by him regarded as a remarkable consequence of social modernization in East Turkestan brought about by transfer of ideas from west to east of Central Asia (Shinmen 154-5). Similarly, Eden Naby's article pointed to the connection between emergence of Turkic national identity and Turkic periodicals mushrooming in southern Xinjiang in 1930s (Naby 1987).

The following sections of this dissertation will attempt to outline how the native Turkic insurgency and proclamation of the ETIR generated an enormous impact on the evolution of Xinjiang Turkic perceptions of national identity and nationalism. This impetus is well traceable in periodicals that were published during the brief autonomy of eastern and southern Xinjiang in 1933-4 mainly by activists concentrated around the secessionist faction in Kashgar. The periodicals were printed by the Swedish Mission Press, which was the printing house established in 1905 by Swedish missionaries who were active southwestern Xinjiang from 1892.⁵⁵ After the missionaries were expelled from the province in 1938, they

⁵⁵ It was already mentioned in Chapter 2 that the extent of the mission's printing activities was substantial. At the same time, as implied in the Introduction to this dissertation, there are considerable grounds to believe that had this archive remained in Xinjiang, today it would have been either destroyed or not accessible to researchers. Saving of Swedish Mission's archives is undoubtedly an event of extraordinary significance for contemporary study of Xinjiang's early modern history. Today,

luckily managed to take their archives with them to Sweden, where the collection is today kept by the Lund University. Chronologically, the first source under research is the *Life of East Turkestan*, (*Sherqiy Türkistan Hayati*; LET) a two-page weekly which started publication on July 21, 1933, or in other words around the time of Sabit Damolla's and Abdulla Bughra's arrival in Kashgar Old City, which likely provided a stimulus for nationally-minded activists. Proclamation of the ETIR on November 12, 1933, was reflected in the change of name of the weekly – the following issue came out on November 15 as *Free Turkestan* (*Erkin Türkistan*; LET).⁵⁶ Its last issue of was published on February 1, 1934, i.e. shortly before the ETIR leadership left Kashgar Old City on February 5 (Forbes 122). Throughout the whole period of its existence, the editor in chief of this periodical was Qutluq Haji Shewqi, a prominent modernist intellectual of Kashgar (whose activities were already mentioned in Chapter 2 of this dissertation). Although as a rule the articles in *Life of East Turkestan* and *Free Turkestan* are never signed, it is reasonable to assume that a large number of them were written by Qutluq, or a similarly minded activist with Jadidist background.

Another significant source is the biweekly journal *Independence* (*Istiqlal*; I; Fig. 5), published for the first time by the ETIA on December 18, 1933. The first issue of *Independence* had seventy-four pages and in fact consisted of numbers 1 and 2. *Independence* is an especially valuable primary source because it contains, among other material, the ETIR constitution. However, as no other issues are currently known to be preserved in the Swedish archive, *Independence* seems to have come out only once. The editor-in-chief of *Independence* was one Sufizade, of whom nothing certain is known.⁵⁷ Similarly, other articles in *Independence* are undersigned by pseudonyms and authors of whom nothing is currently known. *Life of East Turkestan*, *Free Turkestan* and *Independence* were all periodicals directly or closely affiliated with insurgent administration and thus can be considered its press organs. It is notable that *Independence* has stronger religious overtones than *Life of East Turkestan*.

A source of major significance is *History of East Turkestan* (*Sherqiy Türkistan Tarikhi*; Bughra 1998), penned by the aforementioned Muhemmed Imin Bughra who was undoubtedly one of the most important personages of modern Uyghur history. Due to his background in a Khotanese aristocratic family where he was born in 1901, he received religious education at a *madrasas* in Khotan and nearby Qaraqash, where he afterwards also became a teacher and principal in 1922-1933. At this time, he became an advocate of modern education. After the Komul rebellion of 1931, Bughra organized an uprising in Qaraqash and gradually became one of the leading figures of the Khotan rebellion and of the whole Turkic insurgency in southern Xinjiang. After the collapse of the movement, he managed to escape from Khotan to Leh and Srinagar, eventually ending up in the Xinjiang Turkic refugee community in Afghanistan. There, he functioned as a revered leader until 1943, when he left for India and eventually for China (Benson 1991: 90; Forbes 124).⁵⁸

the missionary archive is well preserved and made available for research by the Lund University library.

⁵⁶ Despite the change in title, numbering, editorial staff and contents of this periodical did not change. Therefore, this research considers it a single source and despite the change in title refers to *Free Turkestan* as to *Life of East Turkestan* (LET).

⁵⁷ A man named Sufizade is by communist historiography said to be a member of a group of anti-Bolshevik and anti-Soviet rebels called the Qasimovists who had fled Soviet Central Asia around the time of proclamation of the ETIR (Ezizi 1997a: 305). It seems unlikely that this person would be able within such a short time to hold an influential post of an editor-in-chief of a major propaganda organ.

⁵⁸ Muhemmed Imin Bughra's further activities are examined in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Bughra finished his *History of East Turkestan* in Kabul in 1940. Since then, this text has been republished several times by Uyghur exile organizations.⁵⁹ It is the first modern history of the region, moreover written by a highly educated individual who was also a personal protagonist of core events and highest political decisions. Bughra was the first Uyghur historian to integrate classical Turko-Islamic historiographic tradition with findings of modern archeology, ethnology, epigraphy, linguistics and other fields (Tursun 89). This also means that, in contrast to e.g. Molla Musa Sayrami's works, Bughra's narrative is the first general history of the region to distinguish between historical and mythical past of the region and its people. At the same time, the nationalistic overtones *History of East Turkestan* make it a text highly acclaimed by many Uyghur historians, intellectuals and also ordinary Uyghurs who had a chance to read it. A western specialist has recently called the work 'a foundational text for Uyghur independence activists' (Bovingdon 2010: 138). It is also a text continuously vilified and strictly banned by PRC's authorities and politicized scholarship. At the same time, *History of East Turkestan* exists in Chinese translation in the form of *internal material*⁶⁰ and Chinese historians are well familiar with it. Zhang Dajun also refers to Bughra's work, interestingly calling it *Modern History of Xinjiang* (新疆近代史 *Xīnjiāng jìndài shǐ*; Zhang 2811). Undoubtedly, Bughra's *History of East Turkestan* is one the most influential works of modern Uyghur historiography and nationalism.

Finally, the first section of this chapter refers to an unpublished memoir of the insurgency written by Emin Wahidi in Lahore in 1938 (Wahidi 1938). Nothing is further known about Wahidi except facts specifically mentioned in the memoir itself, such as that Wahidi was probably a direct witness of the insurgency in southwestern Xinjiang and that, similarly to many other Xinjiang Turkic families, after the collapse of the ETIR in 1934 he fled via the Karakoram to northern India. The authenticity of Wahidi's memoir is corroborated by *History of East Turkestan* (Bughra 1998: 446), which mentions its existence under the name *Memoir of the Revolution (Inqilab Khatirisi)*. Another work refers to a man called Emin Wahidi, who was in 1936 dispatched by Mahmud Muhiti to report to the central government on Sheng Shicai's flawed policy. After this mission failed, on the way back Emin allegedly remained in Lanzhou due to worsened situation in southern Xinjiang (Ezizi 1997a: 461-2). It is possible that this Wahidi could have somehow travelled from the Xinjiang Turkic expatriate community in Lanzhou to join the main body of diaspora in India. In any case, the memoir, itself slightly over twenty pages of typed text, briefly summarizes the main events and context of the Turkic insurgency and contributes the author's commentaries on the events, as well as his views of nation and nationalism. Therefore, Wahidi's memoir is a remarkably personal insight into thoughts and feelings of a Xinjiang Turkic Muslim who in 1930s opted for exile after his homeland lost its brief freedom.⁶¹ Altogether, *Life of East Turkestan*, *Independence* and works of Emin Wahidi, Muhemmed Imin Bughra are good exhibits of

⁵⁹ Known editions are in 1941 (Kashmir; publication completed in 1947), 1970 (Kashmir; not complete edition), 1987 (Ankara), 1991 (Almaty; in Cyrillic script) and 1998 (Ankara; in modern Uyghur script). This dissertation refers to the 1998 Ankara edition.

⁶⁰ Internal material (内部发行资料 *nèibù fāxíng zīliào*) are publications commissioned by the Chinese Communist Party that examine politically sensitive topics and are therefore intended only for exclusive use by Party officials. Technically, internal material should not be legally accessible to non-Party academics or reading public; however, it is relatively easily purchasable on black market.

⁶¹ Emin Wahidi's memoir was edited and transcribed into contemporary Uyghur script in May 2002 by Prof. Abdujelil Turan of the Taklamakan Uyghur Publishing House (*Teklimakan Uyghur Neshriyati*) in Istanbul. I am deeply thankful to him for supplying me with this unique source, as well as with other valuable materials related to Uyghur history.

secessionist political activism of 1930s, as well as a rich source on the authors' perceptions of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims' communal identity and interest. The following section examines main patterns in these perceptions.

Discourse of East Turkestan Nation

Similarly to Molla Musa Sayrami's portrayal of the *Musulman* category examined in Chapter 1 of this dissertation, 1930s' Turkic insurgent activists considered religion one of the main defining communal markers of indigenous Turkic oasis dwellers of eastern and southern Xinjiang. Religion was specifically considered a pillar of happiness of human life (I 53). Accordingly, the insurgent administration strongly professed its religious piety. The constitution of the ETIR was drawn up in the name of God, the top figure of its apparatus bore the traditional religious-administrative title 'Commander of the Faithful' (Ar. *amir al-mu'minin*; I 23) and its legislature was based on the Islamic law (Ar. *shari'a*). 'As the state is based on the superior fundamentals of Islamic law, Ministry of Religious Affairs and Justice is instituted. The Minister of Justice will act as the Supreme Religious Authority.' (Ar. *shaykh ul-Islam*; I 28) Khoja Niyaz Haji became the head of state and was frequently referred to as 'holy warrior' (Ar. *ghazi*). The Qur'an was considered primary vehicle of knowledge while non-compliance with religious principles was to be severely punished. The ETIR itself was the goal of the 'path to the independence of Islamic state' (*dölet Islamiyening istiqlal yoli*; I 4, 5, 17, 21-3, 28, 53, 55). The insurgency itself is also often referred to as the holy war of Islamic warriors and true Muslims against the infidels (LET 3; Newby 1986: 240-1; Wahidi 6, 7). The state was also clearly intended to unite other Muslim brethren in the region (*Musulman qerindashliri*; LET 3, 19; I 4): '...Ninety out of a hundred people living in the region of East Turkestan are us Muslims. We are of the same religious faction...' (LET 15) Issues of *Life of East Turkestan* from before declaration of the ETIR also reveal that 'Islamic government' (*hökümet Islamiye*) was the insurgents' goal from at least summer of 1933 (LET 3). Similarly, after the Khotan insurgency declared independence in March 1933, the territory between Cherchen in the east and Yarkend in the west fell under the administration of the 'Islamic Government of Khotan' (*Khoten hökümiti Islamiye*; Wahidi 14). Abidance by religious rules was perceived as a reason for development of other Islamic countries, about which the insurgent press frequently brought news (LET 2, 14).

In other aspects, however, the discourse of communal identity in 1930s was altogether different from Molla Musa Sayrami's thinking and clearly showed the impact that the transfer of the national idea and other features of modernity, described in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, had on the thinking of Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals. In particular, the community is newly and most importantly perceived as a *nation* that is bound by common descent and other features. The following passage is illustrative of this pattern:

'...Our East Turkestan nation (*Sherqiy Türkistan militi*) is a world-known Turkic nation (*Türk millet*) of noble descent and pedigree. In the old times, just like other Turkic nations, we have pursued a nomadic livelihood in tents, raising herds of sheep and horses in the Altay mountains and pastures of Moghulistan. We have been a noble nation governed by our own khans and leaders of the homeland. Several centuries from the *hijra*, our mighty khan Oghuz with all Turkic nations saddled horses and conquered all China, also subduing East and West Turkestan, Iran and India. We are the children of Oghuz Khan's soldiers who settled in East Turkestan at that time. The state assembled by Oghuz Khan stretched from the Chinese sea in the east to Qipchaq villages in the west...' (LET 4)

The term nation (*millet*, *qewm*) or national (*milliy*, *qewmiy*) is used very frequently in the texts in a wide variety of contexts. The nation has a distinct ethnonym – ‘Turki’, ‘Turkic’ (*Türk*) or ‘East Turkestan’ (*Sherqiy Türkistanlik*; I 60; Wahidi 1, 2, 7, 13, 21, Bughra 1998: 296). The nation also possesses a clearly defined ‘homeland’ (*weten*) – East Turkestan (*Sherqiy Türkistan*; I 57; LET 9), or ‘Great East Turkestan’ (*Sherqiy ulugh Türkistan*; I 60): ‘...As regards our lineage and kinship, we are all descendants of the same Turks. Our language is the same Turkic. Our common homeland is East Turkestan, inhabited by Turkic tribes...’ (LET 15) Common ancestry is also shared by other Turkic communities, e.g. the Kyrgyz (Wahidi 8, 19), who are also generally included in the category East Turkestan. Analogously, the population of southern and northern Xinjiang is sometimes referred to as ‘Turk’ (*Türk*; Bughra 1998: 304-5). The periodical *Life of East Turkestan*, which in July 1933 started publication as a ‘religious, national, educational, literary, ethical and political newspaper’ (LET 2), became a ‘national, political, educational, ethical and literary newspaper’ after proclamation of the ETIR in mid-November 1933 (LET 13). The Turkic term for God (*Tengri*) is sometimes preferred to Arabic or Persian word (I 3, 4, 66), which shows to emphasis on Turkic aspect of identity as opposed to Arabic or Persian influence. The lack of national feeling is specifically criticized as a negative trait of some East Turkestanis (Bughra 1998: 367-8). It is also clear that the ETIR activists were aware of distinctly Uyghur identity. The *Independence* uses the word *yighiliq*, while it is footnoted that it is a ‘Uyghur word’ (*Uyghurche söz*) meaning ‘uprising, struggle’ (I 41). On the early edition of the ETIR coins, the state is referred to as the ‘Republic of Uyghuristan’ (*Uyghuristan Jumhuriyiti*; Zhu 225). At this moment, these two instances constitute the first known official usage of the term ‘Uyghur’ as a modern ethnonym.

The national segment of communal identity had at least the same importance as the above discussed religious segment. In many instances, the words ‘religious’ and ‘national’ are used next to one another throughout the text. For example, the Constitution of the ETIR declares the state as both ‘religious and national Islamic government’ (*diniy milliy Islam hökümeti*; I 22) or ‘religious and national rule’ (*diniy we milliy hakimiyet*; I 57-8), coming about as a result of ‘religious and national revolution’ (*ibadiy milliy inqiliab*; I 61) and intending to administer religious, national, social and economic affairs of the nation (*milletning diniy, milliy, medeniyy we iktisadiy ishliri*; I 23). According to a saying featured in another text, ‘the success [of the new state] is granted by God as long as the nation contributes proactively’ (LET 14). The people of the ETIR are called ‘children of Islamic Turks’ (*Islam Türk balisi*; I 60-1). A ‘Turko-Islamic spirit’ (*Türk Islam rohi*) was a specifically mentioned concept of East Turkestan history (Bughra 1998: 315). In another place, the establishment of Islamic government is hailed as much as national awakening (LET 13). The ‘Islamic nation’ (*millet Islamiye*; LET 2:1), the ‘path of religion and nation’ (*din we millet yoli*; I 11) and ‘religious and national virtue and honor’ (*dinniyy we milliy nomus we izzet*; I 45) are other frequently used concepts. Dates in articles in *Life of East Turkestan* and *Independence*, which were both religious and national journals, are given to Muslim calendar (AH), but also according to Western calendar (AD). Khoja Niyaz Haji and Mahmud Muhiti were referred to by both their honorary religious and modern political/military function titles – ‘President Holy Warrior Honorable Khoja Niyaz Haji’ (*janab re’is jumhur ghazi Niyaz Hajim*; LET 16) and ‘Commander Mahmud Holy Warrior’ (*qomandan Mahmud ghazi*; LET 14). The banknotes of the ETIR were called ‘national Islamic notes’ (*milliy Islam akchesi*; I 64). However, as the concept of national identity is referred to more frequently than that of religious identity in the examined sources, it is possible to argue that nation replaced God as the basis of world-view, partly at least.

Another extremely prominent pattern of community principle was a shared *homeland* – East Turkestan – which in the national discourse becomes an important national treasure. The terminology used is ‘homeland’ (*weten*; LET 1:1; Wahidi 20), ‘place of origin’ (*yurt*; LET 1: 1; I 31), ‘our homeland East Turkestan’ (*wetenimiz Türkistan Sherqiy*; LET 1: 1, LET 3), ‘our great and holy homeland of East Turkestan’ (*ulugh we muqeddes yurtimiz Sherqiy Türkistan*; LET 3) or ‘great homeland’ (*ulugh weten*; Bughra 1998: xiii). In this way, referring to East Turkestan as to the homeland of East Turkestanis revived for indigenous use the term ‘Turkestan’, wielded for the first time by Mahmud Kashgari in the eleventh century, and also introduced the modern idea of nation as a legitimate owner of its homeland. East Turkestan started to be seen as a primordial geographical entity which was the home to Eastern Turks, or in other words East Turkestanis nation. In contrast to other names, such as Xinjiang or Chinese Turkestan, the name ‘East Turkestan’ was also seen as a term devoid of ephemeral political connotations, and thus the only historically and scientifically correct name unbound by the ‘chain of politics’ (*siyaset zenjiri*; Bughra 1998: xiv).

According to the sources, national homeland belonged exclusively to East Turkestanis who had the right to rule it by themselves. East Turkestanis were perceived as a member of the ‘family of Turkic peoples’ (*Türk qewm a’ilisi*) or a ‘Turkic race’ (*Türk erqi*), and East Turkestan is portrayed as a ‘homeland of Turks’ (*Türk ana yurti*; Bughra 1998: xiv). The term ‘East Turkestanis’ referred in majority of instances to indigenous sedentary Muslim Turkic population of Xinjiang, or the *Musulman*, but sometimes also comprised other Turkic indigenous groups (in southern Xinjiang it was mainly the Kyrgyz; I 57-8; Wahidi 7, 8). In turn, origins in the same homeland generated a sense of vertical solidarity and fraternity necessary for existence of national consciousness – the members of the nation are often referred to as ‘brothers’ (*burader*; LET 13), ‘persons from the same place’ (*yurtdash*; I 3, 9, 55 or 63) or ‘persons from the same homeland’ (*wetendash*; I 3, 60). The president of the ETIR was explicitly declared to be responsible for the welfare of the religion, nation and homeland (I 25). An important aspect was that only local East Turkestanis were able and entitled to rule in East Turkestan: ‘...*From that day, the people of Komul were fed up with Ma Zhongying. They realized that it was only the descendants of the homeland who could save it and defend it against enemies. They understood the meaning of our ancestors’ wise words “A stranger stays with you as long as you feed him, a relative until you die...”*’ (Wahidi 5)

For this reason, it was seen by the Turkic theoreticians as vitally important to protect homeland from enemies and foreign elements. These were primarily the Han people (*Khitay, Chin, Chinlik*; LET 1: 1; I 59; Wahidi 1, 22), as well as the administration of China (*Chin, Khitay, Khitaystan*; I 54, 60), against which the insurgency was targeted: ‘...*Until that day, our people clearly wanted to advance Islam and get rid of the Chinese...*’ (Wahidi 11) The other significant adversary was the Soviet Union, whose ideology was incompatible with that of the insurgency and was therefore viewed by the insurgency with great suspicion (I 59, Wahidi 10). Another enemy of Turkic insurgents were Xinjiang Mongols who occasionally sided with provincial authorities (I 59). However, by far the most formidable and despised foes were the Gansu Tungan troops, who, after initial support to the insurgency, remained loyal to the central government of China and seriously challenged the Turkic troops from Kashgar New City (LET 13, 16, 18; I 46). Tungsans were even regularly referred to in the sources as ‘Chinese’ (*Chinliq*; Bughra 1998: 304). Even though Tungsans were also Muslims, East Turkestanis did not hide their bitterness about their alleged betrayal and regarded them in much the same way as the Chinese, which again testifies to the demise of traditional religion-based world view and its replacement by the national idea: ‘...*At the time, it was possible to attain the goal of Islamic government by the people of Turkestan only by expelling*

foreign elements. The fact that the Chinese were there, and also that the Tungans were there, was in conflict in reaching our goals. The Tungans were not any different from the Chinese, besides the fact that they declared they were Muslim...’ (Wahidi 11) Altogether, the emergence of the national idea in Turkic elite perceptions of communal identity in 1930s is perhaps best illustrated by the following passage:

‘...Black Tungans are worse enemies of ours than Chinese. We are safe from the oppression of the Chinese, but we are not in the least safe from oppression of Tungans. There is now no danger for us from the Chinese, but it cannot be said that we are not troubled by Tungans. Therefore, we will carefully prepare ourselves for the Tungans, we will fiercely fight them on the battlefield and from now on, there will not be the slightest sign of mercy in the hearts of East Turkestanis for the Tungans. This is what East Turkestanis learned from their rich experience on the battlefields. Yellow Chinese have nothing to claim in East Turkestan, and in the same way, black ‘Tungan’ Chinese do not have anything worth of one *dachen*⁶² to claim in East Turkestan. East Turkestan belongs to East Turkestanis – this is our slogan. From now on, East Turkestan does not need any foreigner to act as our parents. Be it yellow Chinese or black Chinese, wherever they came from let them go back there and take their rulers, dignitaries, magistrates, officials, administrators and the like back to Beijing. We need neither them nor their language. Let their ways, customs, manners and writing get lost altogether. We have now expelled them forever. Enough of yellow and black bastards soiling our homeland for so many years! A handful or half-handful of yellow and black dirty slobs remain here. These are like in an opium hallucination – they are hoping to retain the government like before and, trying their best since they have nothing to lose, they want to continue aforementioned cruelties. Their days are coming to an end. Soon, these dirty newcomers, who just somehow happened to end up here, will be sent off to their homelands regardless if they want or not. From now on, the oppressors who do not recognize the state authority of East Turkestan will be given no rights! Let the yellow and black beasts get lost! Long live state of East Turkestan and let the political, religious, national, scientific, social and economic revolution spread!! Long live our great leader President Khoja Niyaz Haji! Long live East Turkestani devoted fighters and heroic soldiers!...’ (I 47-8)

Construction of National Symbology

A prominent national symbol emerging in the discourse of 1930s’ insurgent activists was East Turkestani national history. The territory of the ETIR, i.e. eastern and southern Xinjiang, started to be perceived as a primordial ‘East Turkestan’ which has since the dawn of history been inhabited by Turks:

‘...East Turkestan has a bloody history of two thousand years...’ (I 50).

‘...Historical books of the Chinese often speak of us Turks as of occupants and raiders, and accuse us of troubling their homeland, so that the famous Wall of China had to be built for their protection. In contrast, some of us speak of the fact that we have been ruled by the Chinese for two thousand years and speculate that things will

⁶² A *dachen* (from Chinese colloquial expression 大錢 *dàqián*), in proper terminology 文 *wén*, was the smallest denomination of Qing imperial monetary system – a round brass coin with rectangular aperture, equal to one thousandth of a *tael* of silver. In republican Xinjiang, ten *wen* were equivalent to one cent of a dollar. The lowest existing denomination was five *dachen*, or *wen*, therefore a *dachen* was indeed a very small amount of money. Given the message of the following sentences of the excerpt, the use of a Chinese loanword in this particular text is actually quite ironic.

also be like this in the future. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Beijing, the long time capital of the Chinese, was founded by us Turks...' (Wahidi 1)

'...[New scientific methods] proved that the Turkestanian nation (*Türkistan milliti*) is the most ancient and civilized nation in the world. Works written after painful exploration and research by European travelers and archaeologists revealed to the world that the Turkic nation (*Türk milliti*) living in Turkestan land (*Türkistan éli*) has continuously existed for more than ten thousand years and that it is an ancient nation with surprisingly advanced civilization and glorious history...' (Bughra 1998: xiii)

There was a close relation perceived between oppression of the nation and absence of national historiography:

'...The great homeland of Turks, located in central Asia, is called western and eastern Turkestan in today's terminology. This homeland of Turks is, in every aspect, an enormously significant region. Since ancient times at the beginning of historical period, this place has been the place and homeland of Turks. Prior to all other places, this place disseminated mankind and civilization to the world. Turks, who lived here in ancient and middle ages, wrote thousands of pages about their history and accomplishments. Regrettably, in later centuries East Turkestan's people (*khelqi*) were exploited under oppression of opinion (*pikir asariti*). In this period, all affairs of our nation (*militimiz*) were subject to ulterior interests. Our historiography also came across frightening treachery and our historical works, preserved from ancient times, disappeared. They were replaced by subversive fabricated falsehoods and superstitions. Although there were great scholars and famous writers excelling in Turkestan in this period, they had to succumb to contemporary ways and to the influence of political environment around them. For this reason, they did not attach importance to their own national history (*milliy tarikh*) and instead wrote many books about other subjects...' (Bughra 1998: xii)

Bughra further claims that because so far no history of East Turkestan has ever been published, some people might think that the place is some kind of a mysterious 'country' (*memliket*) and not consider East Turkestanis a nation equal to other nations. In his view, national history has also been greatly distorted and misinterpreted by claims such as that East Turkestanis have never before established an 'independent state' (*musteqil dölet*), that they have always been dominated by other nations and that they were an underdeveloped and backward people. Nevertheless, for Bughra such politically motivated efforts at concealing a nation's history are as futile as attempts to cover the sun during daytime (Bughra 1998: xiii). In this way, Bughra sought to establish his nation as a primordial and highly cultured community.

Historiography was indeed by nationalist activists perceived as a patriotic enterprise to present 'dear nation's' (*eziz millet*) history, several thousand-year 'heroism' (*ezimet*) and 'greatness' (*ulughwarliq*; Bughra xiii). Indeed, to write national history was seen as a duty:

'...Through these lines, we hope to tell our people who they are and who their enemies are...' (Wahidi 3)

'...The reason for writing the memoir is to remember names of those who sacrificed their life for the fatherland, which is a duty of our graceful people... It is the duty and debt of each Turkestanian to write down the history of past uprisings, to record in chapters the past sacrifices, to draw attention to and learn from revolutionary process and especially to make sure that our future uprisings are not like this...' (Wahidi 21)

Turkic insurgent activists' writings of 1930s also devoted an enormous amount of energy to portrayals of flawed policy and oppression by previous Chinese/Han administrations. According to this line of argumentation, East Turkestanis suffered some fifty-eight years of hardship, during which they could not sufficiently develop (I 22, 50; LET 1, 9). The situation did not improve even after founding of the Republic of China in 1911 – governors Yang and Jin deprived the East Turkestanis of all rights, political representation and means of appeal. They enforced sinification policies and kept the whole region in darkness of ignorance, while exploiting it for their own benefit. Local population was treated as animals and even called by animal names, such as *sinkou* (from Chinese 牲口 *shēngkǒu* – cattle, beast of burden) and *chentou* (from Chinese 纏頭 *Chántóu* – meaning 'Rag-Head'). The oppression during republican era was portrayed as even more brutal than during any time of history (LET 9, 12, 17, 19; I 62; Wahidi 1-4; Bughra 1998: 292, 358-9). Xinjiang Turks were said in the sources to have especially resented the government's obstruction of cultural development and education, because it in fact aimed at inhibiting the rise of 'national feeling' (*milliy tuyghu*; Wahidi 2). Thus, East Turkestanis lagged behind the world in every aspect (LET 17) and, during what was called in one text 'period of captivity' (*tutqunluq dewri*; I 42), suffered miserably under 'the claws of tyrants' despotism' (*zalimlarning istibatliq tirnaqliri*; LET 19):

'...In all previous periods, East Turkestani nation (*Sherqiy Turkistan milliti*) was one of great reputation and grandeur. We were a nation that possessed national independence (*milliy istiqlal*) and national honor (*qewmiy izzet*). Then at some point, we became plagued by the disaster of disunity and personal motives and by discord and difference of opinion. Since then, we experienced occupation and authoritarianism of foreign nations (*chet millet*) and our homeland and nation has been trodden into humiliation and abjection. National chastity (*milliy nomus*) and well-being of the homeland (*weten sa'aditi*) have slipped from our hands. All this disunity came about because everyone started to pursue his own motives and neglected and became oblivious of the overall purpose of the homeland and nation (*yurt we milletning omumiy meqset we menpeeti*). Also, we did not pay attention to and learn from our history, and we forgot our national independence and grandeur. This was the reason of our subjugation, appalling destruction and devastation which has no parallel in the world...' (LET 4)

'...Since AH 1293,⁶³ when the Chinese again subjugated East Turkestan, they treated local people cruelly, humiliated and oppressed them. They insulted them by names such as *chentou* and *sinkou*. These are Chinese words, *chentou* meaning "wrapped head" and *sinkou* meaning "cattle". Because the Chinese considered themselves idols and masters, and considered others slaves and serfs, they forced all those wanting to appeal to government authorities to stoop down and bow to them.

The Chinese found joy and excitement in committing decadence and licentiousness towards lives, property, chastity, dignity and land of local people. They have deprived the miserable local people of all of their rights; nobody could utter a single sound of praise or criticism about of injustice. Whenever someone was discovered to have committed even the slightest misconduct, he was immediately sent to prison. The prisoners were confined with huge wooden boards and massive shackles around their necks, hands and feet, beaten with clubs into unconsciousness and sentenced to life imprisonment or to banishment afterwards. The prisons were old, dirty and hazardous to health, resembling stables for cows. The Chinese have not done a thing for prosperity of the homeland (*weten*) and nation (*millet*), for education

⁶³ AD 1875/6, i.e. roughly the time of Qing re-conquest of Xinjiang.

and culture nor for commerce and production. All Chinese and Tungan officials specialized and excelled in fraud and corruption and those in law-enforcement uniforms competed in taking bribes. They forcefully extorted gold, silver, gems and other national riches. They monopolized business matters as well as internal and external trade.

They strained local merchants for their own profit and absolutely did not consider local production. They have seriously obstructed national education and publishing; they have given grand freedom to prostitution and immoral debauchery. On the one hand, they implemented the policy of sanification, giving the fertile and fruitful land of Turkestan to Chinese immigrants and making it very easy for Chinese immigrants to settle here. They have imposed excessive taxes and levies on locals, so that people (*khelq*) left their land and abodes behind and fled. Land and houses of those unable to pay heavy taxes were confiscated, and they were sentenced to banishment or life imprisonment. They have forcibly taken away wives and daughters of Turkestanis (*Turkestani*). In Turkestan, the Chinese have not done one *dachen* worth of anything humane. They have verbatim adopted the kind of Russifying policies of Russians in Western Turkestan. Actually, the Chinese have brought really greedy beggars to Eastern Turkestan, because such Chinese are only concerned with their personal interest, making money and getting rich. There was no humanity of conduct. The Chinese have no laws, everyone behaves as he wishes. All the officials of government authorities engaged in smoking opium. This was a major activity for Chinese officials; whenever you looked, you could see them lying stretched out smoking opium. There was not a smallest sign of justice and equity in Chinese courts. Whoever gave a bigger bribe, even if he was a heavy criminal, the verdict was beneficial for him. The poor who were not able to pay a bribe, even if law was on their side, they were hung by their bound feet and beaten with clubs, and finally sentenced to life imprisonment or banishment. In reality, money was the religion, belief, ideal and merit. Eventually, the Chinese have invented new ways of making money. They started to apply Bolshevik policies and infringed upon property, lives, chastity and dignity of the nation. Upon this, a revolutionary movement sprang up to oppose these cruelties...’ (I 42-5)

During the Turkic insurgency, the period of subjugation to Chinese was counted at fifty-eight or sixty years roughly from the moment of collapse of Ya’qub Beg’s administration and Qing reconquest of Heptapolis (1878) to the Komul uprising (1931) or proclamation of the ETIR (1933; I 3). Thus, the khoja-Ya’qub Beg’s insurgency was often perceived as a period of religious and national freedom, which in fact is not in accord with Molla Musa Sayrami’s above examined account of Muslim insurgent administrators’ exploitation of their *Musulman* brothers in faith, of local and social factionalism and of Xinjiang *Musulmans*’ dislike for Ya’qub Beg. In other contexts, Ya’qub Beg’s governance was viewed as a totalitarian power detrimental to the national struggle of East Turkestanis (Bughra 1998: 324-5, 341-5). A passage from Sayrami’s *Tārīkh-i Amniyya*, which relates the Qing oppression of Heptapolis, is quoted in *Independence* (I 42) to illustrate suffering of East Turkestanian nation. This is despite the fact that Sayrami does not once use the word ‘East Turkestan’ nor does he think in categories of a nation in his texts. This ‘nationalization’ of otherwise very impartial and objective work of Molla Musa Sayrami is a good example of nation work done by Turkic activists in 1930s – remolding of existing cultural relics into new national symbology.

In further narrative of the nationalist thinkers, the ineffective Chinese heteronomy, perceived as an ‘injustice done to the whole nation’ (*pütün millet naheqliq*; LET 9), understandably resulted in an alarming degree of national decline that set stage for righteous uprising of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims. Despite the fact that the individual local revolts throughout Heptapolis were in fact sparked by mostly economic causes, propagandists of

Turkic insurgency promptly framed the whole rebellion into national terminology – ‘national revolution’ (*milliy inqilab*; LET 13; Bughra 1998: 289, 383), ‘national revolutionary movement’ (*milliy inqilabiy hériket*; I 41), ‘national liberation revolution’ (*milliy azadliq inqilabi*; I 63), ‘struggle for independence’ (*musteqilliq kúriishi*; Wahidi 2) or for ‘national independence’ (*milliy musteqilliq*; Wahidi 16) or ‘national movement’ (*milliy hériket*; Wahidi 22). Similarly, all uprisings that had in the past taken place in East Turkestan since the Qing dynasty were by the insurgent discourse termed ‘national revolution’ aiming at ‘independence’. This interpretation was also applied to the 1930s insurgency:

‘...East Turkestanis had no means to let the government authorities know about the various kinds of oppression by the cruel monsters dominating them. No one dared to appeal and the grievances of the people did not reach high officials. And even when the grievances reached them, they remained unheeded as an unwelcome guest or brought bad consequences for those who voiced them. Local people were obliged to withstand plundering of the Chinese and their infringements on chastity and dignity of wives and daughters. When the local people could not anymore tolerate it, an armed uprising burst out against the cruel Chinese, seeking to protect religious and national (*diniy we milliy*) virtue and honor (*nomus we izzet*)...’ (I 45)

In insurgent texts, the state symbology of the ETIR was constructed in a similar way to national history. Both *Life of East Turkestan* and *Independence* devoted large space to the description of the activities during proclamation of the ETIR. In an unprecedented way and undoubtedly emulating foreign models, the ETIR leadership successfully instituted the practice of making contemporary political events a partially public affair. Several examined sources relate the public aspect of the festivities, which were clearly arranged with the intention to strengthen people’s vertical fraternity and national togetherness by demonstrating that the ETIR was truly everyone’s business: the proclamation of founding of the ETIR was read out publicly at a meeting of some twenty thousand people on one of Kashgar’s squares on Sunday, November 12, 1933. The newly adopted sky-blue flag with white star and crescent chosen for the ETIR, which is in several places called ‘ancient’ and ‘national’ (LET 13; I 14; PFK 1933: 9), was then officially raised and other ETIR flags were also brandished throughout the place. The song ‘*Our flag is a blue flag, our domain is a Golden Horde, Turkestan is a homeland of Turks, of Turks inevitably*’ was sung repeatedly in ‘pure Turkish.’ Forty-one ceremonial shots were fired and military commanders and high official held speeches. After that, the figures sung marching songs while the crowd paraded through the city (I 12-6, LET 13). Another important step in construction of national symbology was swift introduction of national coins and banknotes inscribed ‘East Turkestan Republic’ (Zhu 152-3, 224-5).

The researched sources provide us with many other instances of national symbology construction. Close attention was paid by insurgent propagandists to events and figures associated with struggle for national freedom. The ETIR was thus reportedly established ‘*under the shadow of blood shed in the struggle of tens and tens of thousands of people who rose due to disputes within Chinese, Qalmuq, Russian and Turk nations’ united opposition against the manifold state institutions*’ (I 59). The insurgent leaders were highly revered and glorified. For instance, it is reasonable to argue that Khoja Niyaz Haji was granted the function of the head of the ETIR for life rather due to courteous reverence for him as the initiator of national revolution than to his actual merit, because at the moment when the relatively minor skirmish broke out in Komul, he could have in no way foreseen or aimed at creation of an independent nation-state. Similarly, an obituary for the ‘enthusiastic nationalist’ Haji Jirjis Ependi emphasized his struggle for the ‘national freedom of East

Turkestan' (*Sherqiy Türkistan milliy azadliqi*; LET 18). Nameless ordinary participants in the insurgency were glorified (Wahidi 7, 17, 19) as 'those who raise the flag of Turkestan independence' (Wahidi 23). The length of the uprising was also often reminded (I 58). While the Bughra brothers were the first to declare independence in Khotan, the ETIR established its capital in Kashgar, by far most important of the cities of Heptapolis. A lengthy article calling for meticulous preservation of ritual and physical cleanliness of the Eid Kah Great Mosque in Kashgar illustrates emergence of another national symbol – an ancient place of worship in the center of nation-state with potent religious creed (LET 16).

Similarly, in sources written after the collapse of the ETIR, the failure of the insurgency was recast into a symbol of renewed national tragedy. It was referred to as a moment when 'national independence' (*milliy istiqlal*) was overrun and its 'sacred flag' (*muqaddes bayraq*) was torn down. The subsequent administration of Sheng Shicai was regarded as disgraceful and unbearable for Turkic blood and conscience, mainly because it relied on support of the atheist Soviet Bolshevik regime. The day of April 12, 1933, when Sheng came to power and which was subsequently instituted as official holiday, was mourned as a national tragedy by Turkic nationalists (Wahidi 10, 18, 19, 20). Another policy of Sheng sharply criticized by exiled nationalists was his official division of Turkic population into respective nationalities. The insurgent theorists saw this measure as a scheme to implant artificial antagonisms into the Turkic nation, since ancient time living peacefully as 'one kin' (*bir tuqqan*) and 'one nation' (*bir millet*) in Turkestan, and to enslave it in the way Turks of Western Turkestan, northern Asia, the Caucasus and Eastern Europe had been enslaved (Bughra 1998: 465; Wahidi 19). On the one hand, the diaspora hoped that national revolution was by no means over and that it would end only when the 'gift of independence' (*musteqilliq némiti*) was attained (Bughra 1998: 468-70). On the other hand, the renewed subjugation to the Chinese added to the historical suffering of East Turkestanis and multiplied their immemorial national misery:

'...Our Turkic nation (*Türk millitimiz*) is belligerent, boisterous, brave, strong, loyal and generous. We especially value honor and reputation. So, after we made numerous sacrifices on the way to liberation and suffered in bad times, finally in 1931, a battle for independence and fight for freedom began in the entire East Turkestan (*Sherqiy Türkistan*). This struggle continued for five or six years and ended with our flight and with tragedy for our homeland (*yurt*) and people (*khelq*)...' (Wahidi 3)

'...We are Turks of Turkestan, our fatherland is Turkestan. Slavery does not suit us and enemies do not fit into our fatherland. Sadly, our ignorance has thrust us into this dark era. But speaking of our exile: even more dangerous circumstances are in front of us. If we want to retrieve our Turkestan from enemy hands, it is essential that we solve our educational, social and economic problem and unite in one opinion and one ideal...' (Wahidi 22)

'...To sum up, when we think about our fatherland, our people and our refugee life, there is not another people on the face of the earth that is as miserable, as weak as us. We are under oppression of the Chinese, and the Chinese are under oppression of Russians. It means that we are under twofold harsh tyranny....' (Wahidi 20)

Politicization of Turkic National Movement

Writings of Turkic activists of the 1930s also explain in great detail, what was by their authors regarded as communal interest. Terminology for this concept varies greatly – expressions such as 'common interest' (*omumiyy menpe'et*), 'future of the nation' (*milletning*

istiqbali), ‘happiness of the homeland’ (*wetenning sa’aditi*), ‘benefit of the homeland and nation’ (*yurt, milletning paydisi*), ‘need of the homeland and nation’ (*yurt millet hajetliri*) etc. Activities striving towards achieving communal interests were referred to as to ‘work for nation and homeland’ (*weten we millet üchün qilghan khizmet*; Bughra 1998: 384). It is clear from the texts that for ‘nationalists’ (*milletperwer*; LET 16), national interest fully replaced religious virtues in the place of the highest communal interest. ‘To realize national interest’ (*menpe’et milliye ehmiyet bermek*; LET 4), ‘to save the homeland’ (*millet qutulup*; I 10), to nourish ‘feeling for the homeland and the nation’ (*weten we millet qaygusi*; LET 16) and ‘love for nation’ (*muhebbet milliye*; LET 19) and to promote ‘religious and national virtue and honor’ (*diniy we milliy nomus we izzet*; I 45) were the ultimate goals of human life:

‘...There is of course not one kinsman (*tomurdash*) who in his beliefs and conscience would not be willing to work for East Turkestan. Wherever there is a brother willing to work for East Turkestan asleep let him awake; if sitting down let him get up, if standing up let him keep stay standing, if on the road let him fly! Whoever wishes to work for Islamic religion and Turkicness, let him come to Great Turkestan!...’ (I 57-8)

Unlike in the previous period discussed in Chapter 2, where national interest was indentified with largely cultural activities and national awakening, the Turkic activists of the 1930s primarily sought to achieve political goals. Not surprisingly, in the minds of nationalists ‘national independence’ (*milliy musteqilliq*; Wahidi 16) of the homeland was the most important of all national interests. National revolution was considered the only suitable means to attain ‘liberation’ (*azadliq*; Bughra 1998: 400). In fact, founding of the ETIR was in some texts interpreted as having reached the destination of the ‘path of independence’ (*istiqlal yoli*; I 50). The exclusive position of independence in the interest hierarchy is illustrated in the first passage of the first issue of *Life of East Turkestan* of July 21, 1933, or in other words historically the first written statement Xinjiang indigenous Turkic Muslims made in conditions of free expression:

‘Thankfully, nowadays the downtrodden country of East Turkestan (*Sherqiy Türkistan memliket*) was saved from cruel enslavement and national rule (*qewmiy hakimiyet*) was established. In the world, there is nothing as bad and cursed as living like prisoners and captives under the domination of a foreign nation (*millet*). Similarly, there is no greater blessing that can be imagined than that of national rule (*qewmi hakimiyet*) and of independence and glory of homeland (*weteniy istiqal we izzet*)...’ (LET 1: 1)

In a similar tune, Wahidi’s memoir reads:

‘...East Turkestan is a Turkic territory. It is necessary that there are Turks living in Turkestan and that there is Turkic government in Turkestan. If there comes a foreigner and becomes the ruler, rebellion is a natural thing. Why should there not be a rebellion in Turkestan? This is to say that the ideal of the uprising in East Turkestan is independence. Factions (*partiyе*) were formed in Turkestan, and their original goal was also independence...Our ideal and craving was independence. Communists and occupants, who are today plundering our fatherland, are our mortal enemies (*jan dushman*). Hey evil ravens, let go of our homeland! Where ever you came from, go back there! If you do not leave in due time, later you will have a hard time! Hey, long live, you blessed East Turkestan! Long live your splendid descendants! Long live those who voluntarily sacrificed their lives on the path to East Turkestan’s independence!...’ (Wahidi 21)

Many other passages explicitly extol the principles of autonomy, or in other words a ‘nation being true master of its own homeland’ (*wettening heqiqiy igesi bolghan millet*; LET 3, 9) and ‘independent government’ (*musteqil hokümet*; Wahidi 16), as the most important goal of human activity. Authors of the texts explicitly regarded as the duty for each member of the nation to strive for and preserve the national independence: ‘...So we rightfully learned the value and cost of the independent state (*musteqil dölet*). It is our religious, national and political duty to strive for not letting it pass from our hands...’ (I 59) Freedom and its defense is to a nation of the same vital importance as water for the fish (I 11). In turn, ‘our independent republic’ (*musteqil jumhuriyitimiz*; EW 22) becomes the ‘foundation of national people’s liberation’ (*milliy helq azadliqning asasi*; LET 12) and guarantees political, religious, national and cultural rights of all our fellow countrymen (PFK 1933: 9).

A closely related political goal of nationalist authors was the ‘state’ (*dölet, memliket*) of East Turkestan (I 18, 55), which was claimed to stretch from Komul to Kashgar (LET 3:1, 4). Occasionally, the old term ‘Six Cities’ (Hexapolis, *Alte Sheher*) is also used (LET 2; Wahidi 9, 12). In other contexts, the term *Sherqiy Turkestan* implied also northern Xinjiang, because the periodicals closely followed unrest in Altay, Chöchek and Ghulja (LET 16). In fact, the term ‘state’ specifically implies ‘nation-state’, where the power was in the hands of local Turkic Muslims:

‘...The state of East Turkestan (*Turkistan Sherqiy memlikiti*) is a free, Islamic and autonomous region (*ölke*) stretching from Komul to Kashgar, which does not recognize Urumchi as its central authority and in which Muslims themselves administer their affairs. The Tianshan mountains are the boundary between the two sides. The Chinese must not surpass the Tianshan mountains and stay within their limits...’ (LET 2: 1)

It was mentioned in the preceding sections of this chapter that for Turkic propagandists in the 1930s, religious denomination was a significant segment of East Turkestan national identity, but was nevertheless secondary to shared descent and ethnicity. The same hierarchy of characteristics was discernible in the discourse of characteristics of the state of East Turkestan – even though it was a state of Muslims and was firmly based on the principles of religious law, it was also equally firmly founded upon principles of republicanism and representative government. The ETIR was founded as a republic that was to provide for the needs of the nation (I 23). It was headed by a ‘president’ (*re’is jumhur*; I 25). It even appears that Khoja Niyaz Haji took up this position prior to proclamation of the state (LET 12). The constitution of the ETIR provided for ‘national congress’ (*milliy mejlis*; I 27), even though the principles of its selection and function were not laid out. The figures acting in the administration had to pledge their allegiance to the republic (LET 13, 14). ‘Law’ and ‘justice’ (*hoquq, adalet*; LET 3, 13) were among the most important ‘principles of the state’ (*dölet erkanliri*; Wahidi 17) drawn up to protect the rights of the people (LET 13). In fact, the ETIR is at least on one occasion referred to as the ‘East Turkestan People’s Republic’ (*Sherqiy Türkistan Khelq Jumhuriyiti*; LET 14). After the failure of the insurgency, some activities of Khoja Niyaz Haji and Mahmud Muhiti were denounced by exiled nationalists as flawed due to their disregard of public opinion. In contrast, the Khotan administration was given higher credit because it had a larger public support and strived for ‘creating national’ (*milliyleshturmaq*) military and administration (Bughra 1998: 462-4).

Modernism in the East Turkestan Republic

The second most prominent cluster of national interests was also a direct continuation of modernist trends which penetrated Xinjiang Turkic community in late Qing and early republican period from Central Asian and Ottoman/Turkish Jadidist and reformist milieu. During the course of southern Xinjiang rebellion, the insurgent administration itself supported these trends and took up the duty of implementing modernization. The periodicals feature a rich discourse of modernization, development, progress, improvement, reform, construction, awakening and similar dynamic concepts. Enforcement of this modernization imperative was for the nationalist authors tightly linked to national well-being and welfare:

‘...East Turkestan finds itself under a great difficulty. We need to carry out many reforms. The core and essential motivation of ours is to endow the children of the nation with knowledge and education. Thus, it will be possible to make them familiar with science and technology. Nowadays it is not possible for any nation to administer and defend their however large country without familiarity with education and education policy. In the administration, regulations and rules are necessary. In our military affairs, military training and regulations are necessary. It is known that ten thousand untrained, disorganized and aimless troops cannot compare to one thousand trained and organized soldiers...’ (LET 9)

‘...If in the future we need to improve educational, social and political situation (*ehwal*) and make our lives stable and prosperous, then we need to subject all affairs to the needs of the people....’ (LET 17)

Such rhetoric and attributes of modernization discloses strong influence of Jadidist movement in Russian Turkic communities. ‘Unity’ (*birlik, ittifaq*) of East Turkestani nation is a principle espoused on numerous occasions in the sources (LET 12, 15, 19; I 11, 12, 48-9) and is seen as a precondition of realizing national interest: ‘...*All Turkestanis alive were united in one feeling, that is they were able to make decisions under the flag of national independence and gain their benefit...*’ (Wahidi 16) Similarly to Tatar and Central Asian Jadidist press, the mast of both *Life of East Turkestan* and *Independence* bore the slogans of ‘*Unity in heart, action and thought*’ (LET 1) and ‘*Unity in religion, language, heart, thought and action*’ (I 1). The disunity principle, or in other words local and social factionalism explored in Chapter 1, was apparently still active in 1930s, as exemplified for example by the fact that Abdughupur Shaptul, the highest Kashgar cleric and judge, issued a holy ruling (*Ar. fatwā*) to Kashgar Muslims that to wage war on Khotanese rebels of early 1933 was a religious duty (Wahidi 13). It is also clear that, similarly to other Jadidist platforms, the ETIR periodicals and activists clearly had in mind a cultural unity of Turkic nations, not a separatist objective of political unification of Turkic nations and creating a greater Turkestan. Claims of PRC’s scholarship that the ETIR’s separatist agenda was motivated by politically oriented pan-Turkism (Li 172-4) are thus not substantiated by primary sources.

In a clear allusion to Gaspirali’s classic Jadidist bilingual newspaper *Interpreter* (*Terjiman/Переводчик*), the authors of *Independence* referred to the journal as to an ‘interpreter’ (*terjiman*) of the ETIA’s opinions, principles and goals to the people, and also as a moderately reformist mirror of modern trends and events. Similarly to Jadidist initiative, Xinjiang Turkic insurgent press sounded a loud call on the nation to restore its past grandeur. Occasionally, Xinjiang Turkic modernist discourse even made direct use of Jadidist rhetoric, such as in comparing the insurgency to a spark of national liberation which lit up the whole region as the nation awakened from fatal sleep and nation-state was established (I 63, LET 3,

13). The aforementioned Jadidist concept of unity even occasionally refers to desire for Turkic insurgents' alliance with other rebelling factions, such as Mongols of Karashahr (LET 14, 15, 16). Analogously, disunity and factionalism during the uprising were viewed as the most negative and undesirable phenomenon (I 48-9; LET 4, 19). After the failure of the revolution, disunity was described as the direct cause for collapse of the nation-state and national decline:

‘...The reason for the collapse of our independence was the seeds of distrust. Each one of those Uyghurs, who had been trained in Russia, ran and joined the ranks of revolutionaries. These very people then slandered the principles of revolution and enabled the birth of treachery and distrust...’ (Wahidi 17)

‘...The distrust among commanders not only devastated the soldiers, but even the very independence of whole Turkestan. It has thrust our fatherland into this tragic condition. Even though the Chinese, Russians and Tungans have opposed the independence of East Turkestan and to preserve our sovereignty was enormously difficult, had all the people united and with rightful intentions sacrificed their lives, it would have still been totally possible to preserve our independence. Unfortunately, this did not happen...’ (Wahidi 22)

Similarly to the Russian Jadidist project, for Xinjiang insurgent theorists by far the strongest focus of modernization efforts was education. Non-existence of schools was seen by them as a cause of national decline and therefore also one of the strongest impetuses of the insurgency. Similarly, modern ‘knowledge’ (*ilim*) and ‘education’ (*ma’arip*) was seen as a basic precondition to progress and well-being of the nation: ‘...*beacon of education and knowledge under which children are able to clearly distinguish between black and white therefore brings manifold benefits to nations in states all over the world...*’ (LET 12) Leadership of the ETIR was respected by common population for being well educated (Wahidi 12). Shinmen Yasushi’s research revealed that many of the ETIR high officials were educated in modern secular schools and some were even active promoters and organizers of new education (Shinmen 152-5). In a way, the ETIR can be compared to other short-time political endeavors with Jadidist participation referred to in previous chapter, such as Khoqand autonomy movement or Alash Orda. The high cultural background of the insurgency’s leading figures is acknowledged even by communist PRC materials (Ezizi 1997a: 216-220, 293).

Instituting ‘national and scientific’ (*milliy we penniy*) schools was thus the most immediate objective that the insurgent administration pursued since the very early stages of its existence. The very first issue of *Life of East Turkestan* in July 1933 declares that ‘national education’ (*ma’arip milliye*) was instituted in Kashgar with the concern for the ‘future of the nation’ (*milletning istiqbali*) and in order to establish foundation for the ‘well-being of the homeland’ (*wetenning sa’aditi*). At the same time, modern schools were to remain in accordance with Islamic principles and continue to convey ‘religious education’ (*diniy ma’arip*). Modern schools, pedagogical institutes and education administration organs were thus among the first institutions the new state established. The almost sacral significance of modern education for the ETIR was underlined by the fact that the ‘pedagogical institute’ (*darilmu’elimi*) and ‘national schools’ (*mekteb milliye*) in Kashgar were by the administration explicitly established, again in the name of ‘benefit of the homeland and nation’ (*yurt we milletning paydisi*), on the site where a Chinese temple had previously stood – this measure clearly aimed to symbolize how previous Chinese political heteronomy and religious heterodoxy gave way to justice and modernity of the East Turkestani nation-state

(LET 1). From the first to the last issue, *Life of East Turkestan* is filled with zealous advocacy of modern knowledge and education, need for reform of existing religious schools, eradicating illiteracy and ignorance, establishing pedagogical institutes, libraries, reading rooms, endowments for educational institutions and other similar concepts (LET 3, 4, 9, 12, 14, 17). The educational mission of the ETIR was also articulated in its constitution, which declared instituting regular and reformed education system as one of the duties of the ministry of education (I 35-6). Mahmud Muhiti's efforts in his position of an influential military commander to protect and effect modern education were after the insurgency regarded as a formidable contribution to national education (Bughra 1998: 456). Articles in *Independence* also extol virtues of modern knowledge and reformed education as preconditions of national development:

‘...Blessed and mighty God has made us powerful by enabling us to establish an independent Islamic government. We need to support this government by establishing systematic and organized forces of knowledge. Knowledge is a powerful weapon. The strength of knowledge cannot be obstructed by any other strength. Those endowed with knowledge and learning soar in the air and float in the seas...’ (I 54)

National publishing and printing was another significant modernizing imperative of Xinjiang Turkic nationalist administration. The nationalists asserted that similarly to the sphere of education, the total absence of printed Turkic periodicals during the Yang and Jin's rule strongly contributed to national decline. National newspapers and publications were regarded as nations' representatives, guides, interpreters and promoters of modernity and progress. Similarly to Jadidist publications of Russia, ETIR periodicals were to be the eyes of the nation and the pillars of 'national well-being' (*sa'adet qewmiye*) and 'national honor' (*izzet milliye*; LET 1, 2):

‘...The *Independence* magazine is a political, social, academic and literary guide on the path of defending and extending the freedom and religious and national power that became the possession of our fellow country men as a result of countless sacrifices and after suffering all kinds of bitter hardships over long fifty-eight years of subjugation...’ (I 3)

Thus, immediately after the insurgent administration somewhat stabilized in July 1933, the objectives of founding national press were realized. The 'liberty-oriented' (*azadliqigha nishane*) *Life of East Turkestan* was founded as press organ of the ETIR under the auspices of ministry of education, which was also in charge of publishing textbooks for national schools and other printed matter (LET 1; I 35-6). The editor-in-chief of *Life of East Turkestan*, Qutluq Haji Shewqi had also been previously closely associated with modern education movement. *Life of East Turkestan* and *Independence* were printed in trust for the ETIR by the Swedish Mission Press Kashgar and this fact was even openly stated in them (I 74). Both periodicals were inspired by and resembled in structure, content and purpose the Jadidist periodicals published in Russia (Khalid 122-3). Moreover, *Independence* was published by the above mentioned East Turkestan Independence Association (*Sherqiy Türkistan Istiqlal Jemi'iti*; ETIA) that was closely affiliated with the Khotan faction of the insurgency, in which Muhemmed Imin Bughra, Sabit Damolla and other figures had been also actively involved in new education (Shinmen 139-42). The partially government-funded ETIA also assisted the state in opening schools, publishing books, founding printing houses and seeking, training and appointing teachers throughout the country (I 5-7, 55). In short, modern schools, periodicals and national societies were by nationalists seen as conducive for 'national awakening' (*milliy*

oyghinish), which the Chinese had been trying to suppress with the assumption that ‘*the awakened ones cannot be forced back to sleep*’ (*oyghanhanni zorlap okhlatqili bolmas*; Bughra 1998: 365-7).

The ETIR and its periodicals also propagandized other features of modernity. There was a new concern for public health – ministry of health of the ETIR was responsible for struggle with contagious diseases, establishing hospitals and inspection of their hygiene standard, founding insane asylums, orphanages and inoculation facilities (I 36). Eradication of opium and hashish use was considered essential for the life of the nation (LET 13). Modernist drive was also palpable in reliance of the state structure on Western models and assistance. Foreign specialists were to be contracted to assist in administration, education, public health, commerce, agriculture and national defense with the specific goals of catching up with Western countries (I 29, 34, 36, 55; Wahidi 15-6). The state was to support study of its nationals abroad (I 35). The structure of the ministry of religious endowments was modeled on the two most progressive Islamic countries – Turkey and Egypt (I 32). The ETIR was declared to be specifically modeled on the example of Mustafa Kemal’s Turkey (I 15, 51; LET 12) and it also strived to incur British assistance by espousing principles of Western culture (Newby 1986: 244-5). The news section of *Life of East Turkestan* covered mainly events in Germany, Japan and Soviet Russia (LET 9, 13), and also reported on modern technological developments such as aviation, which was explained as an activity of flying in ‘air boats’ (*hawa kéme*; LET 14). Notably, such references to technological innovations stemming from the Soviet Union suggest that in Xinjiang Turkic Muslims’ perception, the image of Russia as a culturally advanced model for development was not disrupted even during the existence of religiously profiled ETIR.

The language of the ETIR publications also showed signs of modernization. The articles were written in a language close to Turkic vernacular containing a certain number of modern loanwords. Vernacularization of textual practice was apparently an important strategy to incur popular support and to promote national feeling among the population. For that reason, national history was also written in ‘East Turkestani dialect’ (*Sherqiy Türkistan shiwesi*) of Turkic (Bughra xiii). The rising importance of Turkic as national language was indicated in the fact that the peace agreement between Khoja Niyaz Haji and provincial troops was written in Turkic, Chinese and Russian. Due to strong Russian cultural and economic influence in the region, the overwhelming majority of loanwords in the ETIR sources came from Russian – *fabrika* (factory), *konfransiye* (conference), *kontrol* (control) *qomandan* (commander), *gezite* (newspaper), *zhurnal* (magazine), *nomur* (number) *adres* (address), *zhandarma* (militia) *tanka* (tank), *khémiye* (chemistry), *passport* (passport), *programa* (program), *forma* (form, uniform) or *zinkografiye* (zincography). Notably, Russian loanwords are used even in the more religiously tuned *Independence* in contexts, where terms from Arabic or Persian could have been preferred on grounds of sacral purity of language. Other loanwords came from English (names of months in the mast of *Life of East Turkestan*, the word ‘dollar’ [*dolar*] etc.), which points to contact of Xinjiang Turkic progressives with British culture during their stays abroad, and possibly also to at least certain cultural influence of the British consulate in Kashgar. There is also a certain amount of vocabulary from Turkish (*öğretmek*, *maya*, *berge* or the lyrics of the song sung during proclamation of the ETIR – ‘*Bayraqimiz kök bayraq, ordumuz altun ordu, Türkistan Türkning yurdu, Türkning olajaq*’ translated above), which illustrates both pro-Western and pro-Turkish profile of the ETIR. Both *Life of East Turkestan* and *Independence* also print poetry and fiction pieces with topics similar to those of Abdulkhalik Uyghur and Memetili Tewpiq, as explored in Chapter 2.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the brief existence of the ETIR and the lack of field research data do not allow us to assess efficiency of the new state. Perhaps the only two realms that somewhat reflect the ETIR's actual competence were national education, illustrated by the modern education wave commenced under the patronage of Mahmud Muhiti (analyzed in Chapter 2), and national publishing, manifested by the two newspapers researched in the above section. However, despite the fact that the existence of the ETIR occurred mainly in sphere of policy formulation and propaganda, it is clear that the insurgency had a massive impact on Turkic intellectual notions of community and communal interests. In the texts originating in the secessionist milieu of the 1930s, the community was distinctly perceived as a primordial East Turkestani nation with an exclusive historical right to govern itself in the territory of its homeland East Turkestan. The discourse of nation and national homeland also featured a number of newly generated symbols and invented traditions, such as national history and historiography, national misery, oppression, righteous revolution, national flag, public festivities, history of liberation struggle, glorification of its leaders, protection of national identity sites (such as the city of Kashgar or the Eid Kah Mosque) or new national tragedy under renewed heteronomy. The highest political interest of East Turkestani nation was founding its own nation-state, independent and governed by the people. In turn, the nation-state was expected by the nation to fulfill a modernization directive with the aim of accommodating other national interests, namely modernity, progress and well-being. In particular, these included for instance establishing new national education, periodicals and publishing, social, cultural and political organizations, healthcare, vernacularization of press and state practice, pro-Western orientation or embrace of modern technology. The satisfied national need for well-being was in turn supposed to cultivate popular loyalty and support for the new state. Thus, despite the fact that the ETIR did not have a chance to live up to its declared objectives, it is beyond doubt that, as aptly asserted by Shinmen Yasushi, its proclamation was 'one remarkable consequence' of nationalist movement enabled by rise of new indigenous intellectual and merchant strata, as well as of the process of migration of new ideas, activities and intellectuals from east to west (Shinmen 155). At the same time, the 1930s' insurgency and proclamation of East Turkestani nation-state founded on principles of republicanism and modernism was both a strong impetus to and a result of fledgling modern national consciousness and nationalist ideology of sedentary Turkic Muslims indigenous to southern and eastern Xinjiang, who were soon to become called Uyghurs.

3. 2. Administration of Sheng Shicai (1934 – 1944)

The ETIR was toppled in early 1934 by Ma Zhongying's Tungan forces, which were retreating from the Soviet-backed alliance of Chinese, White Russian and Mongol forces advancing along the northern rim of the Taklamakan toward Kashgar. When the Tungsans arrived in Kashgar on February 5, 1933, the ETIR leadership had already fled towards Yangissar, while Khoja Niyaz Haji went his own way and concluded peace treaty with the Soviets in northwestern Xinjiang. The Khotan faction of the ETIR leadership suffered further defeats by Tungsans at Yangissar, where Abdulla and Nur Ahmadjan Bughra were killed and Sabit Damolla fled to Yarkend. Meanwhile, Khoja Niyaz Haji returned and arrested Sabit Damolla, proceeding to Aksu where he handed Sabit over to provincial troops that promptly executed him. Provincial forces then continued their advance on Kashgar where they arrived around July 21, 1934, ousting the Tungsans from Kashgar to Khotan.⁶⁴ Eventually, the whole

⁶⁴ Ma Zhongying himself abandoned his army and under unclear circumstances crossed to Soviet Union at Irkeshtam. His further fate remains unknown.

Xinjiang was under control of Sheng Shicai except the southern rim of the Taklamakan from Yarkend to Charqliq, which was held by Tungans remaining loyal to Nanjing government (Forbes 121-7).

Sheng Shicai's assumption of power signaled a whole new deal for all aspects of life in Xinjiang, a virtual 'New Xinjiang' (*Yéngi Shinjang*, 新新疆 *xīn Xīnjiāng*), an official term used by Sheng since 1934. His program terminated the semi-imperial administration of early republican governors and aimed to bring the province in line with contemporary developmental trends. The most representative of Sheng's policy statements were perhaps the 'Six Great Policies' (*Alte Miqdar Siyaset*, 六大政策 *Liùdà zhèngcè*) of 1935, which altogether declared a strong modernizing imperative: 'anti-imperialism' (*jahangirlikke qarshi turush*, 反帝 *fǎndì*), 'kinship to the Soviet Union' (*Sowét Ittipaqigha yéqilnlishish*, 親蘇 *qīn Sū*), 'equality of nationalities' (*milletler barawer bolush*, 民平 *mínpíng*), 'clean government' (*diyanetlik bolush*, 清廉 *qīnglián*), 'pacifism' (*ténchlikni saqlash*, 和平 *héping*) and 'construction' (*qurulush élip bérish*, 建設 *jiànshè*). In contrast to Yang's and Jin's administration, when Russo-Soviet influence in Xinjiang was result of commercial and cultural contact or clandestine operation, Sheng Shicai introduced political pro-Sovietism as an official and elaborated policy. The Soviets assisted the whole process of Sheng's rise to the post of Border Defense Commissioner (督辦 *dūbàn*), *de facto* ruler of the province, and provided military backup for taking control of Kashgar. Sheng's administration relied heavily on Soviet advisers and material help in military affairs, agriculture, industry, politics and other fields. In exchange, Sheng Shicai allowed the USSR to exploit local resources (oil, gold, tungsten, manganese, tin, uranium etc.) and capitalize on other benefits. Besides that, Soviet Union wielded an enormous political influence in the province and controlled virtually all of its affairs. Sheng even proposed to the USSR communization of Xinjiang, which was rejected by Stalin because the USSR needed a strong and unified China to rely on against Japan (Mirovitskaya and Ledovsky 95). However, the degree of Soviet involvement led some specialists to call Sheng a 'Red Warlord' (Whiting and Sheng 138) and Xinjiang a 'virtual territorial extension of the Soviet Union' (Forbes 157). Xinjiang's approximation to the Soviet Union also reflected the region's historical function as a globally relevant hub of ideologies and geopolitical interests of surrounding major powers.

Sheng's initial policies were drawn up in order for his administration to acquire at least some sort of support or tolerance by Turkic Muslims who made up some eighty-five per cent of the population of Xinjiang. As inspected above in this chapter, Xinjiang Turkic population shared a strong ethno-religious identity and resentment toward Han/China administration which, in their perception, caused deep cultural and economic decline of their nation. Their memories of insurgency and political independence were still recent after Sheng's troops entered Kashgar in 1934. This situation and setting was similar to that of Central Asia, where the Soviets in early 1920s had to counter potential threat of pan-Turkic and pan-Islamic opposition by populace that had theretofore identified itself with either sub-national (tribe or clan) or supra-national (Muslim, Turkic Muslim or sedentary Turkic Muslim) patterns of identity. Therefore, the Soviet state utilized the nascent nation-forming wave, to a large degree facilitated by the Jadidist initiative, that was beginning to surge through Central Asian Muslim society and resolved to weaken the prominence of pan-religious and pan-ethnic Central Asian Muslims by so-called 'national delimitation' (Ru. *natsional'noe razmezhevanie*), which ultimately sought to establish nationality as the primary mode of identification. Stalin's definition of ethnicity as a '*historically formed stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological formation, manifested through a*

common culture' (spelled out in *Marxism and the National Question*, 1913; cited in Roy 2005: 62) with language as the most important criterion was used as the exclusive theoretical foundation for making the Soviet new order in Central Asia. For the equivalent of the Russian terms '*narod*' (nation) and '*natsional'nost*' (nationality) in Central Asian languages, the word *millet* was adopted and its usage varied according to political status of the particular ethnic group. All non-ethnic aspects of identity were swiftly suppressed. Thus, the first Soviet census in Central Asia, taken in 1926, listed population groups solely by their ethnicity (Matley 1967: 106). Simultaneously, the Soviets took up complex affirmative action towards the new national identities by so-called 'indigenization' (Ru. *korenizatsiya*), or providing the 'indigenous nationalities' (Ru. *korennye natsional'nosti*) with formally autonomous national territories, formally claimable right of secession, national languages, cultures, elites, books, journals, newspapers, movies, operas, museums, academies of sciences, folk music ensembles, histories and other national attributes. In fact, the indigenous nationalities were even to be preferred for instance in hiring and admissions to Russians and other western, implicitly more advanced, nationalities of the Soviet Union. Initially, the affirmative action and legal equality of all nationalities of the Soviet state resulted in a kind of cultural pluralism, in which the distinct and unique identities of respective nationalities were to be nurtured by the state (Connor 1984: 201, 213-4; Martin 1-2, 125-6; Roy 58-65; Wimbush 1985: 73; Bruchis 1984: 132).

The Soviet strategy of dividing larger communities, identified predominantly by religion, mode of life, place of residence, tribe and other similar criteria, into smaller groups defined as nationalities was adopted by Sheng's administration. In order to dissolve the common ethno-religious identity of East Turkestanis, Sheng separated them into several nationalities, which, along with other non-Turkic nationalities, were to make up the population of Xinjiang. Two all-province meetings of people's representatives (*Ölkilik awam kelq qurultiyi*) in Urumchi in 1934 and 1935 performed the officially sanctioned act of 'determination of names of fourteen Xinjiang nationalities' (*Shinjang milletlirining namining békitilishi*), or in Chinese terminology 'national delimitation' (民族識別, *mínzú shibié*; Burhan 528; Sayrani 65), which in fact also meant symbolical recognition of their existence: '*...Since that meeting, there were fourteen nationalities in Xinjiang...*' (Burhan 529) It will be shown in following sections of this chapter that Sheng subsequently introduced vis-à-vis Xinjiang Turkic population other principles of Soviet indigenization and affirmative action. Shortly official recognition of Xinjiang's nationalities, their figures were estimated as follows:

Nationality	Population	Percentage of Xinjiang total
Uyghur (維吾爾 <i>Wéiwú'ěr</i>)	2,900,173	77,75
Kazak (哈薩克 <i>Hāsàkè</i>)	318,716	8,55
Han (漢 <i>Hàn</i>)	202,239	5,41
Hui (回 <i>Huí</i>)	92,146	2,47
Kyrgyz (柯爾克孜 <i>Kē'ěrkèzī</i>) ⁶⁵	65,248	1,75
Mongol (蒙 <i>Měng</i>)	63,018	1,69
Taranchi (塔蘭其 <i>Tālánqí</i>)	41,307	1,11
Russian (歸化 <i>Guīhuà</i>) ⁶⁶	13,408	0,36
Shiwe (錫伯 <i>Xībó</i>)	9,203	0,25
Tajik (塔吉克 <i>Tǎjīkè</i>)	8,867	0,24
Uzbek (烏孜別克 <i>Wūzībiékè</i>)	7,966	0,21
Tatar (塔塔爾 <i>Tǎtǎěr</i>) ⁶⁷	4,601	0,12
Solon (索倫 <i>Suōlún</i>)	2,489	0,07
Manchu (滿 <i>Mǎn</i>)	670	0,02
Xinjiang total	3,730,051	100,00

Table 2. Estimated population of Xinjiang after 1933 (Lattimore 110; Chinese characters according to Du 54).

Turning ‘East Turkestani’ into ‘Uyghur’ Nation

Sheng’s abandonment of the derogatory term ‘Rag-Head’ used by Yang’s and Jin’s administration and adoption of the name ‘Uyghur’ is a remarkable act of official reintroduction into state practice of a name, which has not been used to refer to a community of people for some four hundred years. Obviously, Sheng’s revival of the label ‘Uyghur’ as an ethnonym for indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims of southern and eastern Xinjiang reflected the use of the term by Turkic intellectuals in Soviet Central Asia in 1910s and subsequent recognition of the category by the Soviet state throughout 1920s (analyzed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation). At this moment, it is unclear to what degree Sheng’s decision was a reflection of Soviet practice and to what degree it echoed demands articulated by Xinjiang Turkic intellectual inspired by the case of Russian/Soviet Uyghurs. It has been argued that one principal actor behind this step might have been Garegin Abramovich Apresov, Soviet Consul-General in Urumchi who might have instructed Sheng (Rudelson

⁶⁵ The name was used along with another term for Kyrgyz, Burut (布魯特 *Bùlütè*; Burhan 528).

⁶⁶ The term *Guīhuà* means ‘naturalized person’ and refers to the fact that most Russians immigrated to Xinjiang for religious, economic or political reasons at the turn of the century or after 1917.

⁶⁷ The term Tatar replaced another name for used for Tatars, Nogay (腦蓋依 *Nǎogàiyī*; Burhan 528).

149). Another hypothesis speculates that the idea might have been suggested to Burhan Shahidi, a very influential delegate to both provincial assemblies that officially sanctioned the term, by Abdukhaliq Uyghur who embraced this concept during his travels to western Central Asia in 1910s and 1920s (Rudelson 149); however, this fact is not mentioned in Burhan's own memoir (Burhan 1986). Other Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals led by Tatar activist Heyder Sayrani are also said to have propagandized the introduction of the term 'Uyghur' in the Chöchek newspaper *Our Voice* around 1920 (Sayrani 65). Another source argues that Sheng's decision was a reaction to demands by one Association for the Promotion of Uyghur Education (Lattimore 125), a body by which the Chinese term for Uyghur Enlightenment Association (whose activities are considered later in this chapter) is probably meant.

As in the case of Turkic insurgency examined in the preceding section of this chapter, Sheng's institution of the term 'Uyghur' had an enormous impact on the ideas of communal identity and interest Xinjiang Turkic Muslims. Sheng started imposing the concept of Uyghur nationality onto population of southern Xinjiang immediately after he took control of the core insurgent area around Kashgar. As mentioned above, he needed to eliminate the strong sense of Turkic Muslim identity hostile to Han/China administration, as well as to cultivate popular support for his government. In order to achieve these goals, he substituted the existing concept of East Turkestanian nation inhabiting its primordial homeland with the idea of Uyghur nationality that shares its homeland with other nationalities. At the same time, Sheng fully embraced the modernizing imperative of Turkic insurgency. As a result, although the factual political interests of the ETIR were utterly incompatible with those of Xinjiang provincial administration, many aspects of public discourse in the initial stage of Sheng's rule were similar to those of preceding insurgency. However, the seemingly slight differences in fact embodied highly significant disparities between conceptions of community and its interest during ETIR's political autonomy and Sheng's renewed heteronomy.

The publication of the insurgent periodical *Free Turkestan*, discontinued in early February 1934 on the eve of crush of the ETIR by Tungan units, was resumed shortly after the provincial troops entered Kashgar in July of the same year. The periodical came out under the name *New Life* (*Yéngi Hayat*; NL), which symbolized both the start of new era under new government and certain continuity with the previous Turkic nationalist papers. Interestingly, Qutluq Haji Shewqi remained in the position of editor-in-chief of the new periodical. Nevertheless, the regular use of the pronoun 'we' in the articles and omnipresent acclamations of new governmental policies make it obvious that the contents of *New Life* were to a substantial degree determined by Sheng's administration. The first issue of *New Life* preserved in Lund archives is dated August 30, 1934, and starts with the following passage:

'The new government now instituted in the country (*memliket*) is a civilized government, which has took up mainly the goals and obligations of devoting itself to rightfulness (*hoquq*) and humanitarianism (*insaniyetperwerlik*), uniting under equal rights and justice Uyghurs, Hans, Mongols, Tungsans, Kyrgyz, Kazaks and every other such children of the homeland (*weten baliliri*) residing in the whole region (*ölke*), eradicating factionalism (*ayrimichiliq*), establishing friendly relations among all the people (*khelq*) and working and acting towards the good and peace of all (*hemmining yakhshiliq we asayish*)...' (NL 2:1)

Since the very first words of *New Life*, we can notice the immediate disappearance of one of the key terms featured by insurgent nationalist authors – the term 'East Turkestanian'. The majority population of the Seven Cities region is instead referred to as 'Uyghur nationality' (*Uyghur milliti*; NL 10, 13, 14, 19, 20, 43, 44, 243: 4 etc.). The Turkic identity of

Uyghurs is still widely acknowledged. However, this is done only when referring to the past. In the present, the East Turkestanian 'nation' (*millet*) transformed into several 'nationalities' (also *millet*), with Uyghurs forming the largest one:

'...The children of man in the whole world are divided into numerous religious denominations, as well as into many nations and descents. For example, just as there are Arabs, Turks, the English, the French, Italians, Russians, Indians or Hans, there is us, people of Xinjiang (East Turkestan), most of who are in terms of religion Muslim. Concerning nationality (*qewmiyet*) and descent (*uruq*), we are a branch of the great Turanic nations (*Turan aqwamisidin bir ulugh shahche bolgan*). All civilized nations (*medeniy millet*), and even ignorant nations (*jahil qewm*), of the world know of what descent they are. Because the overwhelming part of our people is utterly ignorant (*надан*) and unaware (*gheplet*), we have also forgotten of what descent we are. When someone asks us who we are, we say we are Muslims. Correct, we are Muslims as regards religion. But we also need to know about ourselves from the aspect of race (*nesil*) and descent (*uruq*). Is it not a shame and disgrace when a person does not know or forgets the name of his father and runs around asking others about it? Enough now – we are children of Uyghurs. Uyghur is our honorable national name (*shereplik milliy atimiz*)...' (NL 4: 2)

'...Most of the people living in Xinjiang belong to Turanic nationalities – Uyghurs, Taranchis, Uzbeks, Kazaks and Kyrgyz. Besides these, there are also Hans, Tungans, Kalmyks, Shiwes, Manchus and a few Russians and Nogays. Most of the Russians are refugees who fled to this place in the wake of the Great Russian Revolution. The Hans make up approximately 4.5 per cent of all the people. Uyghurs and Taranchis are agriculturalists and horticulturalists in southern districts. They raise silkworms and a small portion of them make a living in business and handicrafts. Kazaks, Kyrgyz and Kalmyks are involved in animal husbandry...' (NL 53: 1-2)

Similarly to the ETIR activists, Sheng's administration also supported the invention of history and symbology of Uyghur nation. According to the updated discourse, Uyghur 'culture, civilization' (*medeniyet*) came into being a thousand years before Islam with Oghuz Khan in contemporary Mongolia and around Tianshan mountains. Uyghurs gradually abandoned their nomadic life and developed a high civilization. Its artifacts are on display in museums in Paris, London, Berlin, Leningrad, Vienna and other western capitals. Then, after Uyghur civilization merged with the Islamic one, learning and education continued to flourish and Uyghur became an elite language (NL 91: 1). There are many other articles devoted to civilization, music, literature, knowledge, education, arts, crafts, burial customs, language, cultural heritage and similar historical and contemporary attributes of the 'ancient' (*qedimiy*) Uyghur people (NL 17, 29: 1, 107: 1, 210, 236: 4), who were, however, only several months ago called East Turkestanian. Participants of the recent insurgency were glorified as 'Uyghur youths' (*Uyghur yigitliri*, *Uyghur baliliri*; NL 43:1) despite the fact that the uprising strived to establish an independent East Turkestan.

Sheng sought to dissolve the common ethno-religious identity of majority Turkic population of Xinjiang not only by dividing it into Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis, Uzbeks and Tatars. He also aimed to deliberately sow the seed of direct antagonism among and within the individual nationalities. This is well exemplified by his acknowledging Taranchis as a separate nationality, even though they shared a number of common characteristics with the population recognized as Uyghurs (Lattimore 1950: 126). In other contexts, Sheng chose to include several subaltern Turkic communities under the category Uyghur. To borrow one apt wording used in an acclaimed study, such 'stretching the short,

tight skin' (Anderson 86) of the Uyghur nationality over disparate subaltern subjects occurred for instance in the case of Dolans, a community involved in animal husbandry in the Meket-Maralbeshi region in southwestern Xinjiang (Lattimore 1950: 127, 166), in the case of Lopliks, a community of fishermen and hunters around the Lop Nor (Svanberg 1987) or in the case of Abdals (referring to themselves as Eynu), a heterodox and enigmatic group scattered throughout southern Xinjiang (Rudelson 24, 48). This inclusion of such heterogeneous communities into one category easily created internal fissures within the Uyghur nationality. Likewise, by future adoption of different policies toward respective nationalities, Sheng managed to engender disagreements within the entire Turkic population of Xinjiang. This was a continuation of ancient Chinese diplomatic strategy of 'using barbarians to control other barbarians' (以夷制夷 *yǐ Yì zhì Yì*; mentioned in Chapter 1). Several distinct and even mutually contending nationalities naturally posed a substantially reduced risk to Sheng's authority than a united East Turkestanian nation. This measure also later allowed Sheng to utterly omit the use of specific ethnonyms of respective nationalities and to operate only with the generic term 'nationalities'. Thus, in later issues of *New Life*, the term 'Uyghur' is rarely used and Xinjiang is increasingly referred to as a region inhabited not by Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis, Uzbeks, Tatars and other groups, but by anonymous 'fourteen nationalities' (*on töt millet*). Similarly, the government later promised to represent the interests of 'nationalities' of Xinjiang, and not specifically of Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis etc.

Sheng's transformation of 'East Turkestanis' into 'Uyghurs' was also accompanied by a shift in discourse of homeland. The concept of East Turkestanian nation entitled to autonomy within its homeland was replaced by the notion of Uyghurs as one segment of the 'people of East Turkestan' (*Sherqiy Türkistan khelqi*) or of 'people living in East Turkestan' (*Sherqiy Türkistanda yashighuchi khelq*; NL 5). As Sheng strived to reconcile his administration with unfavorable Turkic popular sentiment, the term of 'East Turkestan,' or even 'our sacred homeland East Turkestan' (*muqeddes wetinimiz Sherqiy Türkistan*; NL 16) remained in use. However, several other notions were newly introduced to rhetoric of *New Life* to diminish the memories of the recently independent ETIR. By far the most widely used designation was the official name 'Xinjiang' (*Shinjang*) – Uyghurs along with other nationalities were referred to as 'children of Xinjiang' (*Shinjang baliliri*; NL 19). An alternate neologism 'Xinjiang person, a Xinjiangese' (*Shinjangliq*) started to be employed to designate inhabitants of East Turkestan (NL 20). Sometimes the word 'Xinjiang' even newly replaced 'East Turkestan' in a specific figure of speech favored by insurgent nationalist writers, such as 'Great Xinjiang' (*ulugh Shinjang*) instead of 'Great East Turkestan' (NL 12). The two names were often used together as a parenthetical explanation of one another – 'East Turkestan (Xinjiang)' or vice versa (NL 2: 1, 10, 12, 29:1, 51: 1; PFK 1935: 12, PFK 1937: 10). Another term officially introduced as an alternative to 'East Turkestan' was 'Uyghuristan' (NL 25: 1, 32:2, 43:1; PFK 1935: 3, Fig. 6; PFK 1936: 5, Fig. 7), which effectively recognized Uyghurs as the master nationality in their national homeland. The term 'Six Cities' started to be used during Sheng's rule with higher frequency than in the insurgent texts (NL 8, 11, 43:1). Occasionally, the name 'Chinese Turkestan' (*Chiniy Türkistan*; NL 53: 1) also appeared. All of the above toponyms are of course used in the sense of a province (*ölke*) or district (*wilayet*) of the country (*memliket*) China (NL 9, 19, 43: 1, 259: 1, 261: 2).

Sheng also aimed to justify his rule by endorsing religious identity of East Turkestanian Muslims. His administration formally guaranteed freedom of religious worship (NL 3). Uyghurs continued to be perceived as 'Islamic population of Eastern Turkistan' (*Sherqiy Türkistan ahali islamiyesi*; NL 11). Issues of *New Life* continued to be dated according to

Islamic calendar (AH) and contained many features of religious discourse, such as the formulation ‘God willing’ (NL 12) or congratulatory messages to readership on religious occasions (NL 239: 1, 245: 3). Uyghur figures collaborating with Sheng’s administration, such as Khoja Niyaz Haji or Mahmud Muhiti, were addressed in religious terms, such as ‘holy warrior’ (NL 3, 5), despite the fact that their alliance with Sheng’s government had nothing to do with religious warfare. On numerous occasions, Sheng stressed that he governed in accordance with religious principles (NL 3; PFK 1935: 12; Wahidi 19). Similarly to previous Chinese administrations, Sheng also formed an alliance with traditional Islamic establishment. The above mentioned Kashgar cleric Abdughapur Shaptul became one of the most prominent Uyghur figures collaborating with Sheng’s administration (NL 4; PFK 1937: 10). At the same time, the alignment of Sheng’s state power with Islamic principles effectively diminished the prominence of religion in lives of East Turkestan Muslims, because religious values were by the administration suddenly on par with those of Sheng’s secular government (NL 9). In some contexts, the reference to religion is made in a way which inconspicuously, yet hardly inadvertently denigrates it, such as in an article that portrays ‘Muslims’ of East Turkestan as deprived of education and unaware of national and state virtues (NL 11).

Besides incorporating prominent figures and respected personages into his administration in order to legitimize his government, Sheng built on other features of Uyghur national identity pre-drawn by Turkic nationalists. Sheng and other high officials were portrayed in propaganda as fatherly characters protecting all nationalities and struggling for their well-being and progress (NL 2, 9, 22, 91). *New Life* also propagandized the public dimension of state affairs under the new administration – public speeches, glorification of leaders and officials, announcement of policies and resolutions, exclamation of nationalistic poetry and people’s marches (NL 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 26, 43:1). The occupation of Kashgar by provincial troops was interpreted as a symbolical beginning of new era of order and peace (NL 2:1). April 12, the date of Sheng’s rise to power, started to be celebrated as a dawn of liberty when all nationalities attained ‘parity’ (*musawat*), ‘equality’ (*baraberlik*) and ‘compatriotism’ (*wetendashliq*; NL 53:1, 251). Disruption of public festivities was regarded as undermining the authority of Urumchi (PFK 1937: 10). Sheng’s administration also instituted a rich symbology of the Republic of China, of which Xinjiang was still formally part of – dating of *New Life* according to the year of the republic (AR), celebrating of October 10 as a public festival (NL 193: 2), the flag of Kuomintang China (NL 12), praising of Sun Yat-sen’s merits (NL 9), celebrations of unity with Nanking (NL 53: 1, 249: 1), briefings on Kuomintang policy (254: 4), demonstrations in support of Chinese soldiers fighting the Japanese in Suiyuan (綏遠) province (NL 238: 2) or attaching ceremonial importance to republican days in republican history, such as President Yuan Shikai’s (袁世凱, 1859-1916) acceptance of Japanese Twenty-one Demands (二十一個條項 *Èrshíyī gè tiáoxiàng*) in 1915 or May Fourth movement of 1919 (NL 258: 1).

In much the same way, Sheng resumed the Turkic insurgents’ discourse of national decline and national rebellion. On this topic, the articles in *New Life* are virtually unchanged in content, vocabulary and tone from the texts in *Life of East Turkestan* and *Independence*. We find the same repetitive denunciations of preceding republican governors, who did not represent the interests of the people. Instead, they instituted a totalitarian government, enslaved the population, neglected social, national and education issues and ignored reforms and development etc., which led to national decline (NL 4, 5, 9, 12, 14, 17). In turn, this situation justified revolution against Yang’s and Jin’s system (NL 3, 19). Thus, the independence-minded nationalist Turkic insurgency was portrayed during Sheng’s era not as a struggle against the ‘Han nationality’ (*Khensu, Khitay milliti*) or China as such, but as a

struggle against the oppressive old order (261:2). Initially, *New Life* in fact refrained altogether from condemnations of the separatist creed of Turkic nationalists. Altogether, by intercepting Turkic insurgent activists' discourse of national misery and other above illustrated attributes of national identity of Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims, newly called Uyghurs, Sheng at least partially succeeded in creating an impression that his new government was actually something of a direct continuation of the ETIR's agenda.

Interests of Uyghur Nation under Renewed Heteronomy

Sheng's administration also appropriated a large part of insurgent discourse of national interest. Similarly to Turkic nationalist publications, *New Life* devoted large space to discussion of well-being of the homeland, interests of the people and needs of the nation (NL 3, 4, 5, 13, 17, 25: 1). As with the ETIR, it was Sheng's state that was to represent national interests in conditions of 'liberty, freedom' (*azadliq, hürriyet*), 'peace' (*emniyet, aram*) and 'stability' (*asayish*) after overthrowing the old dysfunctional order (NL 4, 9, 17, 43: 1). Sheng's government was even specifically termed 'Government of New Freedom' (*Yéngi Azadliq Hökümiti*; NL 2). However, Sheng's line also sought to counter the secessionist ideas prevalent among Turkic Muslims. Thus, the new freedom differed substantially from the old one:

'...We the children of Xinjiang, Uyghurs, Hans, Mongols, Kalmyks, Shiwers, Solons, Turghuts, Qoshuts, Tatars, Tungans, Kyrgyz, Kazaks and Russians, have become children of the homeland with equal rights. None of us is her step-child, we are all of her own. Religious and sectarian differences (*din we mezheb ayrimichilik*) are not in conflict with this unity. The nine-point constitution (*qanun asasi*) announced by the new government unites us and pacifies us by the means of reason. Everybody's freedom in religious and national affairs is safeguarded... It is necessary that for the sake of well-being and fortune of our homeland, we, the nationalities of East Turkestan (Xinjiang), tightly connect in perfect unity and with genuine and sincere hearts on the basis of compatriotic relations...' (NL 19)

Although not overtly formulated, the emphasis on unity of nationalities was a substantial departure from the ideal of independent East Turkestan nation-state envisioned by Turkic nationalists. Under Sheng, the most important political objective for Uyghurs and other Turks was 'unity' (*ittipaq, birlik*). In a threefold way, the concept of unity pointed to inter-ethnic solidarity of all Xinjiang nationalities, to their allegiance to provincial authorities and also to Xinjiang's territorial integrity with the Republic of China. By emphasizing the unity line, Sheng strived to repel the specter of secessionist aspirations still cherished by a large portion of Turkic population. Previously, the concept of unity of Turkic Muslims with other communities in East Turkestan had occasionally appeared in the insurgent literature. However, during Sheng's administration the unity of nationalities with each other and with the homeland turned into the most prominent political interest of Uyghurs and is articulated numerous times in *New Life*: (NL 2, 3, 4, 5, 19, 259: 1; PFK 1935: 12 etc.):

'...The new government was formed in order to concentrate on the unity and friendship of all people of Xinjiang, to give each nationality justice, rightfulness and freedom and to facilitate reforms and development of political, cultural and social conditions of each nationality. The leaders of Uyghur people (*Uyghur khelqi*) headed by Khojam Niyaz Hajim and Commander Mahmud formed a close relationship and unity with the new government... We all need to unite. From now on, all of you unite! Actually, the purpose of forming our today's assembly is to unite and protect our

rights. Our unity will of course give us great strength and all our affairs will go well. We need to be aware of the value of these beneficial things...' (NL 3)

The new government was in some articles referred to as 'Government of Unity' (*Ittipaq hökümiti*; 43: 1). Unity was the essential principle of the newly established provincial assembly – in Chinese named People's United Congress (民眾聯合會 *Mínzhòng liánhéhuì*), in Uyghur called Nationalities' United Congress (*Milletler Ittipaq Mejlisi*; NL 3). Unity was also espoused by Sheng and Han officials, as well as by Uyghur collaborators with Sheng's administration (NL 3). The recently separatist Turkic nationalities were depicted in *New Life* as holding hands with the new government (NL 53: 1). All the nationalities were to form a perfect unity (*kemal ittipaq*) based on feelings of friendship (*dostluq*), love (*muhebbet*) and compatriotism (*wetendashliq*; NL 3, 19). The Hans and Tungans, against whom the Turkic Muslims only a few months ago had waged bitter warfare and ethnic cleansing and who were recently on the pages of the same newspaper considered 'mortal enemies,' suddenly became referred to by *New Life* as 'fellow compatriots' (*wetendash*, NL 19). Introduction into Uyghur language of a new and emotionally neutral Chinese loanword denoting the Han, *Khensu*, and its use in place of the Turkic term *Khitay*, which the Chinese for an unknown reason take in as derogatory, also strived to augment the feeling of inter-ethnic solidarity (NL 14). Unity of nationalities was also propagandized to other Turkic nationalities, who could have possibly harbored anti-China sentiment. A page from Tatar primer from 1941 (Fig. 8), i.e. from the very late period of Sheng's administration, features the text '*There are Hans, Mongols, Shiwes, Manchus, Solons, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Uyghurs, Tatars, Taranchis, Tunggans, Russians, Uzbeks, Tajiks and also other peoples (khelq) living in Xinjiang. Children of Hans, Mongols, Shiwes, Solons, Kazak, Kyrgyz, Uyghurs, Tatars, Taranchis, Tunggans, Russians, Uzbeks, Tajiks and other peoples' workers are friends.*' (Janishif 150) The rhetoric of unity of Xinjiang with the homeland, and of the unity of nationalities in the whole Republic of China, is also a frequently used concept in *New Life* (NL 8, 19 etc.). The word 'republic' is even translated into Uyghur as 'republic of people's unity' (*khelq ittipaqi jumhuriyiti*; 256: 1, 226: 1). Turkic secessionist nationalism, the most intimidating challenge to Urumchi's authority, was by Sheng's discourse clad to euphemisms such as disunity, narrow nationalism, factionalism, treachery, spreading malevolent rumors and false propaganda. However, these were condemned as the most detrimental social and ideological phenomena (NL 2: 1, 19, 43: 2, 254: 2; 1937: 10 etc.).

Besides ethnic and political unity, the other most prominent political ideals of Sheng's power were representative government, equality of nationalities, rights of all the people, justice, rule of law and similar attributes of modern republicanism (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 16, 19, 43: 1, 243: 4, 258 etc.):

'... We, Uyghurs, who for years of slavery and subjugation had been shedding bloody tears, have, as a result of several years' revolution, acquired all rights. Besides justice, the new government declared that it will grant us rights, which are as extensive as the amount of blood we had shed and of the sacrifices we had given. It will also give us many seats in the government given the majority of Uyghurs in Xinjiang. As for the government, it will be a government of every nationality living in Xinjiang. It is not so that someone from elsewhere is our leader. Look – besides the vice-chairman of the province, in all high positions there are Uyghurs in charge of government work. In the same way, in places where Uyghurs form a majority, the county magistrates will be also Uyghurs and Uyghur soldiers will be in charge of defense...' (NL 25: 1)

As regards the characteristics of the new government, ‘righteousness’ (*adalet*) and ‘law’ (*hoquq*) are among the most frequently used words throughout *New Life*. The government is termed ‘people’s government’ (*khelq hökümiti*; NL 15, 16, 21) or even ‘people-loving government’ (*khelqperwer hökümet*; NL 250: 1, 261: 2), which again stresses the principle of representing interests of all the people of Xinjiang. The election of delegates into Kashgar ‘national congress’ or ‘people’s congress’ (*milliy mejlis, khelq qurultiyi*) in August 1934 took place in front of the Eid Kah Great Mosque in Kashgar in the form of a mass rally attended by the leading administrative and military officials; all the elected representatives subsequently also held lengthy speeches (NL 2). The newspaper also often brought specific descriptions of the process of delegation of local people’s congresses and their relation to provincial assembly, as well as news from the local congresses (NL 5, 44).

Sheng also incorporated some influential figures associated with the Turkic insurgency and nationalist intelligentsia into his power structure. Apart from Khoja Niyaz Haji and Mahmud Muhiti, such personage was for example Yunus Beg, a student of the first year of the Urumchi Russian School of Law and Politics, a promoter of modern education, leader of an uprising in Turpan and a minister of the ETIR, who was appointed into Sheng’s government (I 13; Shinmen 1994: 154; Burhan 226-7, 307-9, Khushtar 2000b: 245-6). Another similar figure was Tahir Beg, Yunus Beg’s fellow progressive activist from 1920s and once a supporter of East Turkestan independence, who was appointed by Sheng in charge of commission for nationalities and several other positions (Burhan 226-7, 307-9, 569; Khushtar 2000b: 245-6). These individuals’ acceptance of posts in Sheng’s government further testifies to persistence of the centrifugal dynamics of discord, or disunity principle within Uyghur society. Sheng also explicitly strived to institute equal legal and social position of men and women (NL 3, 52: 2), which was a strategy that covertly undermined the influence of Islam and traditional clergy.

Sheng’s discourse of representative government also included extensive references to attributes and policies of the Republic of China as a symbol of republicanism. Thus, the rule of Yang and Jin was portrayed as an era of oppression and corruption, which had nothing in common with principles of republicanism. In contrast, Sheng’s government was interpreted in *New Life* as the true heir of Sun Yat-sen’s Three People’s Principles. As mentioned in previous chapter, Chinese republicanism had first been propagandized in Xinjiang by the Ili revolutionaries in 1911, who endorsed its essentials – equality of Xinjiang nationalities (in their context Hans, Mongols, Huis, Turkic Muslims and Kazaks) and representative government (Ezizi 1997a: 83, 87). However, it is only Sheng’s government that is described in *New Life* as a period when the ideals of republican revolution are to be fully realized:

‘...A new government was formed on the 12th day of 3rd month of 22nd year⁶⁸ on the basis of rights (*hoquq*) guaranteed by the Three People’s Principles and legal equality for all nationalities of Xinjiang was announced. [The government] conferred with the leaders of Uyghur revolution (*Uyghur inqilabi*) Excellency Khoja Niyaz Hajim and Honorable Commander Mahmud and reached an agreement with them on pursuing the rule of law (*hoquq*) and reforms (*islahat*), and thus united with them in promising to make Xinjiang prosperous (*awat*) by the means of justice (*adalet*) and civilization (*medeniyet*). The new government and administration is safeguarding political (*siyasiy*) and cultural (*medeniy*) rights of the people (*khelq*). Whole Uyghur nationality (*pütün Uyghur milliti*) is declaring and confirming their loyalty and

⁶⁸ This slightly erroneously stated date of the Republican calendar points to April 12, 1933, when Sheng assumed power in Urumchi.

diligence, as well as their sincerity and allegiance, to the new government. Now, Mighty God willing, if all nationalities of Xinjiang district (*wilayet*) want to, according to the principles of unity and justice, submit to the regulations of the republic, they will surely enjoy the generosities (*fazilet*) of civilization (*medeniyet*) and lifelong progress (*tereqqiy*)...’ (NL 9)

New Life contains many other such professions of upcoming sincere implementation of Three People’s Principles (NL 3). Xinjiang is perceived as a province firmly integrated into China, the largest country in the world (261: 2). The freedom and fate of Xinjiang is closely bound to that of China (249: 1). Xinjiang Turkic insurgency, which rightfully ended by Sheng’s assumption of power, is interpreted as an integral part of the revolution in the ‘regions of all China’ (*pütüin Khitay yurtliri*) that had been staged by ‘supporters of freedom and humanity’ (*hürriyet we insaniyet terepdarliri*) and eventually gave birth to the Republic of China (NL 4). Sun Yat-sen’s words were frequently incorporated into patriotic speeches: ‘*Oh nations! Take law and homeland into your own hands!*’ (NL 9) October 10, the day on which the Chinese republican revolution began in Wuchang, was celebrated in Sheng’s Xinjiang as a holiday equally important to April 12, the commemoration of Sheng’s coup. As mentioned before, *New Life* is besides the Islamic calendar (*anno hijra*, AH) also dated in Chinese republican calendar (*anno respublica*, AR). Chinese language was widely recognized in Xinjiang as the ‘state language’ (*dölet tili*; 260:2).

Developmental Breakthroughs by the Sheng Administration

Analogously to defining political objectives of his government in terms often similar to those of Turkic insurgency, Sheng also incorporated the ETIR’s concept of modernism into his rhetoric. Progressivism as such was in line with the Soviet models used in Central Asia and was also articulated by the last of Sheng’s Six Great Policies – construction. Sheng heralded a ‘new’ Xinjiang even prior to assumption of power in southern Xinjiang. For Kashgar Turkic Muslims, the beginning of a new epoch was symbolically signaled by the change of title of the newspaper *Free Turkestan* to *New Life*. The expression ‘new’ and celebrations of various aspects of the new life of Xinjiang are used regularly in the newspaper’s texts, sometimes even in the form of poems (NL 2, 4, 6, 57: 1 etc.). The new deal for Xinjiang was also articulated by concepts such as reform, progress, development, uplifting of national status, facilitation of wealth, industry, prospecting of natural resources (NL 3, 7, 10, 12, 17, 22, 25: 1, 43: 1, 198: 3 etc). Naturally, all these were to be achieved under the caring patronage of Sheng. Other prominent figures of the Urumchi-based authority were also dispatched to the south to initiate modernization in order to make the homeland ‘prosperous’ (*awat*, NL 3). Becoming rich was considered ‘necessary’ (*lazim*; NL 22), while the nationalities of Xinjiang were all in ethnic unity expected to work toward ‘reforms’ (*islahat*; NL 7). Sheng’s administration was literally called a ‘period of reform and progress’ (*islahat we tereqqiyat dewri*; NL 12). Elsewhere it was stated, that because of progress and development, ‘...*Uyghur nationality nowadays is not the same Uyghurs as two years ago. Instead, it is a nationality which is alive and possesses a homeland with a bright future...*’ (NL 10) In other words, the progress was seen as the avenue for the Uyghurs to the new life under Sheng (NL 22). Jadidist rhetoric remained in use, namely the metaphors of national awakening from sleep and slumber, calls to activity or the portrayals of Uyghur daughters as the dawn of the republic (NL 9, 13, 14, 19, 52:2). One article strives to calm down the people of Kashgar after an airplane of the provincial government flew over the city, thus symbolizing a beginning of a new progressive era: ‘...*From now on, government airplanes will keep coming. They are our government’s airplanes....*’ (NL 3) In other contexts, the civilizing mission of the Han/China administration was underlined:

‘...Most of Hans [living in Xinjiang] are involved in business, some are administrators and officials and some make a living by growing vegetables. As regards culture (*medeniyet*), the people of Xinjiang, especially Uyghurs, are very backward. To say that ninety-nine per cent do not know how to read and write is probably not an exaggeration. The Han are more civilized when compared to others. Even though their script is difficult, there are very few among the Han who do not know how read and write. Also, there are some people among them who have received high education...’ (NL 53: 1-2)

Despite Sheng’s assurances of representative government, political system in the province did not change substantially during his rule. However, Sheng was aware that the low cultural level and national decline were among significant causes of Turkic insurgency. Therefore, his administration did strive to accommodate the interests of Uyghurs in other than political spheres. In particular, Sheng allowed for a certain degree of cultural autonomy of all Xinjiang’s fourteen nationalities and thus generated some developmental breakthroughs on social and cultural level. In order to implement cultural autonomy, as well as to ensure that its modalities are in line with provincial policies, in 1934 Sheng established the so-called Enlightenment Association (*Aqartu Uyushma*), a government-affiliated ‘academic society’ (*ilmiy jemiyet*) which was commissioned primarily with opening schools and publishing periodicals and books (NL 19). In successive steps, branches of the society were to be launched for each individual nationality of Xinjiang. Altogether, the national and local branches of the association were to promote cultural development of Xinjiang population.

Besides education and publishing, the Uyghur Enlightenment Association (UEA; sometimes also called Uyghur Cultural Enlightenment Association, *Uyghur Medeniy Aqartish Uyushmisi*; in Chinese invariably called the Uyghur Culture Promotion Association, 維吾爾文化促進會 *Wéiwú’ěr wénhuà cùjìnhuì*) was also massively in charge of various other cultural projects, such as societies and venues for Uyghur music, theatre and poetry, opening bookstores, reading-rooms, teahouses, cultural clubs or movie and opera staging (NL 17, 32; 221: 2). These cultural activities were explicitly regarded as means of stimulating, expressing and preserving Uyghur ‘cultural awareness’ (*medeniy hés*) and ‘national feeling’ (*milliy tuyghu*) necessary for existing in a civilized world (NL 26). The UEA took over the publication of *New Life* in January 1935, although Qutluq Haji Shewqi still remained the editor-in-chief (NL 32: 1). Branches of the UEA were regarded as the hands with which the government takes care and supervises awakening of ‘children of the state’ (*memliket baliliri*; NL 19, 86:1).

Under Sheng, healthcare, hospitals, training of physicians, protection of public health and hygiene remained largely a responsibility of the state (NL 2:1, 16, 27), but the UEA both assisted the administration and channeled popular initiative in founding, financing or organizing donations for ‘asylums for the disadvantaged’ (*daril’ajizin*), the care for whom was by official discourse also explicitly linked to national interest and civilization (NL 12, 14, 16, 28: 1). From other studies it is known that the UEA was also involved in management of religious endowments, urban planning, mediating trade or even manufacturing (Schleussel 391). The respective national enlightenment associations also promoted Sheng’s policy of unity and equality of nationalities (25:1). Thus, when reading the *New Life*, Uyghurs were regularly informed that there had been cultural associations established also for Hans and Tungans (NL 210, 248: 3, 4, 254: 1), whom they in fact had recently hated as mortal enemies. Similarly, extensive reporting on the activities of the Kyrgyz Enlightenment Association in the region (NL 226: 4, 229: 3, 231:3-4) generated a sense of disunity between Uyghurs and

Kyrgyz, who had only recently been able to unite as East Turkestanis in anti-Chinese insurgency. In other words, in some the UEA was used by the administration to generate tension within the unanimously insurgent Xinjiang. In sum, the UEA was a new and very influential social structure which oversaw the implementation of Sheng's policies on the lowest social level and also aimed to generate public support for the government. At the same time, the UEA also incorporated many nationalist or religious figures and thus retained a certain degree national autonomy over national affairs.

Similarly to Turkic nationalist activists, Sheng placed a great emphasis on promotion of modern education. Again, education and instruction of children, the future of the nation, was to be carried out exclusively by the state. Construction of education system and improving knowledge of all Xinjiang nationalities was declared as one of the most important objectives of Sheng's new government; moreover, the new education was explicitly intended to be done in mother tongue of Xinjiang nationalities (NL 3, 17). Education, schools and teachers were as some of the indispensable things that the respected Uyghur nationality needed for its new life (NL 28: 2). Local people's congresses were established simultaneously with organs of education administration and branches of the UEA (NL 8, 12, 14, 18, 25: 1, 44). The civilizing mission of Sheng's government was to ignite the beacon of learning and to endow the children of the homeland with the virtues of knowledge (NL 2:1). The children of the nation needed to be awakened by education; in contrast, ignorance (*gheplet*) and slumber (*uyqu*) was said to destroy the nation (NL 28: 2, 46:1-2). A nation without knowledge and education was doomed; therefore, those toiling for education were considered 'those doing an especially meaningful work for the nationalities of our sacred homeland East Turkestan' (NL 16). *New Life* contains an enormous number of references to school being opened immediately after Sheng's takeover of Kashgar (NL 5, 7, 8, 15 etc.). Due to the great haste, schools were sometimes based in temporary locations, such as a military commander's office (NL 8). There are also repeated mentions in *New Life* of donations to schools by prominent Uyghur collaborators with Sheng's government (NL 8, 9). Schools were frequently established simultaneously with facilities for the disadvantaged (NL 33: 2) and also provided for teaching Chinese language (NL 64). The new education was of course to remain in accordance with religious principles. At the same time, it was ostentatiously granted also to girls and women (NL 8, 11):

'...We will act in the way which abides by the Holy Qur'an given to us by Righteous God. All the boys and girls of our homeland will go to school and we will give them education and schooling. It was said that we will make it compulsory for both Muslim boys and girls to study in accordance with the Great Qur'an and the Hadith...'(NL 3)

Sheng's administration also embraced other institutes of modernity. Freedom of expression and press was one the most important directives of the new government (NL 3), equally important as education (NL 5). Publishing and printing was said to be fully transferred to the hands of the people so that books on religion, literature, history and politics could be put out and bookstores and reading rooms opened (NL 12). Sheng also continued the trend of vernacularization of printed matter and public affairs. The time was regarded ripe for the ancient and elite Uyghur language to regain its lost status (91: 1) and use of vernacular was explicitly supported (NL 14, 210). Gradually, *New Life* started to contain a regular Uyghur literary section, the 'Literature Garden' (*Edebiyat Baghchisi*). Sun Yat-sen's works were to be translated into Uyghur language (NL 9) and Uyghurs could even appeal to the government using Uyghur language and script, which made Uyghur an official language of the province (NL 51: 2). Analogously, use of mother language and script was propagandized also to the

other Turkic nationalities with the covert aim of weakening the united Turkic identity. A good example of the vernacularization propaganda can be seen in the following excerpt:

‘...What is Uyghur? Uyghurs are a civilized nation living in cities. Our fathers and grandfathers have lived in a civilized way. In later years, we have lived under tyranny, forgotten who we were and thus left the ranks of human beings (*insan*). Now, we have discovered our name, so let us also find the previous civilized existence of ours. Let us put into use our vanished Uyghur language (*lughet*)⁶⁹ and recall our impressive Uyghur pronunciation (*ahang*), so that we can recall our previous existence. As much as possible, let every word we use be Uyghur (*Uyghurche bolsun*). Particularly, let our own Uyghur mother tongue (*öz ana tilimiz Uyghur tilliri*) be taught in our newly opened schools. Let our poems and dialect be as much Uyghur possible. In this way, our Uyghur language and dialect will not disappear.’ (NL 25: 1-2)

At the same time, vernacularization of public life during Sheng’s renewed heteronomy resulted in an increased usage of administration-related Chinese words in Uyghur language, such as *siling* (a commander, 司令), *sizhang* (a commander, 司長), *Minzhong lianhéhui* (People’s United Congress, 民眾聯合會), *dubàn* (a commissioner, 督辦), *xingzhèngzhǎng* (head of administration, 行政張), *zhǔxí* (chairman, 主席), *fùzhǔxí* (vice-chairman, 副主席), *xíngzhèngfǔ* (government, 行政府), *dà zǒngtǒng* (great president, 大總統), *gōng’ān jú* (public security bureau, 公安局), *júzhǎng* (a bureau director, 局長), *shěngpiào* (provincial banknote; 省票) etc. On the other hand, words for new technology and institutions continue to come from Russian, which reflects the growing Soviet influence in the region – *ayroplan* (airplane), *telefon* (telephone), *teligraf* (telegraph), *telegram* (telegram), *gramafon* (gramophone), *aftamobil* (automobile), *pilimot* (submachine gun), *ayroplan bombiliri* (airplane bombs), *konstitutsiye* (constitution), *militarism* (militarism), *doktur* (doctor), *zawut* (factory), *mashina* (machine), *konsulat* (consulate), *banka* (bank) or *frasent* (percent). The loanwords are sometimes explained in Uyghur language in parentheses after the loanword – thus feudalism becomes ‘particularist rulers’ (*shekhsiy hakimlar*; NL 3) and an agriculture specialist (*agronom*) becomes ‘a scholar of crops (*zira’et alimi*; NL 8). The number of Persisms and Arabisms is substantially reduced in *New Life* in comparison with insurgent publications. The newspaper occasionally reported on events in Islamic or third world countries, such as Egypt, Iraq, Hijaz, Afghanistan, Abyssinia or Tibet, but predominantly brought news from European countries such as England, Spain, Sweden, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania or Bulgaria. Due to prominence of anti-imperialism in Sheng’s policy, close attention was devoted to events in Germany, Italy, Turkey and Japan. The more than obvious reality of Xinjiang becoming a sphere of exclusive Soviet influence was of course never mentioned openly in *New Life*; even news from the Soviet Union were rather rare. In fact, one contemporary Western traveler’s report relates the absence of prominent Soviet propaganda throughout the province (Hedin 1938: 186).

On the factual level, Sheng’s administration did indeed achieve some significant developmental breakthroughs. The policy of construction brought about material improvements. For example, mechanization was introduced into farming and pasturage, factories and manufacturing plants were launched which brought modern technology, an oilfield was opened at Dushanzi (獨山子), a strategically crucial road from Urumchi to

⁶⁹ This word in a heated appeal to use Uyghur vernacular is somewhat ironic – *lughet* is a loanword from Arabic word, which in today’s Uyghur language has acquired the meaning of ‘dictionary’. Here, however, it is used in the sense of ‘mother tongue’.

Ghulja by the Soviet border was built and medical facilities and healthcare were established. Again, due to China's war with Japan and Soviet and U.S. involvement in it, Sheng's Xinjiang became a pivot of complex geopolitical relations (Ezizi 1997a: 321-2; Du 85-91; Norins 105-20, 124-40; Lattimore 154, 170-81, 200-22). Rightfully, the initial phase of Sheng's rule has been termed 'progressive period' (Forbes 152).

Sheng's policy of cultural autonomy and *korenizatsiya* triggered parallel breakthroughs in Xinjiang indigenous society. The division of Turkic Muslim population into Uyghurs, Taranchis, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Tatars, and subsequent affirmative action in reinforcing their national identities was an extremely powerful stimulus in rise of national consciousness. Thus, the Uyghur Enlightenment Association acted powerfully in emergence of modern Uyghur national identity. As regards national education in general, the below table shows the impact of Sheng's policy by comparing the number of schools established by individual Xinjiang nationalities' enlightenment associations (listed as 'EA schools' and 'EA students') to number of schools run by provincial government (listed as 'provincial schools' and 'provincial students'):

Year	Provincial schools	Provincial students	EA schools	EA students	XJ total schools	XJ total students
1934	124	11.313	1.000	19.991	1.124	31.304
1935	135	15.464	1.045	39.966	1.180	55.430
1936	155	22.145	1.055	59.949	1.210	82.094
1937	215	33.054	1.300	79.932	1.515	112.986
1938	357	36.575	1.400	99.915	1.757	136.490
1939	393	49.867	1.800	119.898	2.193	169.765
1940	433	58.991	1.820	139.881	2.253	198.872
1941	545	82.806	1.830	159.864	2.375	242.670
1942	580	91.065	1.883	180.035	2.463	271.100

Table 3. Number of Xinjiang schools established by the provincial authorities and the UEA, 1934-42 (Zhou 317).

As regards the Uyghur Enlightenment Association in particular, there were allegedly 1980 UEA-run schools with 129.640 students in Xinjiang in 1936 (Du 82), while 12.827 Uyghur students studied in government-run elementary schools in 1938 and 104.658 Uyghurs attended literacy courses by June 1941 (Janishif 140-3). According to another figure, there were 1540 UEA-run Uyghur schools with 89.804 students in the province in 1938 (Zhou 316). Although these statistics do not mutually corroborate themselves, it is clear that the outreach of the UEA was enormous. There were also several schools and vocational schools established throughout the province which were directly administered by the Soviet Union, such as one pilot training institute in Urumchi (Hedin 1938: 158). Since 1934, hundreds of Uyghur students were sent to study at schools in Tashkent (at Administration and Law Faculty of the Central Asian University, *Ottura Asiya Universitetining Memuriy Hoquq Fakulteti*), Chimkent, Samarkand, Almaty and other places in Soviet Central Asia (Janishif 144-5; Schleussel 393-4). Although direct indoctrination by communism was reportedly not

part of the curriculum for Xinjiang Uyghurs in Soviet Central Asia (Ezizi 1997a: 449, 473), all of the 1930s' Uyghur students encountered socialist ideology and some became strongly influenced by it, as became obvious in the following decade (researched in Chapter 4).

Uyghur national publishing also experienced quick development during Sheng's rule. The Uyghur mutation of the provincial newspaper *Xinjiang Daily* (*Shinjang Géziti*, 新疆日報 *Xīnjiāng rìbào*) was published in six major locations besides Urumchi (Du 84). Other Uyghur periodicals were also published, often under the auspices of the UEA, such as *New Xinjiang* (*Yéngi Shinjang*) in Urumchi or *Sieve* (*Ghelwir*) in Aksu (Mekit 152; Esqeri 295). These and other similar developments inspired a true 'wave of social enlightenment' (*medeniyet aqartish dolquni*; Janishif 192) and a boom of cultural activities such as theatre, music, arts or motion picture projections (Ezizi 1997a: 498-500).

There are several trustworthy reports written by foreign travelers to the region in 1930s, which imply that southern Xinjiang sedentary Turkic population, in Sheng's propaganda called 'Uyghurs', still identified themselves as 'Turki' or 'East Turki' during Sheng's era (Fleming; Maillart; Hedin 1936; Hedin 1938; Hedin 2009; Gablenz 1942). One exception is the Swedish explorer Sven Hedin's observation that the inhabitants of a small village near Būgūr in spring 1934 referred to themselves as Lopliks, and thus formed a community that was distinct from majority Turki population (Hedin 1936: 121). Notably, Hedin's extensive memoirs arguably reflects contemporary social practice of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims in 1930s of using the word 'Uyghur' exclusively when referring to ancient Uyghurs. Here, the only exception noted is the Swiss traveler Ella Maillart's reference to a rumor overheard in Kashgar in 1935 that the Soviet Union might be considering to facilitate creating an 'Uyghur Socialist Republic' in Xinjiang (Maillart 260). Nevertheless, it is again reasonable to argue that social penetration of Sheng's concept of Uyghur nation was not substantial rural population of southern Xinjiang oases. Nevertheless, Sheng's official policy of creating modern Uyghur nationality obviously did have impact among the Turkic intellectual elite perceptions of communal identity and interest. For instance the fact that *New Life*, once a pro-independence Turkic nationalist periodical, promptly appropriated the discourse of Uyghur nationality, and that Memtili Tewpiq, an activist influenced by Turkish nationalism, disseminated the idea of Uyghur national identity in his schools (mentioned in preceding chapter of this dissertation), indicates that at least some Xinjiang Turkic strata accepted Sheng's ethnic theory. The relatively quick social penetration of Sheng's concept in certain Xinjiang intellectual milieu will be further discussed in the following chapter. At the same time, it is worth noting here that with the exception of Taranchis, who are today by the People's Republic of China considered as belonging into the group Uyghur, the fourteen Xinjiang nationalities as delimited by Sheng exist within unchanged ethnic boundaries until today.

On the other hand, further developments in Sheng's Xinjiang suggest that interception of ETIR's discourse of national identity and national interest, construction of the concept of respective Xinjiang nationalities and their national symbologies, espousal of their national interests and other affirmative actions taken by Sheng towards their identities were mere legitimization measures adopted by Sheng in order to secure smooth consolidation of power during the initial stage of his rule. Sheng eventually commenced the second stage of his policy. As mentioned above, he gradually abandoned the discourse of individual Xinjiang nationalities – later issues of *New Life* before its termination in May 1937 do not speak of Uyghurs and other respective nationalities of Xinjiang. Instead, they refer to the population by the generic keyword 'Xinjiang nationalities' (*Shinjang milletliri*) without any specification of

their ethnicity. After *korenizatsiya*, ethnic identity of Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz and all other nationalities was generally ignored and safeguarding interests of Xinjiang nationalities did not constitute the most important mission of Sheng's government anymore. This naturally led to erosion of trust in Sheng's administration in the eyes of indigenous Turkic population, as implied by increased frequency of the government's condemnations of disunity and treachery in later issues of *New Life*. At the same time, it was struggle against 'imperialism' (*jahangirlik*, *imperialism*) that gradually became the top priority of provincial government (NL 193:2). In relation to this ideological line, an influential body used to mobilize popular support for Sheng's policy was (with Soviet assistance) established under the name *Anti-Imperialist Association* (*Jahangirlikke Qarshi Uyushmisi*, 反帝會 *Fǎndì huì*; Ezizi 1997a: 376, 466). Another good example of the late phase of Sheng's policy is the fierce condemnation of Mahmud Muhiti, which was posted publicly on the streets of Kashgar after Muhiti fled to India due to his fears of getting arrested by Sheng in early April 1937 (Forbes 142). The document still voices professions of equality and rights of nationalities, religious freedom, founding modern schools and other above described institutes of representative government and modernity. It even uses the term East Turkestan for Xinjiang. But it also contains strong criticism of the popular hero who wielded enormous influence on local Turkic population. The pamphlet also portrayed the ETIR as an institution, which violated the sacred unity of nationalities by discriminating Hans, and which sought to bring Xinjiang under colonial domination of foreign imperialists (PFK 1937: 10).

A major uprising which erupted in spring of 1937 once again threw the entire southern Xinjiang into turmoil. This time, the Turkic armed resistance to Sheng's policies centered in Kashgar was reinforced by the Tungsans, who had since 1934 controlled the southeastern rim of the Taklamakan. By fall 1937, Sheng managed (again with massive Soviet military assistance, including tanks and gas bombs) to crush the whole insurgency; by annexing the former Tungan enclave, he finally brought the entire territory of Xinjiang under his control. Subsequently, he embarked on a draconian campaign to consolidate his power. Also modeled largely on the Soviet model of Stalin's purges in late 1930s, Sheng eliminated all other significant power holders in the province and instituted strongly totalitarian rule. He executed a major portion of Turkic nationalist elite remaining in Xinjiang, such as for instance Memtili Tewpiq, Heyder Sayrani, Qutluq Haji Shewqi, Khoja Niyaz Haji, Yunus Beg or Tahir Beg, as well as many ordinary people. The victims of Sheng's atrocities likely totaled over one hundred thousand people (Ezizi 1997a: 349-62; Millward 2007: 210). He also intensified open anti-religious efforts, such as closure or conversion of mosques into theatres and clubs, encouragements to drink liquor for men or to appear in public unveiled for women (Forbes 137). Figuratively speaking, the price of acquiring modern Uyghur identity was covertly set by Sheng for Xinjiang Turkic Muslims to be settled by relinquishing their East Turkestani and Muslim identity. Although, as mentioned above, the Soviet Union was not interested in direct communization nor annexation of Xinjiang, and although there was seemingly little sign of the province being factually under the control of the USSR, Sheng's later policies do show remarkable inspiration by Soviet totalitarianism. Thus, after the bloody and protracted insurgency of early 1930s, followed by a brief period of autonomy during the ETIR and by a promisingly affirmative beginning of Sheng's regime, Xinjiang Turkic Muslims (who in the course of these events became called Uyghurs) once again wound up under despotic Chinese heteronomy:

'...People's congresses and enlightenment unions, which were theoretically people's organizations, were established in Turkestan. False propaganda, such as "we have allowed education", "we have abolished dictatorship," or "all nationalities have

obtained equal rights” was disseminated. Regrettably, this was trickery. The secret police kept putting people to prisons and killing them. The stench of death could be smelled all over Turkestan. A person who would be soundly asleep one night would be gone by the next night, and even if his children and wife would know where he disappeared to, they would not say a word to anyone. Most people were deprived of rights and knowledge. All that was left to them was fear...’ (Wahidi 19)

Similarly to initial affirmative action and indigenization, the latter phase of Sheng’s ethnic policy also bore a striking and most probably deliberate resemblance to Soviet nationality theory and practice. In the Soviet Union, affirmative action towards national identities actually aimed at eventual obliteration of national identities. This seemingly paradoxical and contradictory strategy was based on the assumption that once national identity and rights were granted to Soviet ethnic groups, these would eventually voluntarily give up their national loyalties. Instead, it was expected by Soviet theorists that due to all classes’ common economic interests, the population would forge a unified socialist people, the *homo sovieticus*, which would by himself come ignore the internal national boundaries within the Soviet Union. In the words of Marxist-Leninist ideology, vertical national differences, possibly also all distinctions, were to utterly disappear, because the most significant social distinctions were of course horizontal, i.e. among classes. Technically, the ‘amalgamation of nations’ (Ru. *sliyanie narodov*) was a process of uniting several equal elements into a single whole, and was therefore different from assimilation of an inferior group by a superior one. In this way, Soviet republics and autonomous units would remain national in form, but socialist in content (Connor 1984: 8, 52, 202; Martin 182; Roy: viii; Wimbush: 73; Caroe: 148-9; Bruchis: 132; Soucek 222-224, 232). In Soviet society, brotherhood of nationalities was the classic socialist metaphor of an imagined multinational community (Martin 432-3) and was also one of the most prominent characteristic of communist society:

‘...A great brotherhood of people of labor, people who are united, regardless of national origin, by a community of class interests and goals, has come into being and has gained strength in our country; it has developed relations unprecedented in history, relations that we can rightfully call the Leninist friendship of peoples...’ (Connor 1984: 478)

Thus, the position of national identity in socialist society was ambiguous. On the one hand, Soviet society was overtly referred to as multi-national. On the other hand, nationalism, which had been utilized during the earlier stage in order to gain support of nationally aware population for supra-national socialist movement, would eventually be regarded by Soviet ideologues as something incompatible with socialism and communism, and therefore outright reactionary and in need of annihilation. Similarly, the slogan of self-determination of peoples was ‘designed to recruit ethnic support for the revolution, not to provide a model for the governing a multiethnic state’ (Martin 2). There was also a stark difference between the technical right to self-determination of Soviet peoples, and the right to exercise this right (Connor 1984: 52). In his purges in 1930s, Stalin attempted to solve the national question, in other words the uncomfortable existence of nations and nationalism (Connor 1984: xv), by decimating elites of numerous Soviet nationalities, allegedly on charges of nationalist deviations. At the same time, it was the Russians who were later to become the first among equals and play decisive role in multi-national Soviet state, where all nationalities theoretically enjoyed the same rights (Martin 451-61; Connor 1984: 254-63).

Despite the fact that at this moment there are no sources available on what was the specific means, process and degree in which Sheng adopted Soviet models, the principles of delimitation of nationalities, affirmative action, indigenization, cultural autonomy, formal political autonomy and other policies enforced by Sheng reveal clear Soviet handwriting. This assertion is also in accord with the widely accepted theory mentioned above, that during Sheng's era Xinjiang was factually administered by Soviet advisors. The gradual shift in wording of articles in *New Life* from references to 'Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis, Uzbeks, Tatars and other nationalities' right after consolidation of Sheng's power in Kashgar in early 1934 to 'nationalities of Xinjiang united in friendship' in late 1936 and early 1937 suggests that Sheng's proto-communist measures were likely intended to follow the whole course of Soviet ethnic policy – taking initial affirmative action towards ethnic identity with the aim of their eventual eradication. In northern Xinjiang, where the population was composed of several predominantly Turkic nationalities, the trend of converging multiethnic identity was to a certain degree natural, as evinced for instance by the existence of a Turkic 'common language' (*ortaq til*) used in publications in Chöchek since late 1930s (Ezizi 1997a: 500-1; Tashbayov 58-9).

However, Sheng's unity of nationalities obviously did not point to unity of Turkic peoples, but to unity of all Xinjiang nationalities with each other, with provincial government and with the Republic of China. The texts from the period right before discontinuing *New Life* in 1937 suggest that by including disparate, Turkic and non-Turkic, Muslim and non-Muslim and sedentary and non-sedentary, ethnic groups into the de-ethnicized concept of 'fourteen nationalities of Xinjiang', Sheng ultimately intended to replace ethnic criteria of identification with political ones. To corroborate this assumption, further research is of course still needed that should rely chiefly on sources held in archives of Soviet intelligence agencies and in Xinjiang provincial archives. Therefore, before concluding the section on Sheng Shicai's ethnic policy with perhaps the most illustrative exhibit of his later propaganda, it is worth pointing out that apart from the fact that Sheng's proto-communist national delimitation of fourteen Xinjiang nationalities survives in much the same shape until today, also his other ways of dealing with the plaguing nationality question eventually proved as forerunners to events that took place in Xinjiang in the following decade, as well as to ethnic policy of the Chinese Communist Party's ethnic policy enforced in the region since 1949:

'...To honour the memory of September 18,⁷⁰ we must do our best to defend the whole province of Sinkiang, its privileges and territories, and firmly to unite all the different races, attack the Imperialists and recapture all the territory they had taken from us. If all the different races are to be welded together into a firm whole, they must be placed on the same level and treated in the same way. When this has been done, it does not matter what secret conspiracies Imperialism directs against Sinkiang, for we shall be able to crush them. We must be resolutely on our guard every moment against the Imperialists and give the *one* answer only: that is, *blood*. Down with Imperialism!' (Hedin 1938: 198)

To sum up the findings of this important chapter and to relate them to several theories of nation-forming processes, the above examination of perceptions of communal identity and interests as articulated by Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia during their nationalist insurgency and Sheng Shicai's indigenization in 1930s reveals several significant developments in the

⁷⁰ This date refers to Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931, after which Sheng Shicai, who had then been a military commander of northeastern China, was forced to flee with his troops via the Soviet Union to Xinjiang.

notions of communal consciousness and interest. As pointed out previously, these developments were enabled by the spread of progressive ideas among intellectual strata and nascent modernization of Xinjiang Turkic society from 1880s to 1920 (examined in Chapter 2 of this dissertation). The events of 1930s suggest that the newly established social stratum of progressive intellectuals, teachers, philanthropists, merchants and other enlighteners did to a certain degree succeed in their national agitation – their call to national awakening was heard by portions of their community, who indeed started to perceive themselves as a nation and set out on the path towards defending their national interests. In early 1930s, scores of nationally conscious figures, cultivated previously in Jadidist schools, grew aware of their community's decline and resolved to stage a large-scale movement bent on achieving strictly political objectives. Links were forged between activists and large parts of population hitherto uninvolved in politics. Apart from national agitation and cultivation of nationally conscious individuals, Xinjiang Turkic progressive intelligentsia also directly and efficiently participated in the political movement in throughout 1930s, acquiring a strong presence in the insurgent administration and subsequent Sheng's administration.

In spite of the obvious differences of political objectives of Turkic insurgency and Sheng's indigenization, both initiatives promoted national consciousness among Xinjiang Turkic Muslims. In this period, the nation, in exact words the 'East Turkestani nation' during the insurgency and the 'Uyghur nation' under renewed heteronomy, started to be defined by a multitude of national attributes. While some of these attributes were merely intercepted from previously existing concepts of communal identity with the same or modified importance, other national symbols and traditions were 'invented', 'reconstructed' or 're-imagined', similarly as in processes illustrated by other theorists in other parts of the world in modern period (Hobsbawm 1983: 12-4; Smith 1986: 177; Anderson 7). The concept of 'East Turkestani nation', for which we find so far no evidence in indigenous sources predating the 1930s and can therefore argue that contemporary society still used the autonym *Musulman*, became the key structure of Xinjiang Turkic Muslim communal identity discourse and state practice during the insurgency. Similarly, Sheng introduced the concept of the 'Uyghur nation', which had been until then known only to a very modest progressive circle of *Musulman* society. Subsequently, he also took up massive affirmative action towards implanting this construct into mindset of southern Xinjiang sedentary Turks. Both the insurgent and Sheng's administration acknowledged or even stressed Turkic national origins and desired to restore the grandeur of its ancient culture and political system, a principle pointed to by some general theories of nation-formation processes (Smith 1986: 50-3). In the same way, the invention by the respective political agencies of previously non-existent variations of the concept of national homeland (particularly of East Turkestan, of Uyghuristan and of Xinjiang as a part of China) enabled the justification of nationalist movements on the grounds of restoration of past territorial integrity of the nation, a pattern also ascertained elsewhere (Smith 1986: 57, 162-3, 174-5, 191-2; Hroch 1996: 84).

In a similar manner, other attributes of East Turkestani and Uyghur national identity were constructed in 1930s. In words of the same theories of nation-construction processes, Xinjiang Turkic nationalist ethno-engineers performed a sophisticated recombination of traditional motifs from mythology, chronicles, documents and material artifacts (Smith 1986: 177-8), of relics and memories of past statehood (Hroch 1996: 84), and of pre-existing culture and elements drawn from distant past (Gellner 48-9, 77), into a new concept of East Turkestani nation. As a result of this process, a complex national history was drawn up and a whole new 'ancient' heritage of 'primordial' nation emerged. A vital element in the discourse of national past was the memory of national decline and misery caused in the past by

mismanagement of East Turkestani and Uyghur homeland by flawed Chinese administrations. Also, Muhemmed Emin Bughra's *History of East Turkestan* was the first modern Xinjiang Turkic history that discarded the traditional religious prism of classical Turko-Islamic historiography and instead narrated East Turkestanis' historical past from the so-called 'enlightenment perspective' – as a struggle of a nation to liberate itself from dark oppression and, by reviving its ancient splendor, to attain the light of progress facilitated by modern nation-state. To borrow an apt formulation used by a scholar researching construction of national history narrative in China proper, Bughra did not narrate history of East Turkestan 'evangelically', or 'down time', but reconstructed it as the *History of East Turkestan* 'up time', all the way from modern era to ancient times lit by modern archeology (Duara 33-4). Instead of resorting to the usual nationalist tactic known from elsewhere of claiming that his nation 'forgot' their national history (Anderson 205), Bughra posited that East Turkestanis were forcefully prevented by their oppressive overlords to remember and to speak of their past.

By construction of 'national' past, Bughra and other Xinjiang Turkic thinkers, similarly to nationalists elsewhere, linked their efforts to a long and legitimate tradition of opposition to alien power. At the same time, the newly devised concept of troubled, yet common past was to reassure the sense of national identity, stimulate people's craving for reassertion of past national rights and thus facilitate return to *status quo ante* loss of national independence (Breuilly 60-2, 131, 161). Hence, the subsequent natural and legitimate national movement and nationalist insurgency were interpreted as dramatic national destiny (Smith 1986: 179-83, 192; Hroch 1996: 79). Although the concept of the East Turkestani or Uyghur nation was a newly devised social practice and national history was an innovative cultural structure, the nation and all of its attributes were by the nationalists interpreted as primordial and self-same. In the same way, although the East Turkestani national blue flag with a star and a crescent was newly adopted only in 1933, it was explicitly called 'ancient'. Similarly, newly invented symbolic actions such as invoking tradition of resistance to heteronomy (such as history of national liberation struggle), glorification of remarkable figures of the revolution (such as Khoja Niyaz Haji or Mahmud Muhiti), public celebration of state holidays (such as the date of Sheng's coup) and other important identity events (such as using the Islamic calendar or celebrating Islamic holidays), communal care for important identity sites (appeals for keeping clean the Eid Kah mosque or cherishing of the ancient and famed city of Kashgar), use of national language in administration (emergence of national publishing) and similar acts of the national ritual were all targeted towards fortification of newly devised 'primordial' national identities.

As a result of the industrious nation work of the nationalist intelligentsia in the 1930s, on the discourse level the concept of national identity replaced religion as the cornerstone of communal *weltanschauung* and principal value of life. National theorists performed a multitude of activities that sought to extract the *Musulman* of Seven Cities from receding structures of religious community, dynastic realm and agro-literate society (Anderson 12, 36; Gellner 8-14) and to situate them into modern world. Nation became the most prominent category of identification, which lay somewhere in between sub-ethnic structures of religious identity and supra-ethnic structures of local identity (Anderson 12, 36; Gellner 75-6). On the other hand, Xinjiang's sedentary Turkic Muslim intelligentsia clearly continued to perceive religion as an important national identity marker, at moments even as a marker equal in importance to ethnicity. It was not the case that the emergence of East Turkestani and Uyghur national identity was accompanied by loss of faith in legitimacy of Islam even among a small number of Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals. Politicization of Turkic national movement was rather caused by social and political crisis of Chinese administration that could be mapped

onto linguistic and religious divisions, eventually leading to communal conflict and nationalist movement (Hroch 1996: 85-6; Breuilly 20-2, 133). Even though in 1930s Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals perceived themselves as members of East Turkestani and Uyghur nation, they did not cease to think of themselves as of Muslims.

Besides engaging in rich discourse of national characteristics and thus stimulating the centripetal community principle of national identity of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims, nationalist statecraft thinkers and administrators of 1930s also coherently expressed their visions of interest of the newly delimited East Turkestani and Uyghur nation. Politicization of national movement meant that from early 1930s the primary objectives of national movement were seen in the sphere of politics. For obvious reasons, the political interests of the two administrations differed markedly. For the Turkic insurgency and policy-making circles of the ETIR, the highest political ideal was independent nation-state. In contrast, Sheng strove to counter the secessionist ideology by propagandizing the unity of Xinjiang nationalities with provincial government and with the Chinese republic. On the other hand, both the Turkic insurgency and Sheng's indigenization project rhetorically embraced representative government, national sovereignty, republicanism, the rule of law, morally justified governance, equality of its citizens and other principles as basic tenets of their administration.

As a result, from the early 1930s all members of the East Turkestani and Uyghur nation were, at least theoretically, considered citizens of a state with equal political, religious, cultural, national and other rights. In fact, this moment was an effective embodiment of the principle of egalitarianism and solidarity among members of a nation, which in view of several studies constitutes one of the most important traits of a nation (Gellner 24-5; Hroch 1996: 79; Anderson 7; Smith 1986: 22-31, 135-6; Smith 2009: 27). Similarly, implementation of civil rights and political autonomy are by other theories considered important objectives of national movement and nationalism (Hroch 1996: 81), or even a process in which ethnic communities form states (Smith 1986: 137-41). It is understood that political autonomy, as in the case of Sheng's rule, is the humblest goal a nationalist movement is willing to settle for; ideally, the nation should have its own independent nation-state (Breuilly 3, 62), as was the case of the ETIR. At the same time, the principles of national rule facilitated retention of national homeland, a pattern which has been by one thesis regarded as the ultimate goal of nationalism (Smith 1986: 162-3). In words of another theory, the state of East Turkestani and Uyghurs was conceived as a nation-state, or a state based on unity of several nationalities, and its political boundaries were meant to be congruent with those of ethnicity and culture. A state that defends the nation's, or nationality', political interests became a notable feature of nascent official modernity in Xinjiang in 1930s (Gellner 1, 5, 55). In other words, the high priority of political goals in Turkic insurgency and Sheng's (largely rhetorical) indigenization indicated a shift of largely culturally articulated national agitation of the preceding period into the arena of statecraft, where political interests prevailed over all other national interests. By politicization of communal interest in 1930s, Xinjiang Turkic Muslims' national movement became a pointedly nationalist one. Again, this pattern corresponds to the prevalence of national interests over other interests ascertained by some general theories of nation-forming processes and nationalism (Hroch 1996: 80; Breuilly 3).

Another set of national interests articulated by Turkic insurgency and Sheng's affirmative action can be found in their resolute embrace of modernization and progress. Both powers exerted enormous efforts at fulfilling an educational imperative – creating modern and standardized education system. In an extension of the Jadidist educational movement taken up by individual enlightened activists from 1880s and 1920s, the progress of schools in 1930s

could be seen, in words of other scholars, as a litmus test of the degree of national progress and nationalist movement, as well as an avenue to national well-being (Hobsbawm 1996: 135-6; Smith 1986: 133; Breuilly 149-52). A universal and standardized education has been described as an essential feature of modernized society, in which every member of society is endowed with literacy and knowledge previously reserved only to clergy and other upper strata (Gellner 27-9, 32). The eruption of Turkic insurgency in 1930s also indicated, that the private modern schools emerging in the previous period greatly improved the mobility, communication and transmission of ideas within members of nationally conscious intelligentsia and strongly contributed to the rise of politicized national movement (Hroch 1996: 85, 87-8; Breuilly 21-2). But in contrast to early educational efforts taken up by individual activists, often in direct conflict with the state, in 1930s Xinjiang Turkic education became irrevocably intertwined with state power. The control and operation of education was one of the means by which nation-state disseminated principles of its ideology and fortified national identity of its citizens on whose support it depended. In words of another academic, it was of vital interest of a modern state to launch a 'mass educational enterprise' (Smith 1986: 136, 142). At the same time, by facilitating the people's craving for modern education and knowledge, the state further legitimized its existence and created a need for more modern education and knowledge. In effect, the nation-state's taking up the overwhelming portion of the national education responsibility, as well as allowing or financially supporting non-state schools that fostered national identity, turned education into a structure that made the nation and nation-state interdependent on each other.

An analogous interrelation emerged in other aspects of modernity. In order to strengthen people's sense of national identity and popular support for state administration, both the East Turkestan nation-state and Sheng's multi-national heteronomy extolled the need to create a national publication enterprise and introduce the vernacular into public discourse and state practice. The state was specifically made responsible for facilitating these national interests, which in turn led to growth in public support for the state, as well as to an increased need for promotion of modernity and progress. In accordance with principles observed elsewhere, vernacularization of publishing and official intercourse underlined national language as one of the nation's chief attributes (Anderson 71-5; Breuilly 149-52). Through vernacularization, the nation-state aimed at engendering cultural and social homogeneity, defined mostly by national culture as a universal and egalitarian social structure completely penetrating Xinjiang Turkic Muslim society (Gellner 35, 43-5, 77, 97; Hroch 1996: 81; Smith 1986: 142). Beyond the discourse arena, in Xinjiang of 1930s the declared modernization did to a certain degree occur in spheres of education, publishing, infrastructure construction, industry, agriculture, resource exploitation, healthcare or foreign policy.

In short, 1930s witnessed a strong shift in Xinjiang Turki intelligentsia's ideas of nation and national interest. Since this decade, the intellectuals viewed their community as a nation endowed with national attributes such as homeland, ethnic origin, culture, language, history, heroes, rituals and symbols. National interest was seen firstly in attaining national self-determination (either in the form of independent nation-state or a multi-nationality province), decent political status and representative government. Secondly, it was in the interest of the nation to undergo wide and deep modernization, namely in the spheres of education and knowledge, publishing, social organizations and other walks of life. It was the duty of the state to attend to these national needs. Successful accommodation of these needs by the state led to reinforcement of citizens' national identity, to an increase in their support for the nation-state and thus also to their growing need for more modernization. This demand justified the continued existence of the nation-state, which in turn kept on affirming national

identity of its citizens. This cyclic reproductive relationship between state power and modernization directive can be articulated as one in which an ethnic community is awakened to national consciousness, which in turn generates a nation, which in turn generates national interest, which in turn generates nation-state, which in turn generates accommodation of nation's vital needs, which in turn generates survival of the nation, which in turn continues to possess national consciousness, which in turn continues to generate national interest and so on. This pattern can be compared to the model of official nationalism outlined in a somewhat different context by Hugh Seton-Watson: a nation's leaders confer nationality and its benefits on all the people, while at the same time they strengthen their state by creating within it a single homogeneous nation (Seton-Watson 148). The importance of cultural homogeneity and school-transmitted culture in rise of nations has also been already pointed out (Gellner 39).

The above outlined intertwining of East Turkestani and Uyghur intellectual images of national consciousness and national interest with statecraft in 1930s is one fundamental change from perceptions of community and its interests in late imperial and early republican era examined in the previous chapter of this dissertation. It is also clear that due to improved means of communication, emergence of schools, cultural associations, printed media, public dimension of statecraft and other nascent social phenomena, in 1930s the practice of nation and nationalism penetrated Xinjiang sedentary Turkic Muslim society to a much wider and deeper extent than in the previous era. As pointed out above throughout the dissertation, in assessing the modalities of social penetration of East Turkestani and Uyghur ideas of nation and nationalism this research is sadly limited by the lack of reliable data produced by systematic contemporary field research. However, the next chapter of this dissertation will illustrate that the concepts of East Turkestani and Uyghur nation and national interest continued to play a decisive role in thinking of Xinjiang Turkic elites, and that these concepts markedly evolved as a result of majorly altered geopolitical position of Xinjiang within the Republic of China in 1940s.

4. Significance of National Boundary in Flux (1940s)

The final chapter of this dissertation considers the transformation of the politicized Turkic nationalist insurgency and Sheng's affirmative action of the 1930s, explored in previous chapter, during the subsequent late republican era from Sheng Shicai's demise and restoration of central government's authority in Xinjiang in 1944 to Chinese Communist Party's takeover of Xinjiang in 1949. The first section of this chapter concentrates on ideology of Turkic activists, politicians and intellectuals associated with the Kuomintang (KMT). In the wake of southern Xinjiang Turkic insurgency in early 1930s, these figures left Xinjiang and allied with the central government in Nanjing, where they organized other members of Xinjiang Turkic Muslim diaspora, published Turkic periodicals and performed other kinds of nation work. A good sample of their ideas and activities is the periodical *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* (*Chiniy Türkistan Awazi*) published by Isa Yusuf Alptekin and other Turkic enthusiasts under auspices of the KMT-dominated central government in Nanjing in 1934, which is the first source of research in this chapter. In this magazine, Isa Yusuf Alptekin and other authors acknowledged that their homeland, in their terminology 'East Turkestan', 'Chinese Turkestan' or simply 'Turkestan', formed an integral part of Republic of China, and that all local Turkic groups made up a single Turkestani (*Türkistanli*) nationality, which at the same time constituted one of the five nationalities making up population of China. Simultaneously, they defended East Turkestani's national interests by demanding that the central government grant Xinjiang Turks the same rights as to the majority Han population in China proper.

This ideology gained momentum after the central government instituted its factual control over Xinjiang in 1944 and appointed several Turkic figures into high political positions. These Turkic politicians and officials were thus able to promote national consciousness to their fellow Turkic nationals, as well as, albeit to a limited degree, lobby for Turkic national interests in the government level. Turkic politicians' writings under examination in this chapter, such as Mes'ud Sabiri's *Speech* (*Bir Nutuq*) and *Awareness of Being a Turk* (*Türklük Oranı*), Muhemmed Imin Bughra's *War of Pens over Homeland and Nation* (*Yurt we Millet Heqqide Qelem Kürishi*) and Polat Qadiri's *Freedom Principle* (*Erk Shoari*) and *History of the Province* (*Ölke Tarikhi*), reveal that the KMT-affiliated Turkic thinkers of 1940s viewed their nation in very much the similar way as we have seen in the previous decade. In this theory, all Turkic groups of East Turkestan, and indeed of the whole world, as a single Turkic 'nation' (*millet*) defined primarily by common language and culture. East Turkestan was viewed as national homeland, whose political belonging to the Republic of China did not in the least conflict with the Turkicness of East Turkestani. At the same time, the discourse of national interest of the KMT-affiliated Turkic politicians exposes that after Xinjiang fell under central Chinese administration, the primary objective of national movement also changed. Suddenly, Turkic elites were confronted with assimilationist KMT ethnic theory claiming that all Turkestani are part of the 'nation of China' (中華民族 *Zhōnghuá mínzú*), in which they formed a very insignificant 'minority nationality' (*azchilik millet*). Therefore, late republican Xinjiang Turkic activists worked towards recognition of East Turkestani's existence, name and rights by the central government of China. Preservation of national boundary was for them the chief national interest, as well as the main goal of their nation work within the republican power structure.

A very different approach towards maintenance of national boundary was taken up by politicians and propagandists of yet another insurgent movement, which erupted in northern

Xinjiang simultaneously with the KMT's takeover of the province in fall 1944. The result of this uprising was that three northern districts of Xinjiang proclaimed the second East Turkestan Republic in November 1944, and remained factually independent on provincial government until 1949. To a certain degree, this movement resembled the Turkic insurgency in southern Xinjiang in the 1930s – it strove to shake off the dysfunctional Chinese administration and establish an efficient administration that would represent its citizens' interests. However, arguably due to the strong influence of Soviet Union over the uprising, some factions within the rebel administration expressed ideas of nation and nationalism that were fundamentally different from those of 1930s' Turkic national movement. Issues of an influential periodical, *Revolutionary East Turkestan (Inqilabiy Sherqiy Türkistan)*, as well as three other sources inspected in this section, divulge that the rebellion eventually came to be interpreted by its administration as a revolution of 'Xinjiang people' (*Shinjang khelqi*). It was not the nation, but the people who all jointly struggled for peace, democracy and unity, regardless of their (Turkic or non-Turkic) ethnicity, religious denomination, mode of life and other national traits. In this discourse, ethnic identity or nationality of the people was generally not discussed, and some formulations even denounce nationalism as detrimental to people's interest. The idea of 'East Turkestan Republic' was also gradually shelved and the whole movement was interpreted as countering reactionary KMT administration, not as an independence-seeking anti-Chinese rebellion. Similarly to Soviet ethnic theory, the northern Xinjiang insurgent policy makers' discourse did not view national criteria as the most prominent marker of communal identity, and did not use national terminology to spell out communal interests. Thus, in the Soviet-influenced 1940s' northern Xinjiang insurgency, the decreased importance of national boundary of Uyghurs and other Turkic groups symbolically foreshadowed upcoming ethnic policies of the Chinese Communist Party after 1949.

4.1. Late Republican Turkic Nationalism (1944 – 1949)

After Sheng Shicai terminated his affirmative action experiment and staged his great purge of 1937, explored in Chapter 3, he upheld the pro-Soviet orientation of his policy. He also allowed cadres of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which had after the traumatizing Long March (長征 *Chángzhēng*; 1934-5) encamped in Yan'an (延安) in the Shaanxi (陝西) province, to take up advisory positions in Xinjiang administration. But in 1941, after the Soviets signed a non-aggression pact with Japan, after Germany invaded the Soviet Union and after the USA had joined the war in the Pacific against Japan, Sheng switched sides and initiated rapprochement with Chiang Kai-shek, executing all CCP cadres and severing all ties to the Soviet Union. The first KMT office in Urumchi was established in January 1943, and later that year the first U.S. consulate opened in the city. The KMT continued its moving into the province even after Sheng once again attempted to restore the alliance with the Soviets in 1943 – he failed and was forced by Chiang to give up his provincial post in September 1944. For the first time since the birth of the Republic of China on January 1, 1912, the central government was thus able to assert its factual authority over Xinjiang (Ezizi 1997a: 389-90; Forbes 157-62; Millward 2007: 210-1).

This step was a culmination of a complex KMT effort to regain control over the spacious northwest ruled by warlords and military cliques since the fall of the empire. Ever since the proclamation of the Nationalist government in 1925 in Canton and capture of Beijing in 1928, the KMT party-state presented itself as a nationalistic authority determined to reunify the vast territory and numerous ethno-cultural groups inherited by the republic from the Qing, such as Tibet or Outer Mongolia. The aspiration was also directed toward numerous warlord-controlled regions within the interior and along China's borderlands. This objective

gained even more importance after military incursion of Japan into northeastern and eastern China in early 1930s. That that moment, the northwest started to be considered by the KMT policy makers as one of potential new power bases where the central government could retreat in the face of imminent Japanese attack on Nanjing. In the early 1930s, as a result of negotiations with Ma (馬) family warlords in control of Ningxia, Gansu and Qinghai provinces, the central government managed to generate at least a propagandist image of a projection of its power into the area. This policy led to what has been termed ‘rhetorical development’ of the Great Northwest (大西北 *dà Xīběi*) and what was to materialize during the actual military takeover by the KMT troops ten years later (Lin 2007: 6-21; Lin 2011: 34-48).

The KMT’s rise to power in mid-1920s was also reflected in its statecraft ideology and theory of ethnic relations. It was already mentioned in Chapter 2 that Sun Yat-sen’s theory of ethnic relations included the principle of five-nationality republicanism, which defined China as a polity formed by five equal ethno-cultural groups. Sun also declared that all nationalities living in China were equal in rights and freedoms, including the inalienable right to self-determination. At the same time, Sun Yat-sen’s theory of ethnic relations also contained much more assimilationist views. Since early 1910s, he addressed the nationality question of China in the sense that all ethnic communities of the Republic of China actually formed a single people, and all regions (including breakaway Tibet and Outer Mongolia, and semi-independent regions of Xinjiang, Qinghai and Inner Mongolia) formed a single territory (Leibold 188, 197-9). He maintained that the terms ‘state’ and ‘nation’ pointed to a single concept, because China stood for not only a *country* but also a *race* (種族 *zhǒngzú*) of human beings. Heterogeneous elements should remain within the Chinese state and eventually merge with the dominant Chinese race: ‘*We must facilitate the dying out of all names of individual peoples inhabiting China... We must satisfy the demands of all races and unite them in a single cultural and political whole.*’ (Lin 2011: 10-1) As remarked elsewhere, for Sun Yat-sen China, which effectively meant the most numerous Han nationality, was the world’s most completely formed nation, because the people were bound by all five necessary criteria: blood/race, language, custom, religion and livelihood (Duara 32). This theory was perfected by Chiang Kai-shek, who became the leading KMT strongman by mid-1920s. Chiang argued that all people living within historical China are descended from the same ancestors, therefore belonging to the same race (種族 *zhǒngzú*; literally ‘kind of lineage’, or *nesildash uruq*, literally ‘descendants of the same lineage, clan’) and making up the political and ethnic ‘Chinese nation’ (中華民族 *Zhōnghuá mínzú*). The linguistic, religious and cultural differences among respective communities, or ‘religious clans’ (宗族 *zōngzú*), were brought about by prolonged habitation in varied natural environments (Chiang: 30; Ezizi 1997a: 391).

Given the totalitarian nature of the KMT party-state, Sun’s and Chiang’s strongly politicized theories naturally had massive influence on China’s ethnic policy for coming decades. In Xinjiang, it was Chinese nationalism which in 1940 provided an unprecedented theoretical base for Chinese domination, which heretofore relied on mere manifestation of strength by military presence and oppressive policies (Newby 1986: 200). What Chiang’s approach argued specifically in the case of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims is well observable in the memoir of Yolwas (1888-1971), a very interesting figure of early modern Xinjiang history. Originally from Yangissar in southern Xinjiang, he held a high post in the Komul khanate and later also in the KMT administration. After the communist takeover of Xinjiang in 1949, he continued guerilla war until 1951 when he became one of the very few Uyghurs who joined Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan. There, he continued to function in the exiled Xinjiang

administration until his death. As mentioned in the Introduction to this dissertation, Yolwas' memoir was presumably written with more than substantial assistance of an unknown KMT propagandist and thus presents rather an example of official KMT interpretation of Xinjiang history than Yolwas' own reminiscences and views. In particular, the text argues that it is misleading to point to linguistic and cultural similarities between Uyghurs and Turks of Turkey, because this phenomenon is a result of historical migrations of Uyghurs from Xinjiang during expansions of splendid Chinese dynasties to the west, for instance during the Yuan that established empires in Eastern Europe and Middle East. The concept of 'East Turkestan' is an equally deceptive delusion fabricated by Russian imperialists, who introduced the terms 'West Turkestan' and 'East Turkestan' after their conquest of Central Asia in the nineteenth century, hoping to continue their expansion to Xinjiang. Considering Uyghurs a branch of Arabs is an erroneous conception influenced by religiosity, because that would imply that there were no Uyghurs in Xinjiang before the arrival of Islam in late Tang. It is evenly impossible to say that pre-Islamic Buddhist Uyghurs came from India. In short, '*...Uyghurs are genuinely native to China and have existed in China for several thousands of years. Today, they are the main component of the Hui, who are one the five races constituting the Chinese nation – the Han, Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans and the Hui...*' (Yaole Boshi 4-5).

The KMT was pulled into Xinjiang affairs first in the wake of the Komul rebellion of 1931, the following Turkic insurgency which swept through eastern and southern Xinjiang and eventual rise of Sheng Shicai into the top Xinjiang position. During the insurgency, some Turkic insurgents dispatched pleas for help to the central government, despite the fact that they were only very poorly informed about the structure of KMT power apparatus (Lin 2006: 46-7). On the eve of Sheng's advance into insurgent territory, several thousand Turkic Muslims fled and generated a sizeable diaspora of several thousand in India, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Gansu and Qinghai (Wahidi 14-5; Sabiri 1947: 16-7; Qadiri 1948: 86; Bughra 1998: xv). Thus, Nanjing politicians not only realized the danger of losing the Xinjiang territory, but at the same time also understood that they had the opportunity to use the events against Sheng, who was defiant of central authority.

In this way, Chiang Kai-shek suddenly had the first opportunity to implement KMT's previously drafted Xinjiang policy. A part of Turkic refugees who sought assistance of Chinese central government and ventured all the way to Nanjing, were welcomed by the KMT that appreciated their criticism of Sheng's flawed administration. Prospective Turkic youth received education and official training, while other activists cooperated with the KMT on drafting an alternative Xinjiang policy. In spite of the purely theoretical level of such activities given the limits of central control over Xinjiang at the time, these activists were to later have a strong influence on Turkic ideas of nation and nationalism. Xinjiang Turkic refugees in China proper were organized in the Turkestani Compatriot Association (*Türkistanli Yurtdashlar Uyushmisi*, 同鄉會 *Tóngxiānghuì*, TCA; elsewhere termed East Turkestani Compatriot Society, *Sherqi Türkistanli Wetendashlar Jemi'iti*; VCT 5: 92), which had branches in Nanjing, Chongqing, Lanzhou, Tianjin, Shanghai and other major cities, and was recognized by the KMT, in contrast to Sheng's autocratic rule, as a legitimate council of Xinjiang Muslims. The expatriate community's intellectual activities were concentrated around the publishing house Altay based in Nanjing, in Chongqing after 1937 and in Urumchi after 1946. The diaspora published monthlies *Tianshan* and *Altay* in Chinese and *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* in Uyghur (Zhou 174-5; Benson 1990: 53). At the same time, the Nanjing government occasionally managed to send delegations to Xinjiang, which sometimes included Turkic diaspora Muslims who had joined the central government (Ezizi 1997a: 310, 461-2). The afore mentioned nationalistic Turkic insurgent source claims that the central government

started acting favorably toward Turks following the outbreak of the Komul revolt (Wahidi 14-5). At the same time, a wave of interest in northwestern border region (i.e. mainly Xinjiang) emerged. Several academic societies and think-tanks appeared and books, periodicals and articles were published on northwestern geography, demography, politics, culture and other topics (Lin 2007: 118). Probably the first Turkic-Chinese and Chinese-Turkic dictionaries of the republican era were also compiled – this was for example the *Phonetic Phrasebook of Colloquial Xinjiang Muslim Language* (注音新疆回文常用字表 *Zhùyīn Xīnjiāng Huíwén chángyòng zìbiǎo*) by Xu Xihua (徐錫華) of 1938, which featured Uyghur expressions handwritten in modified Arabic script along with their approximate transcription into Mandarin Phonetic Transcription (國語注音符號 *Guóyǔ zhùyīn fúhào*) and translations into Mandarin (Xu 1938). This trend intensified throughout the 1930s and by 1940s, it expanded into a regular program of developing the whole northwest, which included investment, construction of infrastructure or massive population transfers from China proper (Millward 2007: 212).

One prominent Xinjiang Turkic figure associated with the Nanjing government was Mes'ud Sabiri Bayqozi (1886-1951). He was born in northern Xinjiang near Ghulja and received a several-year education in Turkey, earning a medical degree at Military Medical School in Istanbul. After return to Ghulja, he opened a pharmacy and was also involved in progressive educational activities. For this, he was briefly imprisoned by Yang Zengxin's administration in 1924. He eventually resettled to Aksu where he supported the Turkic insurgency. After its fall, he fled to India and eventually to China. He held a large number of important posts in the KMT administration, such as Xinjiang delegate to the KMT party congresses, a member of the KMT central committee, deputy director of the China Islamic Association, professor at the Border Area Research Institute and at the Central Political Institute. At the same time, he wrote articles popularizing Xinjiang issues and strongly advocated autonomy for Xinjiang Turkic Muslims (Qadiri 1948: 145-7; Benson 1991: 93-4).

Another important activist for the Turkic cause was Isa Yusuf Alptekin (1901-1995), at that time known as Eysa Beg, Eysa Yusuf or Eysa Yusuf Beg. Born in Yangiassar to local beg's family, he had received a traditional religious education and Russian education in Andijan. After return to Xinjiang, he worked briefly in the local bureaucracy. In 1932, he came to Nanjing as a Xinjiang people's representative and requested full autonomy to Xinjiang and countermeasures to Soviet influence in the province. After Sheng Shicai's rise to power, he remained in Nanjing and continued campaigning for the cause of autonomy of Xinjiang, gradually forging ties with the KMT. During the 1933 turmoil in Xinjiang, Eysa was an interpreter of the central government's delegation to Xinjiang led by General Huang Musong (黃慕松, 1887-1937) and met with prominent Turkic figures, who informed him about the situation in the province. After return to Nanjing, Eysa Yusuf suggested that the central government does not recognize Sheng in power. After Jin Shuren, who had in the meantime arrived in Xinjiang in 1933, accused Eysa of being a communist spy, Eysa was charged and forced to discontinue his activities. He was finally acquitted and was able to resume his activities. He then functioned as one of the main organizers behind the publishing house Altay and was also active in maintaining communication with Turkic diaspora in China proper, India and Afghanistan (Wahidi 14; Qadiri 1948: 83-6; Benson 1991: 90-2; Lin 2011: 90).

Nation work of Xinjiang Turkic activists affiliated with the central government in the 1930s and the KMT's early Xinjiang policy are excellently exhibited by the Uyghur-language periodical *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* (*Chinniy Türkistan Awazi*). It was a monthly

supplement to Chinese bi-weekly *Frontier Voice* (邊鐸 *Biānduó*), which was one of the Nanjing publications that emerged after the KMT central government started paying attention to its northwestern border issues following the 1931 Komul uprising and growth of Soviet involvement in Xinjiang. The main figure behind publication of *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* was Eysa Yusuf, who also wrote many of the articles; other texts were written by his associates of whom nothing is known at this moment. The printing technique used in publishing the magazine was lithographic reproduction of handwritten articles, itself an articulate illustration of the humble beginnings of the KMT policy vis-à-vis Xinjiang Turkic Muslims. This dissertation managed to make use of only two isolated issues of the *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* (VCT), No. 5 and No. 6, which were published in June and July of 1934. The *Frontier Voice* and *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* issues contained articles on topics such as Soviet, Japanese and British policy on Xinjiang, role of the northwest in national defense, central government's Xinjiang policy, history and culture of Xinjiang nationalities, Three People's Principles and other fundamentals of KMT ideology or analyses of current political situation in Xinjiang.

From one point of view, it can be said that the articles in *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* contain ideas of nation and nationalism very similar to nationalism prevalent during Turkic insurgency, as analyzed in Chapter 3. The 'nation' (*millet*) of 'Turkestanis' or 'Turks' (*Türkestanli* or *Türk*) are inhabiting a 'homeland' (*weten*) which is called 'Turkestan' (*Türkistan*), 'East Turkestan' (*Sherqiy Türkistan*), 'Chinese Turkestan' (*Chinniy Türkistan*), 'our Turkestan' (*bizning Türkistan*) or 'Six Cities' (*Alte Sheher*). The Komul 'revolt' (*isyan*) of 1931 and the subsequent turmoil is interpreted as a righteous resistance to corrupt misadministration of Yang Zengxin and Jin Shuren, which not only disregarded the 'life' (*me'ishet, turmush*) of indigenous Turkic Muslims, but even sought to wipe out their 'culture' (*medeniyyet*) as a whole. In another interpretation, the revolt stemmed from fifty-seven year of oppression (i.e. from 1874, roughly the time of Qing re-conquest) and was taken up by the brave and courageous 'Turkic nation' (*Türk milliti*). The rebellion was a manifestation of 'nation work' (*millet khizmiti*) and was powerfully driven by aspirations for 'freedom' (*hürlik*), 'republicanism' (*jumhuriyetchilik*), 'lives of our people' (*khelqimizning turmushi*), 'modernization of life' (*turmush yengilitish*), 'cultural progress' (*medeniy tereqqiyat*) and other similar concepts. Historically, East Turkestan was annexed to 'Chinese state' (*Khitay döli*) in 1878, and today's Turkestanis are descendants of ancient Uyghurs. *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* itself was published as a 'political, social, economic and educational magazine' (*siyasiy, ijtimaiy, iktisadiy we terbiyiy meymu'e*), which was a clear allusion to Tatar Jadidist publications featured also by *Life of East Turkestan* and *Independence* of 1933 (VCT 5: 1, 4, 8, 30-2, 61, 73, 100, 110; VCT 6: 1-2, 7, 13-4, 25, 35, 41, 67, 73-4). This line of thought is well illustrated by the following excerpt:

'...Turkestan is my homeland and those living Turkestan are my brothers. What is beneficial for Turkestan is beneficial for me (*Türkistanning paydisi méning paydam*) and what is important for Turkestan is important for me (*Türkistanning zörüri méning zörürüm*)...' (VCT 5: 8)

On the other hand, *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* introduces a political principle which had been non-existent in the ideology of Xinjiang Turkic insurgent activists in southern Xinjiang in 1930s and was present only in a limited and highly ritualized degree in texts engendered during Sheng Shicai's administration – the idea of Turkestan and Turkestanis being an integral part of the Republic of China. The concept of Turkic nationalism within the Chinese political realm was conveyed by the very name of the periodical. Visual content of

Voice of Chinese Turkestan flashed rich republican iconography, such as photographs of Sun Yat-sen, notable politicians (sometimes riding horses), republican identity sites (such as Sun's tomb or national sport champions, calligraphic inscriptions by leading officials, republican flags, national female swimming champions in swimming suits etc). All pictures were captioned in Turkic language written in Arabic script. Given the proscription of depicting living beings by Islam, the graphic content of the *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* can be altogether counted as quite a revolutionary undertaking in its time.

The periodical also featured translations of Sun's *Three People's Principles*, republican legislature (mainly the constitution of the ROC), the history of revolutionary movement in China proper and other substantial treatises of Chinese republican and nationalist ideology. 'China' (*Khitay, Chin*) and the 'Chinese' (*Khitaylik, Chinlik*) are not viewed as enemies (as by the nationalist thinkers of southern Xinjiang insurgency at the time) or a vague political concept and fellow Xinjiang nationality (as by Sheng's propaganda), but as an inseparable part of political reality of the Xinjiang Turkic nation. Turkic 'nation' (*millet*) is viewed as one the five constituent 'nationalities' (*millet*) of China, or in another words of the 'Chinese nation' (*Khitay milliti*) which constitutes the 'Republic of China' (*Chin Jumhuriyiti*). The republican discourse is also sharply critical of Sheng Shicai's policy for recognizing only formally the sovereignty of the central government, while factually allowing the Soviet Union to run the province (VCT 5: 1-18, 4, 8, 19-29, 34, 35, 62-8, 80-88; VCT 6: 37, 44-59, 62). The following well-known passage of Sun's words on nationalism suggests that *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* and other early KMT publications of 1930s were the first vehicles that delivered the fundamentals of KMT nationalism to Turkic Muslims of Xinjiang in their mother language and script:

'...There are four hundred million people (*khelq*) in China. In this number, several million Mongols, approximately one million Manchus, several million Tibetans and more than one million Muslim Turks are of another race (*jins*). The number of people belonging to these outside races does not exceed ten million. That is to say that most of them are of the same blood, same language, same religion and same culture, and belong to the Han Chinese race. And what is the standing of our nation (*millet*) within the world? When compared with other nations (*millet*), we have the largest population and also are the longest lasting civilization which has been around for four thousand years. We have been on the same level of development as European and American nations (*milletler*). But the people of China (*Khitay khelqi*) formed factions based on family (*a'ile*) or tribe (*qebile*), and there was no spirit of a nation (*millet rohi*) or national consciousness (*milliy tuyghu*). As a result, although we are a people (*khelq*) of four hundred million, in reality we resemble a nation (*qawm*) which does not stick together, similarly to a handful of sand...' (VCT 5: 67-8)

Finally, another new national interest expressed by Eysa Yusuf and other contributors in *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* were Turkestani demands towards the KMT government. In other words, while acknowledging being part of China, early Turkic Muslim activists affiliated with the KMT also demanded that government fulfilled their legal obligations. In this way, references to Sun Yat-sen's ideology emphasize his embrace of autonomy and people's rule (VCT 5: 8). Another article states that throughout the first twenty-some years of existence of the ROC, central government was not in the least concerned about the plight of Xinjiang people and thus enabled exploitation by Yang Zengxin and Jin Shuren (VCT 5: 62). The *Voice of Chinese Turkestan* itself was seen as a means through which the Turkestani nation could address the government, which would then accommodate its demands and appeals, whereupon the nation would attain freedom (VCT 6: 43). Another passage points to

the necessity for the central administration to cultivate local Turkic leaders and reflect on their demands:

‘...If our leaders will believe government’s views and policies, the Turkestan problem will be quickly solved. Then there will be no need to force us into compliance as it is happening today. If the government will want to solve the Turkestan problem hastily and will not adopt this measure, then we will be obliged to say that the government is not concerned about peace in our land...’ (VCT 6: 44)

Throughout the 1930s, Eysa Yusuf and Mes’ud Sabiri became respected leaders of Turkestanian expatriate community in China proper. At the same time, they continued their activities under patronage of the Nanjing government and were able to substantially increase their status with the KMT. Their integration into power apparatus provided the central government with a means of justification of its Xinjiang policy as one rightfully based on local people’s demands. In early 1940, Sabiri was named to several important state administration posts, such as membership in the People’s Political Council or the State Council of the Republic of China, and became closely affiliated with the so-called Center Club Clique (or CC Clique), a wing of the KMT close to Chiang Kai-shek at the time. An important moment occurred when Eysa was commissioned by Chiang Kai-shek to carry out a diplomatic mission to the Near East to secure their support against Japan. During the way back in 1940, Eysa Yusuf visited Afghanistan where he met with the Xinjiang Turkic refugee community. An important exiled figure was also Muhemmed Imin Bughra, who had found asylum in Afghanistan since his flight after the ETIR’s collapse in 1934. After return to Chongqing, Eysa Yusuf persuaded the KMT that Bughra could be used to strengthen central government’s influence in Xinjiang. After Bughra left Afghanistan and had been detained in Peshawar by the British for alleged espionage for Japan, the KMT arranged for his release. Bughra arrived in Chongqing in 1943 and joined Mes’ud Sabiri and Eysa Yusuf in their nation work. Along with Eysa, he became one of the two leading activists and contributors of the periodicals published by the Altay publishing house (Benson 1991: 90, 92, 94; Lin 2011: 90). The triumvirate subsequently became known as the ‘Three Gentlemen’ (*Üch Ependi*).

The role of three Three Gentlemen increased after the central government gained control over Xinjiang in fall 1944. In the first step, the KMT appointed General Wu Zhongxin (吴忠信, 1884-1959) into the position of Xinjiang governor. Wu was a CC Clique member and, as the head of the central government’s sole ethnic policy drafting body, the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission (蒙藏委員會 *Měng-Zàng wěiyuán huì*, *Mongol-Tibet Idarisi*; the MTAC), had gained a reputation of a promoter of hard-line assimilationist ethnic policy. In Xinjiang, his insensitive measures immediately proved disastrous for the province. His efforts to institute firm KMT control over society, deployment of large number of troops and resettlement of Han migrants from China proper utterly alienated indigenous Turkic Muslims, while his economic policy sent Xinjiang financial system into collapse. Moreover, a rebellion has broken out simultaneously with the KMT’s arrival in northern Xinjiang with the consequence of provincial and central authorities again losing factual control over a significant part of Xinjiang territory. Wu was eventually replaced as provincial chairman by General Zhang Zhizhong (張治中, 1895-1969), who had been in the meantime entrusted with negotiating with the north Xinjiang rebels in September 1945. After his appointment, Zhang extensively consulted with the Three Gentlemen and eventually also brought them along to Urumchi in fall 1945. After a coalition government of the provincial and rebel parties was formed in 1946, the Three Gentlemen were appointed to high posts in the provincial administration – Mes’ud Sabiri became the Supervisory Commissioner directly responsible

directly to Nanjing, Muhemmed Imin Bughra was the Minister of Reconstruction and Eysa Yusuf a Minister without portfolio (Benson 1990: 70, 73; Forbes 196). Eventually, Sabiri even rose to the position of Xinjiang governor in 1947-9. Another prominent Uyghur figure who returned to Xinjiang with the KMT was Yolwas (Forbes 163-70, 190-4; Millward 2007: 213-9; Benson 1991: 91-93).

It has been rightfully remarked that Zhang Zhizhong is unique in Xinjiang's history because his performance was equally welcomed by all Xinjiang circles (Millward 2007: 217). He instituted a number of measures bent on improving the overall economic and political situation in Xinjiang, and also managed to establish a productive working relationship with the Ili rebels. He is also credited with a number of conciliatory measures in ethnic policy. His public acknowledgment of grave mistakes made by the KMT and suggestions that power in the province should be turned over to indigenous Turkic groups since these constitute 95 per cent of its population was indeed a bold and significant departure from Chiang Kai-shek's chauvinist theory and Wu Zhongxin's totalitarian practice (Forbes 200). In recognition of Sun Yat-sen's principle of autonomy, Zhang's government appointed a number of native leaders into high official posts throughout the province and commenced a series of affirmative policies towards non-Han ethnic groups, such as mother language education, publishing in local languages and governmental sponsoring of non-Han cultural societies (Forbes 201-204, Millward 2007: 220-1). These KMT policy breakthroughs were partially brought about by lobbying of the Three Gentlemen, whose rise of political status enabled them and their associates to articulate the demands of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims in a more systematic and emphatic way. At the same time, the wave of publishing in national languages enabled the Three Gentlemen and other nation workers to disseminate their ideas of Turkic nation and its interests among their fellow compatriots. Subsequent sections of this chapter demonstrate late republican Turkic discourse of nation and nationalism as articulated in writings of Mes'ud Sabiri, Muhemmed Imin Bughra and Polat Qadiri.

Writings of Mes'ud Sabiri

One source of research in Three Gentlemen's advocacy of Xinjiang Turkic Muslim demands and propagandizing Turkic nationalism is *Speech (Bir Nutuq)*; Sabiri 1947; Fig. 9), a short booklet containing speeches by Mes'ud Sabiri at the 8th KMT congress in 1941 in Chongqing as recorded by Eysa Yusuf. The text was put out in Urumchi by the Altay publishing house in cooperation with the TCA in Urumchi in 1947 during the surge in Turkic publishing after Mes'ud's rise to governorship. In fact, the publication of Sabiri's speeches some six years after the congress suggests that the issues addressed in the speeches retained their high relevancy for Turkic nationalists under KMT's administration. As stated on the cover of the book, the reason for publication is the historical need (*tarikhiy hajet*) to provide a record of events helpful to the 'struggle for liberation of our people' (*khelqimiz milliy azadliq üchün qilghan küresh*). Throughout the text, Mes'ud professes his and other refugee's devotion 'nation' (*ulus*), 'nationalism' (*uluschilik*) and 'homeland' (*yurt*; Sabiri 1947: 1). He calls his nation 'Turks' (*Türk, Türkistanli*), who are aware of Turkestan as of 'our land' (*bizim yérimiz*) and 'our homeland' (*bizim yurtimiz*; Sabiri 1947: 8, 12, 13). He openly denounces division of Turks into individual nationalities and also rejects Sheng's concept of fourteen ethnic groups of Xinjiang. According to Mes'ud, there are four 'nationalities' (*ulus*) currently inhabiting Xinjiang – the most numerous are Turks, followed by Hans, Mongols and Manchus. He also acknowledges Kazaks and Turkic refugees in China proper, India, Afghanistan and Arabia as integral part of the Turkic nation (Sabiri 1947: 14-7). From political point of view, the Turkic nationality is part of 'China' (*Chin, Khitay*), along with other four constituent

‘nationalities’ (*ulus*; i.e. Hans, Mongols, Manchus and Tibetans). The Han people are specifically called ‘fellow countrymen’ (*wetendash*), while Turkestan and Turks are viewed as important and responsible part of China because they inhabit a strategically important territory and contribute to war efforts (Sabiri 1947: 3, 19-20).

In relation to national interest, Mes’ud voiced several demands raised on behalf of Xinjiang Turks and ‘for the benefits of nationalities other than Hans’ (*Chindin bashqa uluslarning pa’idiliri üchün*; Sabiri 1947: 3). An elementary request was to change the name of Turkic nation and homeland in Chinese language. In politically correct KMT terminology of the time, Xinjiang Turkic Muslims were called ‘Hui’ (回). However, this category comprised all Muslims living in the territory of the ROC regardless of their ethnicity, lumping together several subaltern communities as diverse as Xinjiang Turkic Muslims, Chinese-speaking Tungans or Mongolian and Tibetan converts to Islam. On several occasions, Mes’ud pointed out that from academic point of view, the name Hui was not suitable as a national name and requested that Chinese rendering of the words ‘Turk’ (突厥人 *Tūjuérén*) and ‘Turkestan’ (突厥斯坦 *Tūjuésītǎn*) be used to call his nation and its homeland in Chinese language:

‘...One of our requests is for our name (*bizim adimiz*) not to be ‘Hui’. This term is an erroneous name use by the Chinese. Is ‘Hui’ supposed to be a name of a religion? If so, then it cannot be a name of a nation (*ulus*). If it is supposed to be a name of a nation (*ulus*) or tribe (*aymaq*), for instance coming from a corrupted form of the name ‘Uyghur’,⁷¹ then it is not to be used as a name of the religion of a particular nation or a particular tribe. For religion belongs to a multitude of people. For instance, to say ‘Uyghur religion’ or ‘people who believe in Uyghur religion’ sounds somewhat peculiar, because Uyghurs did not use to have a special religion of their own. That is to say, our people have a name and we ask to be called by this name...’ (Sabiri 1947: 5-6)

‘As for the Chinese calling us in Turkestan ‘Rag-Heads’ and later ‘Huihui,’ ‘Huijiao’ and ‘Huizu’: ‘Huizu’ means ‘Hui nationality’ (*millet*). ‘Huijiao’ means ‘people of Hui religion,’ as ‘jiao’ means ‘religion’. We do not know where the term ‘Huihui’ and ‘Huizu’ for us and the term ‘Huijiao’ for Islam came from. Anyway, the Muslims are thus called ‘Huijiao’. Some people say that the term ‘Huihui’ is a corrupted form of the word Uyghur. As Islam came to China mostly via Uyghurs, some people started calling Islam ‘Huijiao’, that is ‘Uyghur religion’. Thus calling us ‘Huijiao’ is the same like calling us ‘Uyghur’.⁷² (Sabiri 1947: 33-4)

Another important issue addressed by Mes’ud was the central government’s recognition of his nation’s existence. Until 1940s, interests of Turkic and Uyghur nation had been negotiated solely within the territory of Xinjiang, where the Turks formed an overwhelming majority of population. By Mes’ud and other’s alliance with the KMT and acknowledging that Turkic nation is part of China, suddenly a whole new political reality emerged for Xinjiang Turks – they became a minority nationality of China. Thus, struggle for acknowledgement by the overwhelming Han majority forming the ROC and its power structure became a matter of life and death for the Turkic nation and also the top priority of

⁷¹ This remark alludes to one possible interpretation of the origin of the term ‘Hui’ (回) as being a transcription of the name ‘Uyghur’ in Chinese characters – 回紇 (*Huǐhé*). This issue was previously addressed in Chapter 1.

⁷² Again, this passage alludes to the confusion of terms ‘Uyghur’, ‘Islam’ and ‘Hui’ that is mentioned in Chapter 1. Here, the author also voices disagreement with being labeled ‘Uyghur’.

Turkic nationalist negotiation with the state. Therefore, Mes'ud specifically requested that the Turks are recognized on equal terms with Mongols and Tibetans (Sabiri 1947: 3-4). The lack of systematization, transparency and budget in central government's 'nationality policy' (*ulus siyaseti*) vis-à-vis Xinjiang Turks should be rectified by placing Turkestanian affairs under the jurisdiction of the MTAC or by creating a special department that would be in charge solely of Turkic affairs (Sabiri 1947: 26-7). Naturally, preserving bare existence in the face of Han majority was a fatal issue for all other non-Han nationalities and translated into various level of political practice. For instance, despite their excellent knowledge of Chinese, all Turkic, Mongol and Tibetan delegates to the party congress were deliberately conducting their part of communication with Han delegates in their native languages through interpreters (Sabiri 1947: 6, 10, 12, 41-2). Indeed, Mes'ud spoke out boldly about the issue of recognition:

'...Central government must acknowledge and endorse the existence and status of all nationalities in China. Since long ago, the words that we are all one nation (*ulus*) and one blood (*qan*), which we kept hearing, have terrified us and made us wonder. If the central government would want to add other nationalities to the Hans and thus turn them into Han, that would be a big loss. If our small nationality is added to the Hans, how much bigger will the Han nation (*Khitay ulusi*) become? How much benefit will you gain? Maybe this step would even grow detrimental, rather than beneficial. Today, the government of China is telling the world: "We are democrats and are struggling for democracy." But regardless if imperialism is white or blue, it always oppresses minority nationalities (*azchiliq uluslar*), or is even trying to annihilate and wipe them out. Is it not so? If, in contrast to its own words, China makes us disappear, no one will believe the above words and no one will stand by the Hans...' (Sabiri 1947: 23-5)

Mes'ud further pressured for promotion of Turkic language publishing and education, arguing that learning Chinese language was not as natural and easy for Turkic Muslims as learning for example English or French. Again, he justified this appeal to the Han-dominated KMT by pointing that Turkic national identity was distinct from that of the Han:

'...Having heard this, you might feel offended. It is right for you to ask: "Why do you not learn, or are not able to learn, something that we can learn?" The uniqueness of Chinese script and language is related to your own abilities (*qabiliyet*) and blood (*qan*); it is also related to atavism and history. But for us it is somewhat alien. Our education should not be in Chinese script and language, but in our own script and language. In this way, education will be simpler and faster for us. This principle should be recognized and enforced from this day, and textbooks in minority nationality languages should be designed...' (Sabiri 1947: 29-30)

Mes'ud also openly criticized mismanagement of Turkestan and suggested numerous improvements in the KMT's policy. He called for allowing the region's autonomy in accordance with the state legislature and the official KMT codex, the Three People's Principles. On objections to difficult wartime situation, he asserted that yielding to demands in ethnic policy facilitates 'unity and cooperation of all nationalities' (*pütün uluslirining birlik we yardemi*) and thus is beneficial for the whole country (Sabiri 1947: 20, 23, 36-7). Along this line, Sabiri also demanded direct political representation of Turks in the central government, for central ethnic policy drafting agencies to be headed by ethnic minorities, for the budget on education of minority education to be increased and for state to carry out a responsible minority policy (Sabiri 1947: 25-9).

Naturally, Mes'ud statements were not welcomed by some Han KMT delegates. Notably, the chairman of the MTAC Wu Zhongxin reacted by stating that the rights of 'frontier people' (*chégarali*) are stipulated in the legislature of the ROC, which is being fully implemented. He also denounced minority people's requests as endless, saying that if they are given something, they immediately ask for more. While asking for high posts, the minorities do not realize that their knowledge does not suffice for such responsibilities. Moreover, Wu insinuated that minority people are not willing to be educated. He also ignored Mes'ud's calls for rectification of the Chinese term for Turks and continued to use the term 'Hui jiaotu' ('Islam believer'; Sabiri 1947: 38-9). Wu's disrespectful reaction incurred a passionate retort by Mes'ud:

'...Mr. Wu said that frontier people lack knowledge. Fine. But at the same time, who is responsible for us lacking knowledge? Who has put us into this bitter condition? Who has not educated us and not enabled us to be educated? Does Mr. Wu know? It is not that we did not study. We wanted to study, and established our own schools. But you have not let us study and closed our schools down.⁷³ When we want to study, our children, who are still feeding on the milk of their mothers, endured great hardships, traveled over long distances and high mountains to inner China – is this an unwillingness to be educated? And even today, the education problem of these people is still not solved. It is not that we do not want to be educated. We do not want to be educated in Chinese, because the language is difficult for us. If you claim us to be unwilling to be educated without looking into the reason, this is a slander to us. I do not know how frontier issues can be solved, when a person who is the head of frontier affairs administration holds views which are hostile to frontier people...'

(Sabiri 1947: 40-1)

At the close of the KMT congress, Mes'ud submitted a typed rebuttal in Chinese to Wu and 300 other delegates. In it, he declared that equality of nationalities in China was merely formal, as were the state ethnic policy agencies. True equality meant equality in ethnic, political, economic and cultural affairs, as well as in the use of respective languages and scripts. Education level of frontier peoples was low, because administration had not only not promoted it, but had even obstructed it. Thus, the authorities should be blamed for it. The deprivation in skills and education of Turkestanis should be the reason for more concern by the authorities, and not for accusations of excessive requests. The harsh feelings existing among Turkic population towards the corrupt Chinese administration should be countered by the central government by policy improvements and facilitation of progress in the province. Mes'ud further argued that in case the appeals of Turkic Muslims would not be addressed, their bitterness and harsh feelings would not go away. He even demonstrated Wu's incompetency for functioning as an ethnic policy administrator by showing his inadequate expertise in Xinjiang ethnic affairs (Sabiri 1947: 41-51). In this way, *Speech* illustrates well the major national interests the Three Gentlemen and similarly minded activists sought to represent in their interaction, and often confrontation, with the KMT administration.

Another text that lays out Mes'ud's ideas on Turkic identity and nationalism is his short essay *Awareness of Being a Turk* (*Türklük Oranı*; Sabiri 1948). Here, Mes'ud stressed the importance of 'national consciousness' (*ulusal ang*), 'feeling' (*tuyghu*) and 'awareness' (*oran*) of his 'fellow nationals' (*ulusdash*), as well as the 'future of Turkicness' (*Türklükning kélecheki*). The relatively new concept of Turkic national consciousness emerged only after Turks 'awakened for their exanimate sleep' (*tuyghusiz uyqudin oyghandiler*; Sabiri 1948: 1-2).

⁷³ Sabiri refers here to obstructions to modern education during Yang Zengxin's and Jin Shuren's administration.

According to Mes'ud, national feeling of 'noble Turkicness' (*ulugh Türklük*) facilitates peaceful coexistence of all Turks and also transcends their ephemeral individual lives. In other words, national values stand higher than individual values and personal lives (Sabiri 1948: 3-4). Mes'ud also notes that all nations have a national feeling. The Slavic nations in their pan-Slavist movement in Europe, today's 'Chinese state' (*Chin döli*) in Three People's Principles, Greeks in the form of their national movement (which is actually anti-Turkic), Hungarians, Serbs, Romanians, Germans, Italians and other nations have all awakened and formed national feeling from 'tribes' (*aymaq*) and 'clans' (*awul*). 'Each nation, be it small or large, has national feeling (*ulusal orani*). A nation without national feeling is nothing but a herd of animals.' (Sabiri 1948: 6-8)

To explain Turkic 'nationness' (*uluschilik*), or the sense of belonging to a nation, Mes'ud clarified the important concepts of nation, religion and state. The most prominent criterion of Turkic nationness was language. 'All people speaking Turkic (*Türkche*) are Turkic nation (*Türk ulusi*), Turks. That is to say – the terms 'nation' and 'being a nation' (*uluschilik*) point to a land (*el*), or a very large group (*türküm*) with a unified language. All those people, who speak Turkic in Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Turkestan, Kashgar, China, Manchuria, Caucasus, Crimea, Russia, all of them are 'of our nation' (*bizim ulusimizdin*) and are Turks.' Turks also share Islam as their common religion, which is, however, practiced also by other, non-Turkic nations. The homeland of Turkic nation, in other words the territory currently inhabited by nationalities speaking Turkic languages, is by Mes'ud called Turan. Thus, Xinjiang Turkic Muslims are 'Turks of eastern Turkic homeland (*doghu Türk yurti Türkler*), that is Turks of eastern Turkestan (*doghu Türkistan Türkliri*). We are of the same nation (*ulusdash*) as Turks from other places on earth, for instance Anatolia or Crimea. We share national affairs (*ulusal ishlar*) with all other people of our nation, we feel the same sorrow and the same pride' (Sabiri 1948: 8-10). The state, however, unites people of different language, religion and nationness on one territory (*tupraq*) or region (*ölke*) and under one flag (*bayraq*). The Turks of eastern Turkestan belong under the state of China, and all their state affairs are governed by its constitution and legislature. 'So we are of the same nation as Anatolian Turks, of the same religion as Arabs and of the same state as the Chinese.' (Sabiri 1948: 11)

Mes'ud illustrated the birth of national feeling on the case of Turkey. In his schematized narrative, he employed the usual nationalist argument of a nation forgetting its nationness (mentioned in Chapter 3 the case of Muhemmed Imin Bughra's *History of East Turkestan*) – after the Turks had lost their ancient national consciousness, they started calling themselves Ottomans. But this was not a name of a nation, but of a state. Subsequently, the national feeling was engendered by national movement and also by modern schools which disseminated the concept of nation, national consciousness and 'national obligation' (*ulusal wezipe*). Along with national awakening, there appeared also political national movement. Nowadays, national feeling must be fostered by one's love for mother language. This was the problem of Ottoman Turks, who did not treasure their own language, started using a lot of Persisms and Arabisms and ceased to understand ancient Turkic writing. After national awakening, the beauty of national language was understood again and all the foreign words were purged. From then on, people who have national feeling write in beautiful and easily comprehensible Turkic script. Turkic language is the most significant value of a nation and must be used in literature. 'Language is a spiritual homeland of a nation. If one does not work hard toward preserving its spiritual homeland, it, just like its physical homeland, will not survive.' An equally important way to cultivate national feeling is love for homeland. Each person has two homelands. One is the state that he lives in, while the other one is Turan, the

‘national homeland’ (*ulusal yurt*) of Turks. Regardless of under which state’s administration the respective parts of currently Turan are, they are still Turan and belong to Turks (Sabiri 1948: 16-24).

According to Mes’ud, all the Turks of the world are bound to each other by mutual obligations based on their belonging to the same nation. ‘*One who knows of and acknowledges his national consciousness, where ever on earth there is a Turk, he recognizes him as a Turk and loves him in the same way as he loves himself. This is what it means to love Turks, to love Turkicness and to love one hundred million Turks as oneself.*’ Every Turk has numerous obligations to his nation, namely to become educated and wealthy, to oppose those who stand against Turkism, to uphold the good reputation of Turks, to speak well of Turkicness etc. Turkic children become nation-lovers (*ulussewer*) by speaking the beautiful Turkic language and writing Turkic vernacular. Thus, to love and protect nation and national feeling is to protect oneself, and vice versa. In this way, the nation unites, progresses and is not enslaved by other nations. ‘*Rejuvenated and enriched nation (janlanghan zenginleshken ulus) nation will come to sense its national consciousness by itself (ulusal tuyghusini özidin özi tuyar) and to acquire its identity by itself (oranni özidin özi tapar).* Such are the national consciousness and identity.’ (Sabiri 1948: 25-9)

Thus, the contents of *Awareness of Being a Turk* reveal Mes’ud’s formidable inspiration by Turkish modernism and pan-Turkic nationalism acquired during his lengthy stay in Turkey. Understandably, the language of the essay, and to a certain degree also of *Speech*, is replete with expressions and grammar structures loaned from Ottoman and modern Turkish. As the meaning of this slightly artificial language would be hardly comprehensible to less educated Xinjiang Turkic readers, it is explained in Xinjiang Turkic in the form of footnotes or parenthetical references throughout the text. Mes’ud clearly considered all Turkic languages to be rather dialects of one language than separate tongues. What is entirely new in *Awareness of Being a Turk* is the fact that the text contains few references to socio-political context of China, focusing instead on trends in Turkic milieu. Although the close relation of Xinjiang Turks to other Turkic nationalities had been previously referred to by Xinjiang Turkic cultural agitators and nationalist activists, this pan-Turkic bond was never the basis or argument of their writings. For instance, despite the fact that *Independence* and *Life of East Turkestan* of the 1930s cultivated Turkic identity of their readership, they were not engendered with the aim of fostering a sense of shared pan-Turkic identity of Turkic nations. They dealt solely with Xinjiang issues and were written in a locally comprehensible vernacular. In contrast, Mes’ud Sabiri’s *Awareness of Being a Turk* stands out in writings of early modern Xinjiang Turkic Muslim intellectuals as an eloquent manifesto of cultural pan-Turkism.

Writings of Muhemmed Imin Bughra

Another illustrative exhibit of how intensely the Three Gentlemen contended for the recognition and autonomy of the Turkestanian nation is the discussion about ethnic identity of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims between KMT historian Li Dongfang and Turkic nationalist politician Muhemmed Imin Bughra, which occurred in the form of articles written in Chinese and published in *Central Daily News* (中央日報 *Zhōngyāng rìbào*), a KMT flagship newspaper aiming at general public, in 1944-5. The argument has been previously researched and publicized by Linda Benson, who based her research on reading Chinese versions of the articles that were reprinted in the *Altay* magazine (Benson 1991: 96-98). The very fact that the articles were reproduced in *Altay*, the main Chinese-language forum of Turkic nation workers

targeted at Han readership, points to the importance Turkic Muslim nationalist activists attached to the argument. Interestingly, its significance was further underscored several years later, when the whole dispute was reprinted once again by the Urumchi branch of the Altay publishing house in 1948. This time, all the articles of the exchange were published in Turkic in a single volume called *War of Pens over Homeland and Nation (Yurt we Millet Heqqide Qelem Kürishi*; Bughra 1948) with an articulate subtitle: ‘*This war of pens waged with Chinese historian Li Dongfang over history and name of our homeland and nation reveals the rightfulness of our national struggle (milliy dewayimiz) and shows a fine victory of Turkestani nationalism (Turkistan milletchilik).*’ Its preface declares the author’s and publisher’s devotion to the struggle for ‘dear homeland’ (*eziz weten*), for ‘great nation’ (*ulugh millet*) and for Turkicness and being Turkestani by all means necessary, while the purpose of the publication is stated as the need to commemorate such struggle (Bughra 1948: i-iii). Thus, the text is yet another exhibit of the Turkic nationalist activists’ efforts to strengthen the sense of Turkic identity among Xinjiang Turkic Muslims in the face of becoming a minority nationality in KMT China. At the same time, the re-publication of the article series and intended dissemination among nationally minded Xinjiang Turkic public reveals that the issues addressed by Bughra held strong social appeal.

Importantly for this research, the *War of Pens over Homeland and Nation* republished an important prelude to Li’s and Bughra’s dispute, which had not been publicized by Benson – a list of demands for Constitution amendments as raised by the Turkestani Compatriot Association (TCA). After the central government invited suggestions for constitution draft amendments in early 1944, the TCA held a two-day convention in Chongqing which agreed on several demands of Xinjiang Turks. These were submitted to the government in April 1944 and publicized in October 1944 in another important paper close to the KMT, the *Ta Kung Pao* (大公報 *Dàgōng bào*, sometimes translated as *Impartial Daily*).⁷⁴ Again, the first request raised by the TCA was that the population of Turkestan should be called ‘Turkestani’ instead of the incorrect name ‘Hui’:

‘...When Dr. Sun Yat-sen waged revolution, he formulated a theory according to which the China people’s state (*Chin khelq döli*) consists of five nationalities and that these nationalities are equal (*musawiy, teng*). The five nationalities are the Han (*Chin*), Manchus (*Manchu*), Mongols (*Monghol*), Muslim Turks (*Musulman Türk*) and Tibetans (*Tibet*). Also, Dr. Sun Yat-sen in his first speech on nationalism (*milliy meslek*), one of his Three People’ Principles, said that “there are more than one million Islamic Turks appended to China (*Chingha qoshulghan*).” These are Muslim Turks and population of Turkestan and thus the words correspond well with the truth. Even though the population of Turkestan was later divided into Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis, Uzbeks, Tatars and Tajiks, all these seven names are tribal names (*aymaq ati*). By no means they are nationality names (*ulus ati*). Nationality (*millet*), language, religion, customs and traditions of these seven tribes is the same; they are not at all separate. All belong solely to one nationality, and this nationality is Turkic nationality (*Türk ulusi*). The term ‘Hui nationality’ (*Hui ulusi*), which came to be customarily used (that is to say, customarily used in China), does not designate any of the tribes in Turkestan. These are scientific and historical reasons reflecting the truth, for which the population of Turkestan should be called Turks...’ (Bughra 1948: 3-4)

⁷⁴ The Hong Kong branch of this newspaper continues to publish this paper until today, its title in English being *Takung Pao* and contents being close to the Communist Party of China’s official stance.

Similarly, the TCA argued for abandonment of the term Xinjiang and its replacement by the name Turkestan in Chinese:

‘...The word “Xinjiang” is a name that emerged due to violent and brutal Manchu administration. It does not at all suit the special ethnic, geographic, social and economic context of Turkestan province. Turkestan is a place (*yurt*) that has since historical times been called by the name “Turkestan”. In Turkic and Persian, “-stan” means “*place*”. If the use of the word “Turkestan” instead of the word “Xinjiang” should become too difficult (that is to say, too difficult to pronounce in Chinese), the word “Tujuesitan”⁷⁵ can be also used as a name in Chinese...’ (Bughra 1948: 5-6)

Again, Turkestanis voiced their strong concerns about the concept of the ‘Chinese nation’ that was being advocated by the KMT ideology. It is clear that in their minds the absence of their recognition by the government as a distinct nationality automatically led to lack of political rights stipulated by the ROC legislature and Sun Yat-sen’s ideology:

‘...In the draft of the constitution, there is the term “China state nationality” (*Chin dölet milliti*).⁷⁶ We have wondered about the meaning of this word for a long time, but have not understood it. We are actually distressed by it and suspicious of it. If we endorse the principle of permanent life and existence of smaller nationalities within the state, then the term ‘China state nationality’ is unsuitable. To make Turks an example, they are one of the separate components of the government of China, and not a single part of some China state nationality. So we have not understood the meaning of the term “China state nationality”. Premier Dr. Sun Yat-sen has in his Three People’s Principles written that a nation exists on a condition of common blood, mode of life, language, religion and culture. Turkic nationality possesses all these five necessary characteristics. There is no reason why the Turks should not associate on equal terms and have the same rights as other nationalities constituting China...’ (Bughra 1948: 6-7)

Arguing that assisting small and weak nationalities to attain self-rule was one of the basic principles of state and party legislature, the TCA further demanded institution of full ‘autonomy’ (*mukhtariyet*) for the Turkestanis. Another important demand was implementation of complete ‘equality’ (*baraberlik*) of political, economic, education, cultural, religious, social, language, writing and other rights of all nationalities of China, which was firmly articulated by the Three People’s Principles. The TCA also demanded use of all China’s nationalities’ writing systems on state currency and stamps, protection of religious worship, increase of number of Turkestani delegates to state organs in order to reflect the larger population ratio in comparison with Mongols and Tibetans and use of Turkic language in Turkestani administration, in state examinations, education, publishing and other areas of Turkestani public life (Bughra 1948: 3-15).

The TCA’s outspoken demands incurred an intense debate between Li Dongfang and Muhemmed Imin Bughra. The Chinese version of this discussion has already been researched and briefly publicized by Benson. However, as her article centers on a different subject than this dissertation, it is useful here to summarize the sections of Li’s and Bughra’s dispute related to Turkic intellectual ideas of nation and nationalism. According to the Turkic edition, in October 1944 *Central Daily News* published Li’s article *Are Xinjiang People Turks? (Shinjangliqlar Türkmü?)*. The article presented a combination of more or less erroneous

⁷⁵ Bughra does not offer particular Chinese characters to transcribe the term into Chinese.

⁷⁶ The term refers to the concept of ‘nation of China’.

claims that the population of Xinjiang was not of Turkic origin, and of hard-line KMT-style argumentation dismissive of Xinjiang Turkic demands. Some of Li's interesting assertions were for instance that so-called Turkic people of Xinjiang could not be of Turkic origin because ancient Uyghurs had been allies of the Tang dynasty (618-907), because Kyrgyz were enemies of ancient Uyghurs, because Kazaks were related to Cossacks of Russia, because Uzbeks originated from Central Asia that had been a dominion of China and because Tatars were descendants of Chinggis Khan who mixed with white race in the territory of today's Georgia. Li concluded by saying that although he had a strong personal liking for Xinjiang people, he strongly discouraged them from imitating small nations of Central Europe and the Balkans in from demanding separation and autonomy. Such demands would be in conflict with the ethnic, language and religious unity of the Chinese nation and could lead to its fragmentation. Li did agree that the term Xinjiang (En. 'New Dominion') was unsuitable for the region. However, given Xinjiang's long historical integration into China, he argued that the name should be altered to *Gujiang* ('Old Dominion'), *Xijiang* ('Western Dominion') or *Tianshan* (Bughra 1948: 16-21).

Not surprisingly, Li's contemptuous article provoked a heated retort by Muhemmed Imin Bughra published in *Central Daily News* in November 1944. Wryly questioning Li's expertise and citing works of Western Turkologists Vilhelm Thomsen (1842-1927), Arminius Vámbéry (1832-1913), Vasiliy Radlov (1837-1918), Vasiliy Bartol'd (1969-1930) and Edward Denisson Ross (1971-1941), Bughra acerbically refuted Li's views on ethnicity of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims and stressed their common Turkic origin. In a way no less politicized than Li's argumentation, Bughra interestingly claimed that Xinjiang's Tajiks were a people of Turkic origin who had migrated from Kashgar and Yarkend into the Tashqurghan region and started speaking a mixture of Turkic, Afghan, Persian and Hindi; moreover, they call themselves Wakhi, not Tajiks. Bughra further argued that should the differences between individual Turkic peoples in Xinjiang mean that they are different nationalities, then one would analogously have to designate the population of China proper as several distinct nationalities. Therefore, differences in language do not necessarily constitute distinct nationality. Bughra also argued that politics should respect scientific conclusions. Moreover, it was Sun Yat-sen himself who stated that Muslims of Xinjiang are Turkic.

As for Li's reaction to the TCA's political demands, Bughra again referred to the ROC state legislature and the Three People's Principles as the 'highest state-founding ideal' (*eng yüksek devlet qurush ghayesi*) that guaranteed equality of China's nationalities. He suggested that Li read these texts again and only then lectured Turkestani people about elementary state laws. Whereas the peoples of Central Europe and the Balkans strived for independence, Turkestanis have never demanded independence from China. Instead, they were requesting autonomy, which was moreover guaranteed by the state legislature. Bughra reasoned that by comparing these demands to separatism, Li sought to defame Turkestani 'autonomy movement' (*mukhtariyet hérikiti*), which in fact was a denigration of Turkestanis as one of the state-founding nationalities. Bughra suggested that if the government abandoned the principle of nationalism, the state ideology should either be renamed to 'Two People's Principles' (二民主義 *Èrmín zhūyì*) and all other legal provisions should be also discarded. He consented to Li's claim that territorial integrity was the most important aspect of a country's existence. However, it was only by enforcing autonomy to all regions that a state's territorial integrity could be preserved, and therefore it was necessary for the state to institute it. As for the name Xinjiang, Bughra repeated that the term was associated with brutality and oppression, and therefore it could not be used by a 'democracy and people's government' (*démocrasi – khelq hökümiti*). He concluded by sarcastically refusing Li's proposals at renaming the province and

stating his hope for Li's admission of Turkic origins of Turkestanian people (Bughra 1948: 22-36).

Li Dongfang reiterated by another article published in *Central Daily News* in November in 1944, in which he again presented several arguments why Xinjiang Muslims were not of Turkic origin. Besides a number of scientifically hardly sustainable views he also pointed out that during several Urumchi congresses, delegates elected by the people of Xinjiang had agreed to call the region's population by the names of fourteen nationalities, of which none, however, was called 'Turkic'. Moreover, the issue of ethnicity of Xinjiang population was yet to be thoroughly researched and thus could not be addressed in the new ROC constitution. He again argued that demands for autonomy could lead to fragmentation of a country, just like in the case of Czechoslovakia, where Henlein's⁷⁷ requests for German autonomy evolved into secession of Sudetenland, the Moravians and the Poles. Therefore, Li's posited, there had to be a centralized authority: '*All our brothers (qérindash) must with all their strength stand on the side of central government and reinforce the unity of the Chinese nation (Chin milliti). For this reason, it is necessary to abstain from all senseless affairs that could become a reason for secession.*' (Bughra 1948: 37-9)

Bughra retorted by yet an even more biting article, in which he insisted on his previous views and supported TCA's demands of constitutional amendments. He again challenged Li's knowledge and urged him to stop comparing Turkestanians to traitors such as Henlein. Stating that Turkestanians love their government as much as their homeland and nation, Bughra reminded Li that Turkestanian politicians came voluntarily to assist China's government and that China's government delightedly accepted their offer of help. Now, Turkestanians had raised their demands in the same way as other nationalities raised their demands. Turkestan was an important frontier region, and that was precisely the reason why good policy in accordance with republican principles must be enforced there. Otherwise, the region would not be peaceful, and that would prove disastrous for China. Bughra also denounced Urumchi nationality congresses as assembled by force. Moreover, the fact that the Turkic nationalities of Xinjiang were called Uyghur, Kazak, Kyrgyz, Taranchi, Uzbek, Tatar and Tajik did not prove that they are not Turks. Indeed, they were 'Turkic descendants' (*Türk oruqliri*). Once again, Bughra underlined that by asking to be called by their own name, Turkestanian people were not seeking secession. He remarked that whoever is afraid of granting such a petty demand was a very terrified person. Throughout the world, all subjugated nations were called by their own name. Stressing again that politics must yield to science, Bughra posited that, unlike prevalent terminology such as Hui or Rag-Head, the term Turk is scientifically correct and the name 'Chinese Turkestan' or 'East Turkestan' is politically correct. Bughra concluded his reply by a summary of the argument: '*Finally, let me summarize for Mr. Li: Turkic nation is a nation (millet). It is not a clan (awul) or a tribe (aymaq). Turks are the autochthonous people of Turkestan.*' (Bughra 1948: 50-66) In sum, similarly to account of Mes'ud's speeches and activities at the KMT congress in 1941, the intense debate between Bughra and Li excellently illustrates that recognition of Turkestanians' existence as a full-fledged nationality of China was a top goal of national movement staged by the KMT-affiliated Turkic nation workers, and indeed one that was not easy to defend in confrontation with the strongly politicized KMT's ethnic theory and practice.

⁷⁷ Konrad Henlein (1898-1945) was a leader of Czechoslovakian German minority prior to World War II., whose activities contributed to separation of large border regions of Czechoslovakia by the Munich Agreement of 1938.

Writings of Polat Qadiri Turfani

Another late republican intellectual engaged in formulating ideas similar to those of the Three Gentlemen was Polat Qadiri Turfani (1919-1970). Born in Qutubi near Urumchi, he graduated with honors from Urumchi pedagogical institute and later became the editor of the Turkic version of the main provincial newspaper, the *Xinjiang Daily* (*Xinjiang Géziti*), working closely with the Three Gentlemen. Some of his ideas of Turkic nation and nationalism are revealed by examination of two of his texts. Firstly, the undated essay *Slogan of Freedom* (*Erk Shoari*; Qadiri undated), which was published by the Altay publishing house in Urumchi probably in 1947 or early 1948, is an explanation of several political principles upheld by the late republican Turkic nationalists in their actions and writings. The principle of freedom consisted of six component tenets expressed by the slogan 'We are democrats, we are nationalists, we are humanists; our race is Turkic, our religion is Islam, our homeland is Turkestan' (*Biz khelqchimiz, biz milletchimiz, biz insaniyetchimiz; erqimiz Türükdur, dinimiz Islamdur, yurtimiz Türkistandur*). This motto was printed in the mast of the daily *Freedom* (*Erk*; F), one of the Turkic nationalist publications commenced during Mes'ud Sabiri's appointment as Xinjiang governor in 1947-9. Apart from this slogan, the mast of *Freedom* also featured the slogan 'Unity in language, work and opinion' (*Tilde, ishte, pikirde birlik*) and description as a 'political, economic, social, scientific, discussion and literary newspaper' (*siyasiy, ikhtisadiy, ijtimaiy, ilmiy, pikiriy we edebiy ghézitedur*; F 83), which was again a reference to Jadidist principles embraced by Xinjiang Turkic nationalist periodicals in the 1930s.⁷⁸ Qadiri further stated that contrary to some people's explanations, which interpret this slogan as a manifest sign of 'narrow nationalism' (*tar milletchilik*), 'pan-Turkism' (*pan-Türkistliq*), 'pan-Islamism' (*pan-Islamliq*) or 'as having other political motivations' (*bashqa bir siyasiy mekshset bar*), the above fundamentals of freedom regard the 'state interest' (*dölet menpe'iti*) and 'interest of our nation' (*millitimizning menpe'iti*) as one (Qadiri undated: 1-2).

In Qadiri's words, the embrace of democracy referred to the fact that Xinjiang Turkic Muslims were prevented by past administrations from having a democratic government promoting progress and development. Indeed, people had been slaves of the government in the past. 'Therefore, as democracy is now the most important thing for our people, and as democracy is also the highest goal to which the world is headed, the slogan of freedom has come to being.' In this day, democracy was realized and people were able to decide their future by the means of election. Qadiri explicitly associated democracy with light. Should in future democracy disappear, 'the future prospects of our homeland would become dark' (*yurtimizning istiqbali qaranghulishidu*). In explanation of the principle of nationalism, Qadiri referred to Sun Yat-sen's expression that 'nationalism is a treasure which saves the nation' (*milletchilik milletni qutquzidighan gewher*). Therefore, Sun made nationalism the 'basis' (*asas*) of a movement aimed 'to revive own nation' (*öz millitini tirildürmek*). Nationalism and fulfilling 'national interest' (*milliy menpe'et*) was the source of development and well-being of all nations, for instance the progress of England or China's victory over Japan. Previous administrations of Turkestan had not allowed for Turkestani 'national spirit' (*milliy roh*) and nationalism to come about; Sheng Shicai had even wanted to extirpate nationalism altogether. Nationalism is truly the most necessary thing for saving a nation. Importantly, one nation's nationalism must be realized on the basis of respecting the interests of other nations. Qadiri called this principle internationalism. On personal level, he referred to the need to perceive

⁷⁸ The allusion to Gaspirali's *Interpreter* flaunted by Xinjiang Turkic nationalists in the mast of *Freedom* is also remarkable from the point of view of history of Jadidism – it signified that Jadidist ideas were still alive sixty-five years after their birth and some thirty years after the original initiative had been terminated by the Soviets.

other beings as humans and respect their interests as humanism (*insaniyetchilik*; Qadiri undated: 3-11).

In explanation of the slogan ‘our race is Turkic’, Qadiri denounced the terms ‘Hui’ and ‘Uyghur’ as incorrect names of Turkic nation that had been instituted by previous flawed administrations:

‘...We are a nation that has been coerced to forget its own nation, and so we do not know to which race we belong. We do not even know the name of our race. Up to this period, we have been caused to think of ourselves as of Rag-Head nation (*Chantou milliti*), as of Muslim nation (*Musulman milliti*) and as of Uyghur nation (*Uyghur milliti*). But these are not names of our nation. The name of our nation is Turk. Rag-Head is a name given to us by the Chinese. In the world, there is no such nation as ‘Musulman’ – it is a name of religion, not of a nation. Uyghur is also not a name of a nation; it is a name of a tribe (*aymaq*). In his era, in order to alienate us from each other, Sheng Shicai divided us into Uyghur nationality, Kazak nationality, Uzbek nationality, Taranchi nationality and several other nationalities. The Turkic race, into which we belong, includes Kazaks, Tatars, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis, Tajiks, Turkmens, Uyghurs and other tribes, totaling over thirty. They have the same language, blood and history. Most of them live in East Turkestan, where we are now living, in Central Asia, which is now under Soviet jurisdiction, in Iran, Afghanistan and Turkey. As for the Turks who are living in our homeland, they are a part of the Turks living throughout the world. That is to say that since the beginning of history, we have been Turks and will go on living with our Turkicness until the end...’ (Qadiri undated: 12-3)

Further, Qadiri specifically stressed that the slogan ‘Our race is Turkic’ was not a manifestation of politically oriented pan-Turkism aiming at unification of all Turks in a single state following the model of Attila the Hun or Oghuz Khan. Pan-Turkism had failed in the Soviet Union, where its influence vanished in mid-1930s. The only independent Turkic country was at the moment Turkey, which was, however, too weak to liberate other Turkic nations and too busy trying to protect itself from the Soviet Union. Qadiri opined that given the negative connotations the word pan-Turkism currently evoked, for Xinjiang Turks to pursue pan-Turkism would actually be detrimental. Thus, the purpose of the pan-Turkist creed was solely to explain to which race Turkestanian people belong. The same was true for the slogan ‘Our religion is Islam’. As it is was not possible to unite all the Muslims in the world, the concept merely sought to protect and revive religion, to introduce Islamic rules to the people, to support nation’s religious leaders and not to let religion become a weapon against the nation.

Finally, Qadiri stated that the principle ‘Our homeland is Turkestan’ sought to remind to the nation the true name of its homeland. Since the nation was Turkic, its homeland was called Turkestan. Contrary to some people’s claims, the name ‘Turkestan’ was not newly invented or imposed after the ‘Ili rebellion’ (*Ili qozghilish*); it has been in use for several thousand years. Geographically, the area of Turkestan was extensive and comprised western Turkestan, eastern Turkestan and southern Turkestan. Therefore, it was correct to call the homeland of Xinjiang Turks ‘Eastern Turkestan’. Politically, the western part of Turkestan was under the administration of Russia, and so it was called ‘Russian Turkestan’. The eastern part was under the administration of China, so it was labeled ‘Chinese Turkestan’. Thus, the slogan ‘Our homeland is Turkestan’ sought to initiate the practice of calling a place inhabited by Turks Turkestan, as well as to promote the knowledge that Turkestan had been the original name of the region and that in future Turkestan would also remain the name of Turks’

homeland (Qadiri undated: 13-20). Ideology of Qadiri's *Slogan of Freedom* thus resembles Mes'ud's *Awareness of Being a Turk* in its accented popularization of cultural pan-Turkism.

Polat Qadiri is also the author of the important work *Provincial History* (*Ölke Tarikhi*; Qadiri 1948), published in 1948 by the Urumchi branch of *Altay*. In the preface, Qadiri commented that he based his 'short history of the homeland' (*qisqiche yurt tarikhi*) on reading Muhemmed Imin Bughra's *History of East Turkestan* (analyzed in Chapter 3), as well as on sources assembled by Eysa Beg about insurgency in the 1930s and various other sources on the latest affairs. *Provincial History* was the first modern history of the region which was written by a Turkic intellectual, published by a governmental agency and intended for mass Xinjiang Turkic readership. For this purpose, *Provincial History* (similarly to *Slogan of Freedom*) was written in an easily understandable vernacular and printed in almost fully phonetic modified Arabic script. As regards contents, the text concentrated on factual depiction of actions rather than on propagandizing ideology or offering evaluations of particular historical events or figures. Already the first sentence of the text revealed the idea that appeared on other texts by late republican Turkic activists: that Xinjiang Turkic Muslims' homeland was politically a part of China while culturally and historically it belonged to Turko-Islamic milieu:

'...Our homeland (*yurtimiz*), or our province (*ölkimiz*), is located in the northwestern part of the territory of China (*Zhongguo topraqi*) and in the center of Asian continent (*Asiya qit'esining ortasida*). It is bordered in the west by western Turkestan, in the north by Outer Mongolia, in the east by Gansu and in the south by the Pamirs. The name of our homeland used by the state is "Xinjiang", while its historical national name (*tarikhiy milliy ismi*) is East Turkestan...' (Qadiri 1948: 4)

Similarly to Bughra's *History of East Turkestan*, Qadiri's *Provincial History* then narrated the history of the region to which it retroactively applies the name East Turkestan. Qadiri claimed that Central Asia was the cradle of human civilization from which various Turkic tribes migrated and spread culture and progress to all surrounding areas. He mentioned ancient Uyghurs, one of the most cultured of ancient tribes, as well as the brief periods of Chinese control over the region. Manchu administration was described by Qadiri as an era of oppression, destruction of local culture and sinicization, which ultimately led to uprisings intent on annihilating Manchus and immigrants from inner China. After reconquest, the Sino-Manchu government accelerated its sinicization policies: immigration from China proper, institution of Chinese language in official intercourse, closing of national schools and mosques. Sun Yat-sen's revolution and Three People's Principles were interpreted favorably by Qadiri. Unfortunately, however, their effects have not reached East Turkestan which remained a backwards and mismanaged territory under strong influence of Russia and Great Britain (Qadiri 1948: 4-40). The insurgency of 1930s was interpreted as a 'revolution' (*inqilab*) against oppression and corruption seeking to liberate the homeland and the people from under iron heels of oppression and corruption. The revolutionaries declared an independent 'East Turkestan Republic' (*Sherqi Türkistan Jumhuriyiti*), whose leadership was made of outstanding intellectuals (Qadiri 1948: 56-73).

Qadiri also disputed the legitimacy of Sheng Shicai's administration of Xinjiang and criticized his policies for allowing the extensive Soviet influence in the region, for obstructing the 'national movement' (*milliy hériket*) and 'national progress' (*milliy tereqqiyat*) and for erroneously dividing Xinjiang's population into fourteen nationalities (Qadiri 1948: 80-83, 101-2, 110-22). The text also related the origins of Eysa Beg's and Mes'ud Sabiri's 'revolutionary work for the homeland' (*yurt üchün inqilabi khizmiti*) and efforts to 'save the

homeland' (*yurtni qutquzush*): after being inspired by progressive 'nationalists' (*milletchi*), 'revolutionaries' (*inqilabchi*) and 'outstanding intellectuals' (*munewwer ziyalilar*) abroad, Eysa and Mes'ud allied with the central government and lobbied for 'national autonomy' (*milliy mukhtariet*) of East Turkestan (Qadiri 1948: 83-89, 145-7). The text also speaks favorably of Mahmud Muhiti's promotion of modern education (Qadiri 1948: 102-3).

Qadiri was also critical of the KMT's administration after consolidation of its power in East Turkestan. In contrast with Three People's Principles, the new government did not take into account the wishes and aspirations of 'local people' (*yerlik khelq*) of Xinjiang. Instead, the administration desired assimilation of 'local nationalities' (*yerlik milletler*) – stopped referring to them as to 'nationalities' (*millet*) and started using the term 'descendants of the same lineage' (*nesildash uruq*). Thus, the locals grew terrified and realized that the slogans contained in Three People's Principles about equality of nationalities and need to help frontier peoples to establish their autonomy were nothing but empty words. Wu Zhongxin released prisoners, but allied with religious figures, instead of intellectuals who were the 'essential social forces' (*jemi'etning asasiy kuchliri*). The KMT government imprisoned many other people and numerous local intellectuals fled their homeland. The corruption of government increased and so did the distrust of the local people (Qadiri 1948: 130-3). Interestingly, Qadiri also devoted a large space to the self-proclaimed independent government of East Turkestan which was established after the uprising in northern Xinjiang in fall of 1944. He specifically mentioned the national flag with the crescent and star and also the fact the rebels made armed incursions to Six Cities Region, the 'place of predominant residence of Turkic – Uyghur people' (*Türk – Uyghur khelq eng köp orunlashqan jéyi*). After the coalition government was formed with the Ili faction, Turkic and Chinese were to be both made the official script of the province and national education and publishing were to be instituted (Qadiri 1948: 136-144).

Qadiri argued that the KMT administration became more moderate after Zhang Zhizhong was commissioned by negotiating with the insurgents and eventually became the governor of Xinjiang. Qadiri related that during this time, Turkic youth became organized several in 'nationalist' (*milletchi*) and 'homeland-loving, patriotic' (*wetenperwer*) associations, staging a 'national movement' (*milliy hériket*) 'for the benefit of the nation and homeland' (*yurt millet paydisi üchün*) to raise 'national consciousness' (*milliy ang*). Specifically, these youth bodies petitioned the provincial government and raised national demands. Zhang negotiated directly with the youth representatives and acknowledged the mistakes in past policies. He even specifically promised that should this time the central government's policy fail again, he himself would stand as a leader of Xinjiang people in a rebellion against renewed oppression (Qadiri 1948: 162-5). This strong expression seems to stem from Zhang's alleged liberal stance on minority affairs, which incurred his popularity with the general Xinjiang population, even with Turkic Muslims.

Qadiri also described how the Turkic youth representatives reportedly called on the government to include the Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Tatars, Taranchis, Uzbeks and Tajik so-called 'peoples' (*khelqler*) under the name Turk, to unify the cultural associations of respective 'tribes' (*aymaq*) into one comprehensive Turkic Cultural Enlightenment Association (*Türk Medeniy Aqartish Uyushmisi*), to enforce in the Six Cities region an equally free political system as was currently functioning in the insurgent northern Xinjiang, to terminate Han immigration from inner China, to appoint Turkic officials in administrative posts, to allow freedom of speech, assembly and press, to erect memorials to national heroes who had died in prison, to support orphans, to bring Sheng Shicai to Urumchi and punish him publicly in front of Xinjiang people for his evil deeds etc. Other agencies were also

established by the government which were to facilitate affirmative cultural policies, such as the Society for Cultural Development of the Northwest (*Gherbiy Shimal Medeniy Qurulush Jemi'iti*) or the Association for Joint Building of New Xinjiang (*Yéngi Shinjang Qurushqa Hemkarlashmaq Uyushmisi*). Under Zhang, the first Xinjiang Turkic dance and song troupe was established and sent on tours to China interior, including Taiwan, to change the Han misconception that Turkestanis are an uncultured and backward people (Qadiri 1948: 162-6, 187-8).

Provincial History also provided an account of the Three Gentlemen's activities. Qadiri remarked that the Three Gentlemen were not favored by the politicians of the Ili faction who called them 'China-ists' (*Khitaychi*) or 'those who had been sold to China' (*Khitaygha sétilghan*). The Three Gentlemen were equally disliked by the KMT hard line administration, which obstructed their nationalist activities. Qadiri claimed that in reality, the three were deeply involved in working for the nation. Following the appointment of Zhang Zhizhong, they were able to implement some of their ideas. Namely, they used their high political status to accelerate advocacy of Turkic demands from the central government. The main request continued to be autonomy:

'...To grant high-degree autonomy (*aliy mukhtariet*) to Turkestan is the only way to preserve its eternal peace, to ensure that it will not separate from the state and to completely solve the Turkestan national problem (*Türkistan milliy mesilisi*)...' (Qadiri 1948: 154)

Besides autonomy, the Three Gentlemen for instance demanded for the government to call Turkestanis by their own name and recognize them as a 'nationality' (*millet*, 民族 *mínzú*), to abolish arbitrary taxation, to suspend Han immigration from inner China, to reduce troops stationed in the province, to raise Turkestanis to a position equal with Mongols and Tibetans, to institute education in Turkic language, to protect Turkic culture, history, language, writing and customs, to terminate the practice of Hans running the region, to appoint Turkic figures to high posts etc. Besides lobbying on the highest level, the Three Gentlemen were also said by Qadiri to have triggered a wave of Turkic national awakening, namely as regards national publishing and education.⁷⁹ Given the fact that Mes'ud's was a 'nationalist' (*milletchi*), during his governorship Turkic nationalism also thrived. Young people acquired awareness of 'their ancestors' history' (*ata babasining tarikhi*), of the 'situation in the homeland' (*yurtning ehwali*) and of the 'name of their nation' (*millitining ismi*). There was also a movement bent on unifying the corrupted, fully phonetic orthographies of individual Turkic groups which had been commenced during Sheng Shicai's era. Due to Three Gentlemen's policies, the Turkic awareness spread, more so around Urumchi than in southern Xinjiang (Qadiri 1948: 144-58, 186-8). Thus, similarly to Muhemmed Imin Bughra's *History of East Turkestan*, Polat Qadiri Turfani's *Provincial History* is an excellent example of national agitation text that integrates the invention of nation's historical past with construction of its modern national identity and with formulation of contemporary national interests, such as cultural awakening, technological modernization, economic progress and political rights.

⁷⁹ The boom in Turkic education and publishing was indeed exemplified by the publication of Uyghur primer, *Alphabet for Turks-Uyghurs* (*Türk-Uyghurlar Üchün Élifba*), which attempted to introduce fully phonetic Arabic-based Uyghur script. The title suggests that the author, the afore mentioned intellectual Ibrahim Muti'i at the time closely associated with the Three Gentlemen, regarded speakers of Uyghur as Turks (Muti'i 1947).

In sum, on the one hand the examination of above writings of the Three Gentlemen and their colleagues in 1940s reveals that their contents were similar to ideas of politicized Turkic national movement of the 1930s analyzed in Chapter 3. Similarly to the previous decade, Turkic nationalists of the 1940s also perceived their community as a 'nation' (*millet, ulus*) defined by common descent (Turkic), religion (Islam), homeland (East Turkestan, Chinese Turkestan, Turkestan, Turan), language, history, culture, national decline under past oppressive administration (Sheng Shicai) and other national attributes. For nationalist intellectuals of 1940s, the Turkic nation consisted of several tribes or clans residing in the territory of East Turkestan, such as Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis, Uzbeks, Tatars and even Tajiks. Again, religious denomination was an identity marker that was, at least rhetorically, of equal importance as ethnicity. However, judging by the extent of space dedicated to discussion of ethnic and religious affairs in the examined texts, it can be argued that for Turkic intellectuals in 1940s, ethnicity and Turkic lineage was a much more significant national identity marker when compared to religion than for activists of 1930s. As observed by Laura Newby, despite the fact that Islam provided a useful common language, in 1940s the nationalists felt that religion could not suffice to secure the goals of nationalist movement (Newby 1986: 223).

On the other hand, the 1930s' modernization imperative, namely concepts such as national liberation, freedom, improvement, progress, national awakening, promotion of national culture, modernity, national education and publishing etc., continued to embody important national interests in 1940s. Similarly to nation work strategies devised in 1930s, activists of 1940s also made sure to establish the important symbolic connection with past liberations movements and resistance to oppression, that was traced in other national movements (Breuille 161). In words referring to Miroslav Hroch's thesis applied to other contexts, apart from being able to build on previously existent cultural relics, preserved ancient literary language, memories of past statehood and other 'national' attributes, Turkic nationalists of the 1940s were able to make great use of the concept of East Turkestani and Uyghur national identity and interest, which had been clearly articulated by their predecessors (or, in the case of Muhemmed Imin Bughra, themselves) in 1930s. Mes'ud, Eysa, Bughra and others endorsed the popular indignation at previous flawed administrations, propagandized national identity and culture as the basis of Xinjiang Turkic public life and acted toward creating a complete social structure permeating their nation, including nationally aware youth, civilian strata literate in national vernacular, economic elites and political leadership. They engaged in dissemination of national consciousness on both academic and civic level, and also achieved at least some social movement in the form of youth organizations' initiative (Hroch 1996: 81-7). At the same time, the fact that in the above texts of 1940s the intellectual discourse of Xinjiang sedentary Muslim Turkic community as East Turkestani nation did not undergo a substantial change in comparison with the previous decade suggests that this concept became fairly consolidated among local intellectual strata by the early 1940s.

A major change did, however, occur in discourse of the chief national interest. The Three Gentlemen and their colleagues of 1940s operated in an utterly different political setting than nationalists of the 1930s. Although the previous administrations of Yang Zengxin, Jin Shuren and Sheng Shicai rhetorically proclaimed allegiance to the Republic of China, they maintained Xinjiang as an entity almost completely devoid of any factual interaction with China proper. Similarly, the Turkic insurgency by default functioned on the premise that East Turkestan is independent from China. Thus, in all past settings the Turkic population of East Turkestan constituted an overwhelming majority of over ninety per cent of the factually independent regions' total population. Both the Chinese and insurgent administration

recognized the Turkic populace as a full-fledged nationality and, albeit to a varying degree, upheld their rights. This phenomenon changed completely when Xinjiang found itself under factual control of the ROC's KMT-dominated central government in 1940s. Turkic inhabitants of Xinjiang suddenly became a part of, albeit theoretically multi-national, yet in reality unitary and overwhelmingly Han state, where they constituted less than one per cent of total population. It was at the moment of the KMT's arrival in Xinjiang that local indigenous Turkic Muslims' status fell from a 'nation' (*millet, ulus*) to China's 'minority nationality' (*azchiliq ulus, azchiliqde ulus, azchilikdeki ulus*) or 'frontier people' (*chégarali*). Similarly, Xinjiang became one of many regions of China, a reality signified for instance in the shift of connotations of the term *ölke*, which had from 'region' acquired the clear meaning of a 'province' of China.

Central government's takeover of Xinjiang therefore generated a whole new set of political interests of Turkic national movement. From then on, efforts of Turkic nationalists did not only consist of awakening national consciousness and creating national attributes of East Turkestani nation, as examined in Chapter 3. In confrontation with the overwhelmingly Han Chinese state, the most important point on national agenda was the state's recognition and preservation of Xinjiang Turks' existence as a separate nationality. Referring yet again to Fredrik Barth's concept of ethnic boundary mentioned in the Introduction and Chapter 1 of this dissertation, it was the maintenance of national boundary that was to secure Xinjiang Turks' future existence as a distinct entity in China (Barth 14). This task was especially difficult given the KMT's rigid adherence to Chiang's assimilationist argument that all people residing within the Republic of China's borders constitute a single 'nation of China' (中華民族 *Zhōnghuá mínzú*). Therefore, Turkic nationalists engaged in lengthy and passionate disputes with KMT theoreticians and emphasized a distinct identity of Xinjiang Turks, different from majority Han population. They insisted that while Turks and East Turkestan were under political control of China, their ethnic, religious and cultural identity was inseparable from other Turkic nations of the world. In fact, 1940s' Xinjiang pan-Turkists perceived Turkic population of Xinjiang and other Turkic nations as one nation, not making a distinction between the concept 'Turkic' and 'Turkish' that we use today. While their premise that all Turkic groups throughout the world are only tribes of a single nation might have been influenced by Chiang's theory of the 'nation of China', their cultural pan-Turkism was in fact a very powerful argument in defense against the Han majority as it placed East Turkestanis into mythical Turan, a massive Turkic milieu stretching over two continents and numbering over one hundred million people.

Along this line, Three Gentlemen and similarly minded activists argued that the official term 'Hui' (回) should be replaced by the terms 'Turk' (突厥人 *Tūjuérén*) and 'Turkestan' (突厥斯坦 *Tūjuésītǎn*) in China's official discourse. Referring to Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles and other state legislature stipulating equality of China's five constituent nationalities, they pushed for recognition of Turks as a nationality equal in ethnic, political, economic and cultural rights to Hans, Mongols, Tibetans and Manchus. In their arguments, Turkic nationalists of 1940s were often bitterly critical of the KMT's incompetency in ethnic policy, of the central government's discrimination of Xinjiang Turks and of Chinese imperialism. By citing basic Chinese revolutionary premises of equality of nationalities and democracy, the Three Gentlemen effectively managed to turn Chinese history against the KMT's Han chauvinists and, to borrow Benedict Anderson's attractive expression, to scrape boldly the weld between modern nationalism and imperialism (Anderson 117). Firmly rejecting accusations of separatism, they also argued that only

effective ethnic policy and high-degree autonomy could result in successful integration of Chinese Turkestan into China, and thus be beneficial for the whole state.

In another words, the KMT-affiliated Turkic nation workers of 1940s perceived East Turkestanis' national interest and the ROC's state interest as fully compatible. Indeed, in their ideology they espoused the ideals of Chinese revolutionary republicanism, democracy and nationalism, all the way from early Sun Yat-sen's thought and the 1911 Ili revolutionaries to contemporary KMT ideology, legislature and symbology. At the same time, they performed complex nation work bent on constructing and promoting Turkic national identity. Their efforts at introducing Turkic script and language into Xinjiang public life were successful steps towards official nationalism, an important nation-forming principle illustrated in other studies (Seton-Watson 148; Anderson 85-6). Similarly, their founding of Turkic education, publishing and other cultural projects of national awakening resound John Breuille's intellectual interpretation of nationalism, previously referred to in Chapter 2 and 3. Arguably, Three Gentlemen's and their associates' nation work was likely to subsequently generate wide political opposition to dysfunctional KMT administration with colonialist tendencies (Breuille 159-60). In any case, Three Gentlemen and their soul mates' ideology were an interesting and strikingly compatible fusion of Turkic ethnic sub-nationalism and ideas of Chinese revolutionary state nationalism. In short, Turkic intellectuals of 1940s formulated a complex set of ideas of nation and nationalism that was also to carry over into the following period of the People's Republic of China's control over Xinjiang from 1949.

4. 2. Insurgency in Northern Xinjiang (1944 – 1949)

The last important stimulus for evolution of early modern Uyghur concepts of nation and nationalism under research in this dissertation arose during insurgency in northern Xinjiang in late 1940s. As with the central Nanjing government's policy vis-à-vis Xinjiang Turkic Muslims, the roots of northern Xinjiang rebellion lay in the 1930s. Xinjiang Kazaks, some of who had escaped from the USSR to Xinjiang in flight of Soviet anti-nomadism campaigns in late 1920s and early 1930s, were angered by Sheng Shicai's secularization efforts and other policies. Since mid-1930s, small-scale Kazak uprisings erupted in Xinjiang in the areas of Tianshan, near Gez Kōl by Gansu-Qinghai border and in Altay. The intensity of unrest somewhat decreased in the wake of Sheng's consolidation of power in 1937, but the fighting resumed after Sheng broke with the USSR in 1942, which prompted the Soviets to start indirectly supporting Kazak rebels through Mongolian People's Republic. Kazak resistance in Xinjiang eventually centered in Altay around the figure of Osman Batur (Osman the Hero, 1899-1951), whose activities however did not seem to have any political agenda. Kazak unrest further increased with the KMT's policies, particularly with intended requisitioning of horses for the provincial army (Forbes 137, 155-7, 170-2).

Another locus of insurgent activity in northern Xinjiang was the Ili valley, which, due to its close relations with Russia, had been since late nineteenth century the most economically and culturally advanced area of the province. After Sheng severed Xinjiang's ties with the USSR in 1942, the Ili valley and entire northern Xinjiang lost its means of income from exporting raw materials and livestock, as well as access to imported manufactured goods. After the KMT's takeover of Xinjiang in fall 1944, the decline in Soviet trade was accompanied by increased taxation, soaring prices of daily consumption goods, requisitions in labor and kind, termination of cross-border cultural ties and security crackdown on everything related to Soviet Union, such as periodicals, books, textbooks, social organizations and even numerous intellectuals educated in Soviet Central Asia. In

October 1944, a small clash in the township of Nilka triggered a large-scale insurgency that quickly spread throughout the entire northern Xinjiang. The rebels seized control of the district capital Ghulja and, exactly to the day eleven years after founding of the first East Turkestan Republic (ETIR, researched in Chapter 3), proclaimed the second East Turkestan Republic (*Sherqiy Türkistan Jumhuriyiti*, ETR) on November 12, 1944. By summer 1945, the rebels formed a regular military force under the name Ili National Army (*Ili Milliy Armiyisi*, INA), took control of the so-called Three Districts of northern Xinjiang (Altay, Chöchek and Tarbaghatay) and seriously challenged the provincial troops near Urumchi. An armistice with the government was reached in September 1945 (Forbes: 172-6; 186-90; Benson 1990: 42-52).

Presently, there does not exist a unanimous scholarly agreement in interpretation of the uprising. It appears certain that some of its traits were very similar to those of Turkic insurgency of the 1930s, examined in previous chapter of this dissertation. In particular, the 1940s' movement was also set in motion by economic crisis aggravated by immediate political abuse of power by newly arrived and ethnically heterogeneous administration. Initial action was taken by Turkic groups, namely Kazaks (who were the most populous group in the Three Districts and formed around 50% of its population), Uyghurs (who should be in fact considered Taranchi according to Sheng's classification), Kyrgyz, Uzbeks and Tatars. Despite the fact that the common anti-KMT cause also attracted all the other non-Turkic ethnic groups inhabiting northern Xinjiang, namely Tungans, Mongols, Shiwes, Solons, Manchus, Russians and even some Han, the name of the ETR and the timing of its proclamation suggests that it was established primarily as a state of Turkic Muslim ethnic groups. A flag with crescent and star on green background symbolizing Islam was used and massacres of Hans occurred frequently in the early turmoil of fighting. The highest post of the ETR's president was initially given to a highly popular religious scholar Elikhan Töre Saghuni (1885-1976), an Uzbek from Russian Turkestan who had fled the communists to Xinjiang in 1920s and served a sentence of several years in Sheng Shicai's prison until 1942. Similarly, Hakim Beg Khoja, appointed as Töre's deputy, was an influential Uyghur landowner, while other prominent members of the government, such as Abdulmuta'ali Khalifa, minister of religious affairs, and Saud Damolla, vice-minister of education, allegedly used their religious expertise and charisma to ally with Töre in efforts to institute Islamic law, religious education and selection of state officials based on their religious knowledge (Forbes 176-9, 184). As discernible in the below pamphlet issued sometime in the early stage of the uprising and signed by Elikhan Töre, some aspects of the proclamation of the ETR were strongly reminiscent of the first attempt at East Turkestan independence:

‘...The Turkestan Islam Government is organized: praise be to Allah for his manifold blessings! Allah be praised! The aid of Allah has given us the heroism to overthrow the government of the oppressor Chinese. But even if we have set ourselves free, can it be pleasing in the sight of our God if we only stand and watch, while you, our brethren in religion...still hear the bloody grievance of subjection to the black politics of the oppressor Government of the savage Chinese? Certainly our God would not be satisfied. We will not throw down our arms until we have made you free from the five bloody fingers of the Chinese oppressors' power, nor until the very roots of the Chinese oppressors' government have dried and died away from the face of the earth of East Turkestan, which we have inherited as our native land from our fathers and our grandfathers...’ (Benson 1990: 45-6)

Nevertheless, a scholarly controversy continues about other ideological currents within the late 1940s' northern Xinjiang uprising, which apparently flowed in a different direction than the above outlined ideology resembling the Turkic nationalist insurgency of 1930s.

Namely, the dispute evolves around the question to what degree the 1940s' revolt was a genuine Turkic nationalist movement seeking independence, or at least autonomy, and to what degree it was a result of Soviet manipulation aimed at destabilization of the KMT's rule in Xinjiang. Linda Benson in her thoroughly researched work, which continues to be the most informative source on the movement, stresses the first aspect of the Ili rebellion issue. She interprets the insurgency as a nationalist attempt at founding East Turkestan Republic, an independent Muslim nationalist state of mostly Turkic Muslim population of northern Xinjiang (Benson 1990: 3, 41, 145, 152). She perceives the most prominent leader of the movement, Akhmet Jan Qasimi (1912-1949), as a Turkic nationalist intent on establishing a democratic, Muslim-majority government in Xinjiang (Benson 1990: 141). According to her, the most influential Turkic political body of the Three Districts was the 'highly nationalistic' East Turkestan Revolutionary Youth Organization (*Sherqi Türkistan Inqilabiy Yashlar Teshkilati*; ETRYO; Benson 1990: 151, Benson 1992: 38), which was in favor of establishing independent East Turkestan and acted also in the KMT-controlled districts. In Benson's opinion, the insurgency necessarily depended on Soviet tacit consent and support, non-interference and non-support to the KMT provincial government (Benson 1990: 5, 34, 40, 137). While acknowledging that there might have even been some Soviet support in the form of advisors or military units (Benson 1990: 138-42), Benson argues that the ETR policy implementation does not show an 'exaggerated Soviet influence' and that the Soviets probably rather acted as a conservative force, who in latter stages of the movement sought to reduce the insurgency's nationalist drive and urged the rebels to reconcile with the provincial government. Despite this pressure, she Benson claims the ETR to have symbolized the dream of independent Islamic state uniting its Turkic population under democratic government (Benson 1990: 152-4).

Similarly, while Laura Newby admits that Soviet influence and socialist ideas had by mid-1940s deeply permeated the Ili insurgency and the ETR showed clear signs of Sovietization, she also claims that the nationalist movement '*...was not merely a tool for Soviet strategy; resistance from within cannot be ruled out as an important factor in discouraging the Soviet Union from helping the Kuldja group to carry the separatist movement to final victory with the liberation of all Sinkiang.*' In fact, accommodations to Soviet pressures should be interpreted as a political foresight by moderates dominating the movement, who understood Eastern Turkestan's precarious position between two ideologically opposed powers (Newby 1986: 155-61, 227-30). Roostam Sadri in his article concludes that the liberation struggle of all ethnic groups of Eastern Turkestan fell victim to the USSR and both KMT and PRC-controlled China's consensus over their common geopolitical interests at the expense of interests and will of Xinjiang's indigenous peoples (Sadri 311-3). Similarly, Allen Whiting acknowledges the formidable influence of the USSR over the matter, but also points out to the indigenous groups' liberation struggle aspect of the movement (Whiting and Sheng 110-1).

Other studies argue that Soviet role was much stronger. Although Andrew Forbes claims that the degree of Soviet involvement is impossible to assess, he thoroughly describes Soviet support by supply of military and organizational training, weaponry, logistics, advisory personnel and allegedly even some direct military action. He even parallels the USSR's role in setting up the ETR to Soviet interventions in Iran that led to emergence of Muslim secessionist statelets of Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan and Kurdish Republic of Mahabad in 1945 (Forbes 177-8, 261-3). Soviet involvement in the affair was also related to the fact that the USSR did not look favorably at the assumption of power by the USA-supported KMT in its volatile borderland, and therefore could benefit from an

insurgency that compromised the authority of Xinjiang provincial government (Millward 2007: 11). Again, it was the pivotal position of Xinjiang at the crossroads of world power politics that influenced its fate. As a result of Soviet interest, Elikhan Töre's 'Turko-Islamic' wing was gradually outmaneuvered by a Soviet-supported 'progressive' wing that sought to establish a secular, pro-Soviet secessionist state. Several figures of the 'progressive' group were trained and organized in the Soviet Union already prior to the uprising. A Xinjiang Turkic People's National Liberation Committee (XTPNLC) was established in Almaty in 1943 with the goal of generating opposition to Sheng-KMT regime and eventually became the most influential structure in the insurgency, through which the USSR successfully propelled the insurgency in the direction it desired (Forbes 173-4). Headed by Akhmet Jan Qasimi, who according to Forbes was most probably 'Stalin's man' in the movement, this group included also Abdukerim Abbasov (?-1949), Ishaq Beg (Kyrgyz, 1903-1949) and Seypidin Ezizi (Uyghur, 1915-2003; Forbes 177-86).

Forbes states the armistice of summer 1945 between the INA and provincial troops was also reached due to direct pressure from the Soviet Union on the former to stop their imminent advance on Urumchi. The USSR exerted this effort in the wake of signing the Yalta Agreement of February 1945, which also stipulated that the USSR stops interfering in Xinjiang in exchange for regaining its privileges in northeastern China. During lengthy negotiations between the two sides, the Ili leaders agreed to abandon their separatist goals and cease to refer to the insurgent territory as to the ETR,⁸⁰ while the KMT promised to grant autonomy, inspired by the Ili model, to the entire Xinjiang. The talks concluded in June 1946 by signing of peace agreement and by forming coalition government consisting of the Ili delegates, provincial appointees and central government's appointees (Forbes 177-186). Elikhan Töre himself was shortly after signing the peace agreement forcibly transported to the Soviet Union, where he was held under house arrest in Tashkent until his death in 1976. According to Forbes, the pro-Soviet faction successfully managed to harness the uprising, while its initial Turko-Islamic overtone evaporated by summer 1945 (Forbes 186-95). As pointed out by Linda Benson, by recognizing Xinjiang as part of China while insisting on its political autonomy, the Three Districts' delegates' stance moved closer to that of the Three Gentlemen, although these were, as will be shown later in this section, continuously vilified by the Three Districts' propaganda.

The coalition government effectively collapsed in summer 1947, the Three District delegates retreated to Ili and northern Xinjiang was administered as a factually independent territory until communist takeover in 1949. During this period, the key political organization in control of the Three Districts was the Union for Support of Peace and Democracy in Xinjiang (*Shinjangda Tinchliqni we Khelqchilikni Himaye Qilish Ittipaqi*; USPD), which integrated several other bodies, such as the ETRYO, and 'despite the name was the party behind Ghulja's one-party system' (Millward 2007: 223). The USPD's main publication organ was *Forward (Algha)*, while other Turkic publications at the time were for instance *People's Voice (Khelq Awazi)*, *Revolutionary Youth (Inqilabi Yashlar)*, *Democrat (Khelqchi)*, *New Path (Yéngi Yol)*, *Örnek (Mirror)*, *Women's Voice (Khanim-Qizlar Awazi)*, *Mirror of*

⁸⁰ On the topic of East Turkestan's independence, Akhmet Jan Qasimi is said by several sources to have proclaimed in August 1946 that '... *Although East Turkestan is a geographical name, it cannot be regarded as a political movement theory. If people use it as such, then they are the enemy of the provincial government and of all the province's people...*', and to have denounced the idea of Xinjiang's secession at several other occasions. The shelving of the original objective of East Turkestan's independence is thus interpreted as a realistic assessment of Xinjiang's geopolitical position between two powerful neighbors (Benson 1992: 34, 41, 43).

Knowledge (Bilim Örneşi), Unity (Birlik) or Union (Ittipaq; Xu 1994: 80-1). At the same time, presumably with more Soviet assistance than what could be described as mere blessings, the USPD's agenda was very much in accordance with the USSR's policy of supporting the principle of territorial indivisibility of the Republic of China (Benson 1990: 152).

The interpretation of the insurgency as a Soviet scheme can be naturally also found in contemporary central government and KMT materials. It has been already pointed out by Benson that in contemporary sources close to the central government, the insurgency figured as the 'Ili Incident' (伊犁事件 *Yīlǐ shìjiàn*; occasionally also the 'Yining Incident' [伊寧事件 *Yīníng shìjiàn*] according to the Chinese name for the city of Ghulja) and was seen as a consequence of Soviet imperialist intrigue (Benson 1990: 4-5, Benson 1992: 23). Here, it is again useful to refer to Zhang Dajun's work for it presents a very good example of the KMT view of the insurgency. While acknowledging that the discontent of indigenous nationalities in Xinjiang was to a large degree caused by the incompetency of KMT officials, Zhang places the greatest part of guilt on the USSR, who supported the 'treachery of Ili native nationalities' (伊犁土著民族叛變 *Yīlǐ tǔzhù mínzú pànbìàn*). The previous Soviet support of Sheng and all other Han ruling elites is by Zhang described as a cover for its 'intrusive behavior' (侵略行為 *qīnlüè xíngwéi*), while subsequent turn to supporting the rebels was caused by the improvement of China's standing towards the end of anti-Japanese war. Soviet support to the 'native nationalities' revolutionary movement' (土著民族的革命運動 *tǔzhù mínzú de géming yùndòng*) antagonized the actions of the central government's and the rebels. The initial stage of the rebellion occurred under the flag of nationalism and leadership of characters such as Elikhan Töre, a fanatically nationalistic element demanding 'self-determination and autonomy' (自決自治 *zìjué zìzhì*). This group was subsequently replaced by communists, such as Qasimi and Seypidin. Zhang refers to the insurgency as to 'treachery' (背叛 *bèipàn*), 'incident' (事件 *shìjiàn*), 'coup' (事變 *shìbiàn*), 'rebellion' (叛亂 *pànlüàn*) or even 'fake Turkestan People's Republic' (偽東土耳其斯坦人民共和國 *wěi Tūèrqísītǎn rénmin gònghéguó*), which are all expressions with connotations of illegal and illegitimate activity (Zhang 6243-50, 6527). Similar interpretation of the events was presented by David Wang, who in his work concentrated on illustrating the intensity and scope of Soviet. In his interpretation, the '...Ili Regime was a feudal Moslem nationalist regime which was encouraged, supported, and controlled by the Soviet Union...' According to Wang, the initial goal of the movement, establishing a Muslim state under the rule of pan-Islamists, was manipulated for its own purposes by the Soviets and finally by the Chinese Communist Party's propaganda (Wang 167-72, 321-36, 407-18).

Finally, the PRC's interpretation of the events is determined by a comment of Chinese communist leader Mao Zedong (毛泽东; 1893-1976) that the insurgency was a 'part of all of us Chinese people's democratic revolutionary movement' (我全中国人民民主革命运动的一部分 *wǒ quán Zhōngguó rénmin mínzhǔ géming yùndòng de yī bùfēn*; Xu 1998: 259). Thus, the whole movement is glorified by today's communist propaganda by one of the most correct words of communist theory – Three Districts' Revolution (三区革命 *Sānqū géming*; according to the three northern districts of Altay, Chöchek and Tarbaghatay). The Chinese Communist Party today asserts that the Three Districts' Revolution was supported by Soviet communists through international diplomatic pressure, propaganda (which to some degree contained also 'erroneous' ideas that were in conflict with the concept of the unity of motherland), forming and supporting secret organizations, training of leading figures in ideology and military skills, supplying equipment, advisors, occasional manpower and other subversive activities (Xu 13-4). However, the most decisive impulse to the success of the

Three Districts' Revolution was the Chinese Communist Party's support from interior China. The insurgency, as well as the national question itself, is seen as a part of mankind's social evolution and development, namely struggle against 'imperialistic, feudal and bureaucratic-capitalist reactionary domination' (帝国主义, 封建主义, 官僚资本主义的反动统治 *dìguó zhǔyì, fēngjiàn zhǔyì, guānliáo zīběn zhǔyì fǎndòng tǒngzhì*) of the KMT. After some mistakes were made in the initial stage of the uprising by separatist elements such as Elikhan Töre, the movement was steered into the right direction by Qasimi, Abbasov and other politically conscious figures. However, by far the most important factor was the fact that the revolutionary movement of all the people of China the under the leadership of the CCP surged day by day and weakened the KMT's rule. It was specifically the Han people who made up the main force of all victorious nationalities of China and thus made the most significant contribution to the success of the Three Districts' revolution (Xu 18, 259-266).

Similar interpretations of the movement resound also in the memoirs of participants of contemporary events. Seydulla Seypullayov, who held a senior official post during the insurgency, claims that the movement was Soviet-supported, non-separatist and strove to implement policies analogous to those of the CCP in the interior. He uses the term of the movement 'Three Districts' revolution' (*Üch wilayet inqilabi*) and claims that the designation 'East Turkestan' carried only geographical connotations. Although the initial purpose of the revolt was to liberate the people of East Turkestan, separatism was not among its goals. The reason why the policies of Three Districts' administration could not have been at the time referred to as 'communist' and 'Marxist-Leninist' was because of strong religiosity of a large part of local population. Nevertheless, the administration was highly sympathetic to the success of communist movement in the interior and prepared Three Districts for eventual takeover by the CCP (Seypullayov 25-7, 34, 45, 49, 68-9). Burhan Shehidi in his memoir does not systematically approach the issue of Soviet involvement in the insurgency. However, he remarks that revolutionarily minded individuals with early communist ideas such as Qasimi and Abbasov were one of three ideological elements present in Three Districts' government (the other two being bourgeois and feudally-religious representatives), and presents anecdotic evidence of influence of Soviet consulate in the province. According to him, the initial ideological mistakes of the insurgency were promptly corrected by representatives who had under Qasimi's leadership adopted Marxist-Leninist viewpoint and took control of Three Districts' administration (Burhan 606-8). Finally, interpretation of Seypidin Ezizi, a high-ranking Three Districts' official who after the unclear death of other insurgent leaders in 1949 allied the region with Mao Zedong's PRC, writes in his memoirs in a similar tone. Although he regards Soviet help and assistance one of vital agents in the insurgency (Ezizi 1997b: 368-70) and in many places presents anecdotic evidence of Soviet hand in the events (Ezizi 1997b: 28-33), he nevertheless interprets the whole insurgency as a 'part of new democratic revolution' (*yéngi démokratik inqilabining bir qismidur*) of the proletariat of China (Ezizi 1997b: 400-6). Influence of the Chinese Communist party in Xinjiang and its indoctrination of local population with communist and Marxist ideology was according to him a factor as important as the revolutionary zeal of Xinjiang's oppressed peoples (Ezizi 1997b: 24-28, 363-8).

Ideas of Nation and Nationalism in the Three Districts

All of the above mentioned authors imply that the less nationalistic, less pan-Turkist and less Islamist creed more compatible with Soviet and Chinese communist principles gradually gained prominence in the ideology of the Three Districts. Establishing friendly relations with the Soviet Union had already been one of the main principles of the so-called

Ghulja Declaration, a rebel manifesto issued in January 1945 (Forbes 183). The national question is addressed in two other rebel pamphlets from 1945 and 1947, previously publicized by Linda Benson. East Turkestan and Central Asia is by their authors perceived as the hearth of Turkic nations, namely Uyghurs, Taranchis, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks and Tatars, which have all lived in the place since ancient times. The Turkic nationalities are devout Muslims, while God is on their side in their struggle for free Muslim East Turkestan State and will punish the oppressors. There are also Mongols and Russians living nowadays peacefully in the region, whose homeland is also not China. All of the above groups were considered true masters of East Turkestan. After the arrival of the Chinese, local people were robbed of their civilization and even prevented to refer to their homeland by its real name. During Sheng Shicai's government, a truly cruel oppression was instituted. Therefore, the insurgents were demanding termination of Chinese rule and immigration, institution of equality of nationalities, representative government, autonomy, national armed forces, education and other revolutionary political ideals. The insurgents were specifically intent on achieving democracy, justice and liberty. Notably, reestablishing friendly relations with the USSR in the spheres of commerce and politics was claimed to be an absolutely indispensable precondition to achieving these ideals (Benson 1990: 200-208). Indeed, the Soviets were perceived as patrons of the Xinjiang people:

‘...The people of East Turkestan [Xinjiang] are like an orphaned child, without father or mother or anyone to heed its cries. The savage Chinese have torn the child from the mother that bore it (the Soviet Government) and seek to give it to a foster mother (the Three People's Principles) for the latter to trample it under foot. For the people of East Turkestan the severance of their mutually friendly relations with the Soviet Union and their subjection to the discipline of the Three People's Principles by the savage Chinese is the same thing as death by torture...’ (Benson 1990: 204)

The sources in Uyghur language examined in the following section of this chapter seem to indicate that the less Turko-Islamic and more pro-Soviet ideological orientation of the Three Districts' Rebellion also brought about a change in Three Districts' official discourse of nation and nationalism. The first example under research is the pamphlet *We Are Ready to Defend Our Rights Acquired at the Price of Blood* (*Qan Bedelige Kelgen Hoquqimizni Himaye Qilishqa Teyyarbiz*; ETRYO). It was authored jointly by the above mentioned East Turkestan Revolutionary Youth Organization (*Sherqiy Türkistan Inqilabchil Yashlar Teshkilati*; ETRYO) and Seven Districts Democrats' Association (*Yette Wilayet Khelqchilar Birleshmisi*), and published most likely in Ghulja by the Free People (*Erkin Khelq*) publishing house shortly after the collapse of Xinjiang coalition government in summer 1947. The text condemns the KMT authorities' non-adherence to the program of Xinjiang coalition government and voices strong determination of the Three Districts to defend the program regardless of the coalition's dissolution. The text starts in the name of God by this passage:

‘...People of East Turkestan (*Sherqiy Türkistan khelqi*) have put up numerous revolutionary struggles, in particular the revolution of November 12, against the reactionary government's evil policy of oppression, enslavement, robbery, exploitation, assimilation, upholding backwardness and creating inequality in order to acquire freedom (*erkinlik*), equality (*baraberlik*) and democracy (*khelqchilik*), and signed the Eleven Point Treaty which guarantees equality, freedom and democracy and, according to the treaty, formed a democratic provincial government (*khelqchil ölkülük hökümet*)...’ (ETRYO 1)

The pamphlet further criticizes the ‘reactionary’ (*eksilhëriketchi*) KMT administration for obstructing the enactment of the government program. The oppression in the KMT-administered seven districts of Xinjiang increased, essential rights guaranteed to the people by the treaty were violated and many prominent local figures were imprisoned. The government did not appoint to high posts those who were determined to do ‘people work’ (*khelq khizmiti*). Instead, it appointed those participating at hindering the program, thieves, bribers, ‘those who sell out the homeland’ (*weten satquchi*), ‘position-hungry traitors’ (*mensepperest munafiq*), who all jointly increased the tyranny. Instead of allowing ‘freedom of publication’ (*metbu’at hürlükü*) and ‘freedom of speech’ (*söz hürlükü*), the government terminated many existing periodicals and started publishing reactionary and fascist press. In Urumchi alone, martial law was enforced and thousands of people were imprisoned. When Three Districts’ appointees to the provincial government sought to enact the government program, they heard only ‘*míngtiān, hòutiān*’ (明天, 後天; literally ‘tomorrow, day after tomorrow’). ‘Three Districts people’s liberation troops’ (*Üch wilayet khelq azadliq qisimliri*) were supposed to be included in the regular provincial army, but from October 1946 were not receiving provincial government’s money. Funds for official and educational expenses in Three Districts were also withheld by the provincial government. Although the ‘Three District people’s representatives’ (*üch wilayet khelq wekilliri*) took part in provincial official duties, they were not able to overcome the KMT reactionaries. Therefore, in accordance with Ahmed Jan Qasimi’s statement ‘...in a place where the treaty is enforced, we are also present. We are not present in a place where the treaty is not enforced. If people’s demands are fulfilled, we will be a part of provincial government. If people’s demands are not fulfilled, from that day we will not be a part of provincial government...’, Three District delegates found it unsuitable to remain in the provincial government and resigned (ETRYO 2-15).

The text further reprimands the KMT for supporting Osman Batur, who is in the text referred to as ‘Osman the Robber’ (*Osman Bandit*), because he turned against the Three Districts’ administration in early 1946. Osman is portrayed as a person who twisted the ‘revolutionary nature’ (*inqilabiy kharaktër*) of ‘people’s uprising’ (*khelq qozghilingi*) in Altay into banditry and thus caused a great harm to it. Indeed, Osman is fighting those who are themselves ‘struggling for religion, for homeland and for the people’ (*din üchün, weten üchün, khelq üchün küresh qilghuchi*); therefore, he should not be considered a Muslim. Regardless of the KMT’s support to Osman, ‘our troops of national army’ (*milliy armiyë qisimlirimiz*) will fight Osman ‘in unity with our people’ (*khelqimiz bilen birlikte*; ETRYO 14-22). Altogether, the people of Three Districts have the duty to fight by all means necessary against exploitation and tyranny, as well as for reinforcement of the peace agreement in the whole territory of Xinjiang. The ultimate goal of the Three Districts’ administration was ‘peace based on true democracy, equality and freedom’ (*heqiqiy khelqchilik, baraberlik we erkinlik asaidiki tinchlik*):

‘...We, the people of Three Districts, who are fighting for liberation (*azadliq*), freedom (*erkinlik*), equality (*baraberlik*) and democracy (*khelqchilik*), will not yield to Osman nor to any reactionaries plotting against us by arming and shielding him. We will strike those who will try to ignite the fire of conflict and start a war; we will continue our fight for truly democratic policy (*heqiqiy khelqchiliq siyaset*) based on the peace agreement, as well as for peace (*tinchliq*) based on true parity and equality (*heqiqiy tenglik we baraberlik*). Our cause is truthful (*heq*) and truth (*heqiqet*) definitely indicates victory. Reactionaries will surely be punished by history for their disgraceful crimes...’ (ETRYO 23)

‘...We do not love false peace and false democracy. We will not let go from our hands the rights that we gained, nor will we let to the life of true peace and democracy for which the people of Three Districts have spilled their blood. It is necessary to strengthen and preserve such peace and democracy by all means... We have acquired human rights and life of equality, democracy and freedom by such means. And by these means, we will preserve and strengthen our human rights and our life of equality, democracy and freedom. Let reactionaries disappear! Hail our people’s freedom!...’ (ETRYO 26-8)

The text of the pamphlet also inadvertently elaborates on the previously mentioned hypothesis that the ETRYO was a ‘highly nationalistic organization’ (Benson 1990: 151). Notably, throughout the whole text, the words ‘nation’ (*millet*) and ‘national’ (*milliy*) are almost completely replaced by the term ‘people’ (*khelq*). The situations, in which the national terminology is employed, are actually only isolated and relatively fixed expressions (such as ‘National Army’). Moreover, the word ‘national’ (*milliy*) almost invariably carries the connotations of a ‘nationality’, which are, moreover, not always positive:

‘...But people of East Turkestan have no more patience left with the excessively evil policy of reactionary totalitarian elements. By the means of the November 12 liberation revolution (*azadliq inqilabi*), they have acquired today’s free life (*erkinlik hayat*) and human rights (*insaniy hoquq*). Our East Turkestan is a part of the world and our people are a part of people of the world. Therefore, just like people of the world we also love peace and democracy. But we love true peace and true democracy. In the kind of peace we love, it is necessary not to yield to bandits, terrorists, gossipers, militarists and those, who verbally support peace but in reality are igniting the fire of conflict. In the kind of democracy we love, it is necessary not to yield to reactionaries, tyrants, conservatives, those favoring supremacy of one nationality (*millet*), position-hungry flatterers who kiss up to the bureaucracy, bribers and treacherous rulers who are democrats only in speech or on paper. In the kind of peace that we want, it is necessary to promote and enforce equality, freedom, true democracy and progressivity...’ (ETRYO 25-6)

Another example of increasing prominence of the term ‘people’ as the concept of communal identity in Three Districts is *Appeal to All Our Muslims of East Turkestan from the East Turkestan Central Religious Supervision (Sherqiy Türkistandiki Barliq Musulmanlirimizgha Sherqiy Türkistan Merkiziy Dinniye Nazaritidin Muraji’et*; here abbreviated as *Appeal*; RS), a pamphlet issued by the Religious Supervision (*Dinniye Nazariti*; RS) in Ghulja in 1948 and printed by the printing house of an influential Three Districts’ newspaper *Revolutionary East Turkestan (Inqilabiy Sherqiy Türkistan)*. Besides explaining the fundamental principles of Islam, the text elaborates on the role of religion in Three Districts. It stresses the social function of religion in facilitating ‘unity and union’ (*birlik we ittifaqliq*), as well as progress and well-being of the ‘Muslim people’ (*Musulman khelq*) of the Three districts: ‘That is to say that not only are religion and civilization not contrary to each other, both of them are even compatible components that guide society toward progress.’ (RS 5) One passage asserts that one of the functions of religion is to uphold the state structure (RS 20). The text articulates four important appeals to Muslims by the Three District administration: to preserve unity of all Muslims in the region, to establish ‘friendly love’ (*dostane muhebbet*) among all previously exploited groups living in the ‘historical homeland’ (*tarikhiy weten*), for clerics to use the religion in a truthful and non-political way to cultivate people’s ethical qualities and for the people themselves to strive for their spiritual and ethical improvement according to principles of Islam (RS 70-2). If these calls are heard,

then after having attained freedom, the ‘society’ (*jemi’et*) of the Three Districts will also see reform and progress (RS 77).

The *Appeal* also strongly denounces the politicization of religion in the remaining part of Xinjiang by the KMT. In particular, it is claimed that clerics in the south have to supplement their one word on religion by fifty words on Three People’s Principles and have to include verbal support of the KMT and its ideology into their sermons, which have to be moreover previously approved by the state officials (RS 76-7). In contrast, the pamphlet declares that there is full freedom of Islamic worship in Three Districts. For more than three years, the religious affairs have been successfully run by the Religious Supervision, which provides for satisfying religious needs of the people, religious education of youth and clergy, construction of mosques and religious schools, as well as for their ‘reform’ (*islahat*). At the same time, there is complete separation of religion from politics in the Three Districts, which enables complete freedom of religion (RS 73-7). What was not specifically expressed in the *Appeal* was the fact that this principle effectively limited the validity of religious rules and influence of Islamic clerics to religious and social affairs.

Similarly to the previous source, the word ‘nation’ itself is used extremely rarely in the *Appeal*. The insurgency itself is invariably and in absolutely every instance called ‘national liberation rebellion’ (*milliy azadliq inqilabi*; RS 54, 67). Other contexts featuring the national concept is for example the interpretation of the Three Districts’ rebellion as of ‘work for religion’ (*din khizmiti*), ‘work for homeland’ (*weten khizmiti*) and ‘work for nation’ (*millet khizmiti*; RS 62), an honorary address of a prominent religious figures as ‘nation worker’ (*millet khadimi*; RS 49) or awareness of existence of the individual ‘nationalities’ (*millet*) of Three Districts – Uyghur, Kazaks, Kyrgyz etc. (RS 17). However, this usage of the national terminology is both very rare and strongly ritualized. In an overwhelming majority of cases, the community inhabiting the Three Districts is defined as ‘people’ (*khelq*). The term ‘East Turkestan’ is used in a strictly geographical sense, such as in the title of the work or in formulations such as about ‘Han intruders occupying our beautiful homeland East Turkestan’ (RS 13, 22). The expression ‘people of East Turkestan’ (*Sherqiy Türkistan khelqi*) appears as frequently as ‘people of Three Districts’ (*Üch Wilayet khelqi*). There are also references to the existence of ‘independent East Turkestani state’ (*musteqil Sherqiy Türkistan döli*; RS 56) or ‘our previous famous state’ (*bizning burunqi ataqliq dölitimiz*; RS 71). However, these instances are used strictly when speaking about the past. In the present, the geographical entity called East Turkestan houses a political structure called the ‘Three Districts’ (*Üch Wilayet*) or ‘our districts’ (*bizning wilayetlirimiz*; RS 67). The problem of Three Districts presently being or not being independent on China is not addressed at all in the *Appeal*.

The enemies of the national liberation revolution are called in the *Appeal* ‘Chinese tyrants’ (*Khitay mustebitliri*; RS 66) or ‘Chinese reactionaries’ (*Khitay eksilheriketчилiri*), not the Han as such. Another phenomenon jeopardizing the liberation revolution is disunity of the various groups in the Three Districts. The text alerts the people of Three Districts not yield to ‘sabotage’ (*buzghunchilik*) of the reactionaries, who are trying to implant ‘separatism’ (*bölgünchilik*) and ‘antagonism’ (*ziddiylik*) among the ‘nationalities’ (*milletler*). Thus, defending the interest of an individual nationality is seen as outright detrimental. In fact, ‘national antagonisms’ (*milliy ziddiylik*) had already been the cause of decline of the region in the past (RS 70-1). Instead, the people of Three Districts should form a unity regardless of any kind of partial interest in order to attain ‘liberty and freedom’ (*azadliq we erkinlik*) and ‘well-being’ (*sa’adet*): ‘Thank God that now in our districts (*bizning bu wilayetlirimizde*), all

the people became one soul and one body (bir jan bir ten bolup) and staged national liberation revolution against slavery (qulluq). (RS 67; also 17, 19)

The decreased frequency of use of national terminology is also discernible by reading issues of *Revolutionary East Turkestan (Inqilabiy Sherqi Türkistan; RET)* of 1947 and 1948, one of the chief propaganda organs of the Three Districts (Forbes 185). From one point of view, the discourse of the Revolutionary East Turkestan is again similar to that of nationalistic periodicals of the 1930s examined in Chapter 3:

‘...The essential goal (*asasiy mekhsed*) of the national liberation movement (*milliy azadliq hérikiti*), that has been occurring incessantly for centuries in our homeland East Turkestan, is to preserve our race, to continue our history, to advance prosperity of our homeland, to develop modern and progressive national education (*milliy ma’arip*) and to exist in the same way as nations in democratic and civilized states (*dölet*) of the world are existing...’ (RET 35: 1)

However, similarly to the two texts analyzed above, in the articles in the *Revolutionary East Turkestan* the words ‘nation’ (*millet*) and ‘national’ (*milliy*) are used rarely, while the context in which these terms are used is also very specific. For instance the armed forces of the Three Districts are called ‘Ili National Army’ (*Ili Milliy Armiye*) or ‘East Turkestan National Army’ (*Sherqiy Türkistan Milliy Armiye*; 26: 3). The term ‘East Turkestan’ is still perceived as the only suitable historical and geographical name for the whole province (RET 33: 1, 45: 1, 151: 1), and there also exists the notion that East Turkestan is inhabited by several ‘nationalities’ (*milletler*; 35: 1). References to independent state in East Turkestan are strictly limited to contexts when speaking about the past (RET 26: 3), while the issue of present political independence of Three Districts on China is ignored. On the contrary, the frequent use of the term ‘Xinjiang’ implies that the region was tacitly perceived as a part of China. The present insurgency is in *Revolutionary East Turkestan* termed ‘national liberation movement’ (*milliy azadliq hérikiti*), or ‘national liberation revolution’ (*milliy azadliq inqilabi*) of November 12, in which ‘all people of Ili’ (*pütün Ili khelqi*) took part (RET 26: 3, 231: 3, 203: 1). The name of a particular high school in Ghulja is Ili Nationalities’ Grammar School (*Ili Milletler Gimnaziyesi*) and its mission is to educate children of various ‘nationalities’ (*milletler*; RET 151: 3). The insurgency in southern Xinjiang in the 1930s is referred to as ‘national liberation struggle’ (*milliy azadliq küresh*) joined by those ‘whose heart was agitated for the sake of homeland, nation and religion’ (*weten millet din üchün jan köydürüdighan kishi*; RET 195: 1). In the present, neighboring Soviet Central Asian nationalities, closely related to the people of East Turkestan, are living in republics which are suitable to their ‘national specifics’ (*milliy khususiyetlik*). These republics form a ‘union’ (*ittipaq*) of ‘independent national republics’ (*musteqil milliy jumhuriyet*) on the basis of ‘friendship’ (*dostluq*) and ‘cooperation’ (*hemkarlik*; RET 151: 1). On the other hand, separatism and nationalism in Three Districts are seen as negative and undesirable phenomena (RET 205: 2). ‘Union’ (*ittipaq*) and ‘friendship’ (*dostluq*) among the peoples of Three Districts is the essential principle of functioning of the society, while separatism and nationalism is a negative and undesirable phenomenon that needs to be eradicated because ‘*the disease of nationalism (milletchilik késili) destroys the friendship among nationalities (milletler ara dostluqi), is the cause of weakening of their strength and opens avenues for enemy conspiracies*’ (RET 25: 1).

Thus, as in the previous sources in *Revolutionary East Turkestan* the word ‘nation’ is also almost utterly replaced by the term ‘people of Three Districts’ (*Üch Wilayet khelqi*), ‘East Turkestani people’ (*Sherqiy Türkistan khelqi*; RET 35: 1), or occasionally by the term

‘the public’ (*amma*; RET 36: 2). Local ethnic groups are predominantly not referred to by the term ‘nationality’. Instead, terms such as ‘brothers’ (*qérindash*; RET 144: 3) or ‘peoples’ (*khelqler*; RET 26: 3, 173: 1, 177: 1) are used in discussions of the respective peoples’ affairs, such as functioning of cultural associations (151: 3). ‘Enemies’ (*dūshmenler*) of the insurgency consist of ‘reactionary elements’ (*eksilhériketchi unsurlar*; RET 26: 3), which can be of any nationality, not specifically Han. The most important social objectives, or ‘people’s interests’ (*khelq menpe’iti*), of the insurgency are ‘democracy’ (*khelqchilik*), ‘equality’ (*baraberlik*), ‘freedom’ (*erkinlik*) and ‘people’s happiness and well-being’ (*khelq bekhtisa’aditi*; RET 36: 2, 173: 4, 214: 3). Ahmet Jan Qasimi is titled ‘our democratic leader’ (*khelqchil rehberimiz*; RET 177: 3), while the leadership is seen as legitimate for ‘all strata of the people of the province’ (*pütün ölke khelqining her qatlamdiki wekilliri*) and inclusive of ‘progressive persons’ (*tereqqiperwer ademler*) and ‘democratic intellectuals’ (*khelqchil ziyalilar*; RET 177: 1). The aim of revolutionary struggle is to do away with ‘superstition’ (*khurapatlik*), ‘illiteracy’ (*jahaletlik*) and ‘ignorance’ (*nadanqliq*) engendered by the oppression of the reactionary Urumchi government and previous administrations which obstructed ‘civilization’ (*medeniyet*) and ‘progress’ (*tereqqiyat*; RET 26: 3). The articles in *Revolutionary East Turkestan* frequently describe successful functioning of ‘democratic education’ (*khelqchil ma’arip*) system, libraries being opened, appeals to the people to assist peasants with harvesting crops, political activity in the region etc. Large importance is attached to physical education of the people, because only in a healthy body can there be a healthy mind, and only with a healthy body the homeland and the people can be strong. Indeed, the physical health of the people is one of the essential duties of the administration after the liberation revolution (RET 224: 1). In agriculture, laxity in struggle against locusts is the same as laxity in struggle against enemies (RET 151: 1). Several articles also mention political and military courses being integrated into school curricula (RET 36: 1, 147: 3, 214: 1, 215: 1). Treacherous officials like Three Gentlemen are interpreted as puppets in the hands of the KMT which is using them to fragment ‘people’s strength’ (*khelqning küchi*) in order to ‘entirely annihilate our race’ (*nesilimizni pütünley yoqitish üçün*; RET 208: 1).

The news coverage of *Revolutionary East Turkestan* often addresses revolutionary struggle of oppressed peoples against imperialism throughout the world. The USSR is seen as a patron of anti-colonial ‘national liberation movement’ (*milliy azadliq hérikiti*) of peoples (*khelqler*) throughout the world (RET 151: 2, 248: 3). Considerable attention is devoted to victories of the Chinese Communist Party’s People’s Liberation Army (*Khelq Azadliq Armiyisi*) over the KMT troops in civil war in China proper (RET 200: 1, 201: 1, 202: 3). Turkey is portrayed as a reactionary country that sided with Germany during the World War (RET 248: 3). The paper also reports on uncovering a reactionary spy ring in Czechoslovakia connected with Catholic Church and involved in anti-state activities and propaganda, or on arrival of Czechoslovakian people’s delegates on state visit to Moscow in 1948. The Czechoslovakian communist coup of February of 1948 is celebrated (RET 200: 2), as well as the election of communist leader Kim Il-sung (1912-1994) as the chairman of Korean ‘people’s democratic government’ in September 1948 (222: 2), are celebrated in the paper. The Soviet Red Army Day (February 23) is pointed out as a festivity (RET 41: 2), while the elections in Soviet Central Asian republics are also closely covered (RET 38: 1). Unlike in the capitalist countries where well-being is available only for certain social strata, according to *Revolutionary East Turkestan* all the people of the Soviet Union can benefit from progress and civilization (RET 27: 1). Soviet Union is also seen as instrumental in bringing civilization to Xinjiang, for instance by running Uyghur, Uzbek, Tatar, Russian and Chinese movie club free of charge at the Ghulja consulate (RET 140/435: 4).

The last source for examination of ideas of nation and nationalism in the Three Districts is the anthology *Poems (Shé'irlar)* written by one Uyghur Son (*Uyghur Oghli*), which is a penname of a currently unknown author. The collection of twenty-four predominantly lyrical poems was published in Almaty in 1948 by the printing house of the *Kazak Land (Qazaq Éli)* journal, one of the periodicals through which the Soviet Union was seeking to assist and steer the revolutionary movement in the Three Districts. *Kazak Land* and other such Soviet Central Asian periodicals, for instance *Oriental Truth (Sherq Heqiqiti)* or *New Life (Yéngi Hayat)*⁸¹, were sent directly from Soviet Central Asia to Three Districts and surrounding areas (Seypullayov 29; Tursun 90). Although the degree of social penetration of ideas presented in the anthology is not certain, the poems are an interesting exemplification of the direction the Soviet authorities sought to steer the Three Districts rebellion. Poems in the collection are dated between 1937 and 1947 and are written in an easily understandable Uyghur vernacular set out in an almost fully phonetic script. We can therefore assume that the anthology was targeting the massive social stratum that had, due to recent Soviet policies, just recently emerged from the darkness of illiteracy, or that it was intended to influence still illiterate citizens, who were expected to listen to recitation of the poems or to memorize them. Notably, vernacularization of the historically elite genre of poetry was intended to openly manifest the Soviets' promotion of popular culture and modernization of the whole society.

Topics of the anthology's poems include school life, family affairs, relationships between children and their parents, revolutionary struggle, war for homeland, freedom, lyricism and nature. The concepts of 'homeland' (*weten*), 'land' (*el*) and 'people' (*khelq*) are the strongest notions in a number of poems (Uyghur Oghli 13-5, 21, 22). It is seen as patriotic 'to devote life to the homeland' (*wetenge jan bérish*) or to die in struggle for it and to become 'people's hero' (*khelq qehrimani*; Uyghur Oghli 23, 29, 34, 35-7, 38-40). The collection features translations of poems by Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837) and even by influential Tatar Jadidist poet Abdulla Toqay (1886-1913; Uyghur Oghli 25, 26, 41, 42-3). There are also panegyrics on Moscow as the resting place of Lenin, who is seen as the father of Uyghur children, and on Stalin, who is perceived as the 'fortune and representative of the people' (*khelq bekhti hem deputat*; Uyghur Oghli 10, 13-5, 17-20). The concept of territorial homeland of western Central Asia is strongly associated with the Soviets and becomes 'Soviet land' (*Sowét éli*), while one poem also introduces the figure of Russian fairy tale hero Father Frost (*Qish Boway*; Uyghur Oghli 16, 28). Central Asian nationalities are termed 'peoples' (*khelq*) which are fighting like 'brothers' (*aka-uka*) with Russians for great Russia (Uyghur Oghli 12, 35-7). Importantly for the central theme of this dissertation, the word 'nation' (*millet*) does not appear a single time in the collection.

The discourse of nation and nationalism in the above examined sources of Three Districts thus constituted a very significant development in early modern Uyghur perceptions of communal identity and interest. It has been remarked above that to a certain extent, the Three Districts' discourse of national interest, namely of righteous government of indigenous nationalities, resembled that of the ETIR and even that of the Three Gentlemen. On the other hand, propagandists of the Three Districts fully subscribed to the concept of Xinjiang's nationalities introduced by Sheng Shicai. In their perception, the geographical entity 'East Turkestan' was inhabited by several nationalities, each clearly defined and distinct from each other. These nationalities jointly rose in a revolutionary liberation movement to overthrow the dysfunctional administration of the KMT in order to defend their interests of well-being,

⁸¹ Not to be mistaken with periodical of the same name published during Sheng Shicai's administration in Kashgar in 1934-7.

progress and modernity. Similarly to Sheng's theory and in sharp contrast to nationalistic ideology of the ETIR and the KMT-affiliated Turkic nationalists, Three Districts' theoreticians rejected the idea of a single Turkic nation inhabiting its primordial and trans-state homeland of Turkestan, of which East Turkestanis are an inseparable part. Instead, the examined ideology of Three Districts viewed Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis, Uzbeks and Tatars as separate nationalities living on the territory of East Turkestan. It appears that, unlike Sheng Shicai, the Three Districts propagandists seemed not to be willing to devote a lot of effort to repeating the defining traits of individual Xinjiang nationalities or verbally mentioning their names, or even to mentioning the national idea as such. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the phenomenon of decreased importance of national labels in northern Xinjiang was partially caused by the natural multiethnic composition of the region and resulted for instance to the existence of common Turkic language used in some periodicals. As asserted elsewhere, in the insurgency '*...a united front of the peoples of Eastern Turkestan was brought into existence, marking an unprecedented development in the nationalist movement of Sinkiang...*' (Newby 1986: 148) Another reason to this reality was that by early 1940s, Sheng's pattern of Xinjiang nationalities took roots among Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals and therefore did not need to be specifically re-explained. Similarly to western Central Asia, in East Turkestan where until 1920s even Turkic intellectuals did not perceive their community as a nation, Sheng's affirmative policies and indigenization in Xinjiang obviously had the effect of relatively quick consolidation of disparate modes of identification into national identities, and therefore the absence of the need to repeatedly refer to them (Martin 73).

Nevertheless, the shift of primary communal identification from 'nation' and 'nationality' to 'people' in the late Three Districts' ideology is closely related to another, more decisive agent behind – the intensity of Soviet involvement in Three Districts' rebellion. Despite the fact that the terms 'communism', 'socialism', 'Marxism', 'Leninism' and other key concepts of Soviet ideology do not overtly appear in the above inspected texts, the discourse of 'people,' as well as of 'nation' and 'nationalism,' is strikingly similar to Soviet ethnic theory and practice, as articulated for instance by a section of the political program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of 1961:

'...Nationalism is the chief political and ideological weapon used by international reaction and the remnants of the domestic reactionary forces against the unity of the socialist countries. Nationalist sentiments and national narrow-mindedness do not disappear automatically with the establishment of the social system. Nationalist prejudice and survivals of former national strife are a province in which resistance to social progress may be most protracted and stubborn, bitter and insidious. The Communists consider it their prime duty to educate the working people in a spirit of internationalism, socialist patriotism, and intolerance of all possible manifestations of nationalism and chauvinism...' (Connor 1984: 477)

The content, vocabulary and lilt of the materials analyzed above suggest that Three Districts' ideologues envisioned, in a way highly similar to Soviet ethnic theory, the nationalities of East Turkestan as a single people, merged by centripetal forces of unity, brotherhood and friendship from several constituent nationalities. The people's ethnic identity clearly existed and was acknowledged by the state, but in fact did not matter much. Concepts such as 'struggle for the nation' or 'national uprising', which were crucial cornerstones of nationalist ideology during Turkic insurgency of the 1930s and KMT Turkic nationalists of 1940s, yielded to ideas such as 'struggle for the people' and 'people's uprising', while ideas such as 'people's representatives' or 'people' liberation troops' started to function with an unprecedented prominence. As in the Soviet Union, in Three Districts nationalism, or in other

words placing loyalty on one's nationality instead on common identity of the people, was ideologically incompatible with the direction of Three Districts' social evolution and gradually started to be viewed as reactionary, counterrevolutionary and decisively negative, and the administration engaged in systematic propaganda about its detrimental effects (Connor 1984: 204-5). Portrayals of Three Gentlemen and their associates reveal that reactionary elements were not defined by the Three Districts' propagandists on the basis of nationality and could even have been members of one's own nationality.

Although the word 'class' (*sinip*) is not used in Three Districts' texts, emphasis on 'people' and mentions of 'strata', 'social groups' and 'reactionaries' reveals the administrators' conviction that, similarly to Soviet assertion, the most significant divisions among the populace were horizontal distinctions cutting across national groupings (Connor 1984: 5). Or to paraphrase words of Ernst Gellner's famous 'Wrong Address Theory,' Three Districts' propagandists believed that by delivering the 'awakening message' to nationalities and not to people of all classes and strata, history or humanity made a grave mistake (Gellner 129). As in the Soviet Union, by eliminating antagonisms among nationalities, loyalties to northern Xinjiang ethnic groupings were expected to crumble and social differentiations and contradictions to be revealed (Martin 67, 73). By furthering the interests of the people, namely democracy, equality and freedom, the Three Districts' government was to create a modern and prospering society where national identity did not pose a significant issue. The national question, in Soviet polity a 'network of problems' arising from the existence of nations and nationalism (Connor 1984: xv), would thus cease to exist in the territory of East Turkestan. Moreover, the almost total absence of references to nation and nationality in Three Districts' texts suggests that, in view of government ideologues, the degree of solving the national question was now much higher when compared to Sheng Shicai's era – administration of Three Districts furthered the interests not of 'fourteen nationalities of Xinjiang', but of a single 'people of Three Districts'. As in the Soviet Union, supra-national identity was expected to come forward after national cultures, following a period of affirmative action and indigenization, had exhausted themselves, the nationalities had naturally merged into a unified people and national territorial forms grew devoid of significant national content (Martin 5, 73, 182).

Resemblance of the Three Districts' discourse of nation and nationalism to Soviet nationality policy is one powerful argument in favor of the above explored thesis that the Soviet Union had a considerable impact on institutions and ideology of the insurgency. Unfortunately, the future course of Three Districts' national policy can be only speculated about, while the degree of social penetration of Three Districts' official ideology can also not be reliably assessed. In fact, as many Muslims of Three Districts undoubtedly knew the recent history of Soviet Central Asia, it is reasonable to argue that the ideology expressed in Three Districts' periodicals did not necessarily reflect ordinary people's affection for the USSR. What is beyond doubt, though, is that the Three Districts' Revolution effectively ended in August and September 1949 after Akhmet Jan Qasimi, Abdukerim Abbasov, Ishaq Beg and other highly esteemed leaders perished in a shady plane crash en route from Almaty to Beijing to negotiate with the victorious Chinese Communist Party about the future of the Three Districts. After the crash was announced by the Soviets with a substantial delay, Seypidin Ezizi, the Three Districts' minister of education became the head of a new group of representatives that consented in Beijing to abandon calls for autonomy of East Turkestan. Simultaneously, the provincial troops surrendered in the KMT-administered districts of Xinjiang and the People's Liberation Army more or less peacefully took over the province by the end of 1949. Muhemmed Imin Bughra, Eysa Yusuf, Polat Qadiri and other

KMT-affiliated nationalist activists fled via southern Xinjiang and India to Turkey, while Mes'ud Sabiri, refusing to leave, was arrested and executed in early 1950s, along with many other senior Turkic officials and activists associated with the both KMT and Three Districts, as well as with captured guerilla fighters such as Osman Batur. Eventually, the Chinese Communist Party instituted minority policy which contained some principles that had appeared in the Three Districts' proto-communist discourse on nation and nationalism. It can be, therefore, said that Three Districts' approach to community and communal interest foreshadowed the stance that would be taken toward national question by the administration of the People's Republic of China throughout the sixty years of its control over Xinjiang indigenous nationalities.

Conclusion

The above research attempted to outline the emergence and evolution of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims', or Uyghurs', ideas of communal identity and interest, or in other words of ideas of nation and nationalism, throughout the early modern period between 1880s and 1949. The examination was based on intellectual perceptions of these phenomena as articulated in historical works, poems, newspaper articles, pamphlets, speeches, memoirs and other texts authored by Uyghur intelligentsia and politicians. Due to lack of systematic field research in how ordinary people of the time felt about their communal identity and interest, this dissertation cannot and does not assess how deeply and widely the ideas expressed in the analyzed texts penetrated early modern Uyghur society. Instead, the probe limits itself to the sphere of early modern Uyghur intellectual history. This dissertation also does not claim to cover the whole process of emergence of Uyghur national consciousness. Although the overwhelming majority of the sources examined by this research have not been previously used by other scholars, and although this dissertation sought to make use of all, often painstakingly acquired, sources available to the author, the fact is that due to the restrictions of the PRC authorities to archival and field research in this sensitive theme, there remain numerous aspects of the topic that await further analysis. However, adopting time of provenance and contents of the available writings under analysis as the chief criteria for research, this dissertation did to a substantial degree manage to answer the two main research questions posed in the Introduction, particularly 'What were the characteristics based on which Uyghur intellectuals perceived their people as a community?' and 'What was regarded by Uyghur intelligentsia as communal interest?' The answers to these questions provided throughout the dissertation enable us to tentatively identify four stages of emergence of early modern Uyghur ideas of nation and nationalism.

Writings of Molla Musa Sayrami analyzed in Chapter 1, *Pre-Modern Basis of National Identity (late 19th century)*, exposed ideas of community and communal interest as they prevailed among scholars at the close of pre-modern society of late Qing Xinjiang at the turn of 19th and 20th century. It was illustrated that the term *Musulman*, or Muslims, which Molla Musa Sayrami used to refer to his community, conveyed a clear sense of common identity defined by shared ancestry, religion, place of residence, mode of life, language, culture, history, mythology, political tradition, relics and memory of the past, sense of solidarity and number of other traits of indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims of the Seven Cities region (southern and eastern Xinjiang) and Zungharia (northern Xinjiang). In other words, in pre-modern era the *Musulman* of Xinjiang formed a basis of modern nation, which in some aspects resembled other proto-national phenomena defined elsewhere by other scholars, such as pre-modern *ethnie* or even a modern nation. In the initial stage of anti-Qing uprisings described by Sayrami, the *Musulman* of Xinjiang also managed to act as a proto-national community seeking to defend its common interest – overthrowing of a religiously and ethnically heterogeneous administration and establishing sovereign jurisdiction in respective localities throughout Xinjiang. Nevertheless, in the subsequent stages of the insurgency *Musulmans'* proto-national identity and solidarity in action dissipated and their movement fractured along the lines of local and social factionalism. Therefore, although the *Musulman* elite strata, and probably also a large proportion of *Musulman* society, in Xinjiang did have a clear sense of proto-national communal identity and interest at the close of pre-modern period, this sense was of secondary importance to local and social interests and thus failed to materialize into communal action. In imagination of *Musulman* intellectual elite at the close of Qing period, the *Musulmans'* shared proto-national identity

failed to generate supra-local and supra-social sense of communal equality and homogeneity, whereas local and social divisions remained prominent stimuli for communal action within the broader scope of pre-modern religious realm. In any way, it is this chapter which corroborates the assumption voiced by other scholars (Geng 1982; Newby 2007, Bellér-Hann 2008; Brophy 2005; Roberts 2009; Rudelson 1997) that the community, who in following decades came to be called Uyghurs, possessed distinct a certain proto-national sense of communal identity already prior to institutional introduction of the term ‘Uyghur’ in 1920s in Soviet Central Asia and in 1930s in Xinjiang.

Chapter 2, *Transfer of National Idea and National Agitation (1880s-1920s)*, focused on indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims’ intellectual elite views of communal identity and interest at the dawn of modernity in Xinjiang from 1880s to late 1920s. It was illustrated that during this period, affluent Xinjiang Turkic entrepreneurs and scholars sojourning in Russia/Soviet Union, the Ottoman Empire/Turkey and China proper grew familiar with local principles of modernism and nation-forming processes (such as those exemplified by writings of a Russian Taranchi Jadidist Nezerghoja Abdusémet) and introduced them into Xinjiang Turkic context. As a result, modernist projects in education, to a lesser degree also in the spheres of printing, publishing and new social organizations, appeared in Xinjiang and triggered a wave of Xinjiang Turkic Muslim cultural awakening. Writings of influential enlighteners Abdukhaliq Uyghur and Memtili Tewpiq revealed that during this period Xinjiang Turkic elites embraced the concept of their community as a modern nation descended from famed ancient Uyghurs and defined by a shared ancestry and homeland. Similarly to patterns ascertained elsewhere in the world, writings and actions of this new class of nationally conscious intelligentsia strongly contributed to emergence of modern national identity of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims. At the same time, the Xinjiang Turkic enlighteners clearly defined and agitated towards attaining communal interests of their nascent nation – modern education and culture leading to improvement of social and economic status of their community. Turkic intellectuals themselves also diligently acted towards defending of these objectives by opening modern schools and promoting progress within their community. In other words, national agitation of the new Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia in this period was a passionate call on indigenous sedentary Xinjiang Turkic Muslims to awaken into national mode of perception of their own identity and to start defending their national interests, which the intellectuals of the period envisioned mostly in cultural and economic contours.

Chapter 3, *Politicization of National Movement (1930s)*, explored the expansion of national interest from realms of culture and economy into the sphere of politics and statecraft. A decisive impulse in this direction was provided by Turkic insurgency in 1930-1934, which caused the provincial government to lose factual control of eastern and southern Xinjiang and resulted in proclamation of the first East Turkestan Republic in Kashgar in November 1933. During this movement, Qutluq Haji Shewqi, Muhemmed Imin Bughra, Emin Wahidi and other Turkic intellectuals and politicians viewed their community as a nation of East Turkestanis inhabiting the homeland of East Turkestan. They also defined other characteristics of the newly awakened, yet, as they believed, primordial East Turkestanian nation inhabiting since the dawn of history its homeland East Turkestan, such as national history, abuse by dysfunctional Chinese administrations, tradition of national resistance to oppressive heteronomy and national symbology. They posited that past exploitation by China justified the insurgency as revolutionary national movement bent on restoration of national territory and prestige. Not surprisingly, for the insurgent thinkers the chief interest of East Turkestanis was national independence that was to enable rise of representative government, republicanism and modernity mainly in the form of national education, press, technology,

progress and development. In the nationalist ideology, these national interests were to be defended by the national state, who by their fulfilling sought to foster national consciousness of East Turkestanis, who were in turn expected to continue supporting the national state. The intertwining of communal identity and interest with modern nation-state transformed the heretofore largely cultural national movement into strongly politicized nationalist action.

Similarly, after the Turkic insurgency was defeated in 1934, provincial ruler Sheng Shicai temporarily built on the nationalist rhetoric and practice of the Turkic insurgency, in which he made several, nonetheless substantial alterations. Namely, he chose to divide the East Turkestanian nation into several nationalities, of which the largest one was Uyghurs inhabiting eastern and southern Xinjiang. He also instituted unity of Xinjiang province with the motherland as the main political interest of Turkic nationalities, thus rejecting the concept of independent East Turkestanian nation-state. Subsequently, similarly to the Turkic insurgent nationalist creed, Sheng either took up affirmative action toward fostering of newly defined identities of Uyghurs and indigenization of their public life, or permitted such trends to keep flourishing. Nevertheless, Sheng's brutal purge of progressive nationalist intelligentsia and abortion of affirmative action toward national identities reveals that his nationality policy was modeled on the Soviet strategy. Namely, Sheng resorted to the efficient Soviet scheme of utilitarian incorporation of the dynamics of national identity and nationalism in order to win trust of local Turkic nationalities, and of their later annihilation. In any way, though, it was a result of Turkic separatist nationalism and Sheng Shicai's affirmative policies in the 1930s that East Turkestanian, or Uyghur thinkers, and arguably also substantial segments of East Turkestanian/Uyghur society, started to see their community as a modern nation bound by distinct national traits and sense of solidarity in common movement toward their national interest of modern and prosperous life endowed with political rights. Importantly, the intelligentsia and the people also expected these interests to be protected by the administration of a more or less autonomous polity in which East Turkestanis, or Uyghurs, formed an overwhelmingly predominant nationality.

Chapter 4, *Significance of National Boundary in Flux (1940s)*, illustrated the shift in intellectual discourse of nation and nationalism that occurred in altered geo-political situation in 1940s' Xinjiang. After the assertion of the Kuomintang authority in Xinjiang in 1944, local Turkic Muslims suddenly became a tiny fragment within the huge population of the Republic of China, which the Han-chauvinist ethnic theory of Chiang Kai-shek moreover defined as a single 'nation of China'. Therefore, KMT-affiliated Turkic nationalists like Eysa Beg, Mes'ud Sabiri, Muhemmed Imin Bughra, Polat Qadiri and others had to engage in fierce arguments with the KMT policy makers about the status of their nation within the Chinese state. They refused to be considered a part of the 'nation of China' and instead claimed that all Turkic groups of East Turkestan were inalienable components of a single Turkic nation comprising all Turkic nationalities of the world. Referring to Three Peoples' Principles and other cornerstones of the ROC legislature stipulating for right to self-determination of all nationalities of China, the KMT Turkic nationalists argued that only if the central government abandoned its discriminatory and chauvinist policy towards East Turkestanis and acknowledged them as a separate nationality with the right to high degree autonomy, could East Turkestan be sustainably administered as a part of China and thus contribute to well-being of all citizens of the Republic of China. In other words, at the moment when Xinjiang was factually incorporated into the ROC administration and indigenous Turks became a minority nationality of China, East Turkestanian intellectuals were pressed to consider institutional recognition of their nation's existence and preservation of its boundaries as the primary national interest. Fulfillment of this fundamental national demand by the

central government was to enable Turkic activists defending secondary national interests, such as political autonomy, representative government, economic well-being or spread of national education and press. Preserving national boundary was seen as the key to survival of distinct Xinjiang Turkic identity within the KMT-dominated China.

In contrast, the insurgency that broke out in three northern Xinjiang districts in fall of 1944 and led to the provincial government's loss of control over the territory until 1949, gave rise to an entirely different discourse of community and its interests. Particularly, the Soviet Union's strong influence over the Three Districts' revolution was reflected in an almost complete disappearance of the vocabulary of nation and nationalism in the texts published in the insurgent press and propaganda pamphlets. The ideologues of the Three Districts' revolution instead perceived their community as a single people formed of all, i.e. not only Turkic and not only Muslim, respective peoples residing in the geographical entity of East Turkestan. In other words, although the notion of ethnicity and national identity did exist in Three Districts, it was the people, not nation or nationalities, who were to strive for their communal interests of liberation, equality and democracy. Nationalism was occasionally even declared a reactionary and detrimental ideology. Similarly to Sheng Shicai, the Three Districts' propagandists also strived to downplay, possibly also to outright obliterate, the significance of boundaries of Uyghurs, Kazaks, Kyrgyz, Taranchis, Uzbeks, Tatars and all other nationalities of Xinjiang and to engender other than national modes of communal identity.

It has been emphasized in the Introduction that this dissertation strives to refrain from adopting a decidedly primordialist, modernist or ethno-symbolist approach to the emergence of modern Uyghur national consciousness. Likewise, the above chapters did not treat nation as a tangible entity; rather they viewed it as an intellectual construct, mode of perception, style of discourse and way of communal identification articulated and disseminated by elites among their fellow compatriots. On the one hand, the defining traits of the *Musulman* proto-national community relevant for Xinjiang Turkic scholars at the close of imperial era continued to shape elite perceptions of communal identity throughout the whole early modern era. At the same time, Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia's notions of communal identity and interest evolved into national and nationalist argument clearly as a result of stimuli generated by modernization trends beyond Xinjiang borders. Similarly, national movement and nationalism was not treated here as a clearly defined ideology which had a certain beginning and attracted a definite number of followers; rather it was viewed as movement of a national community toward attaining a common interest. Along this line, early modern ideas of national interest of Xinjiang Turkic Muslims evolved from cultural self-improvement through political autonomy to preservation of, or alternatively to disposal of, national boundary. Here, it is possible to borrow Miroslav Hroch's aforementioned approach of periodization nation-formation process of European nations (Hroch 1996: 81, Hroch 2000: 23). However, it is important to stress here again that this dissertation uses different criteria than Hroch's perspective and falls into category of intellectual history, generally refraining from assessing the degree of social penetration and modalities of mass national movement. Therefore, the results of this research do not outline a nation-formation process, but establish four stages of evolution of early modern sedentary Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia's *ideas* of national identity and movement:

- Phase A – Pre-modern basis of national identity (late 19th century)
- Phase B – Transfer of national idea and national agitation (1880s – 1920s)
- Phase C – Politicization of national movement (1930s)
- Phase D – Significance of national boundary in flux (1940s)

Besides this more or less narrative thread, this dissertation also revealed several other patterns resonating through the phenomenon of early modern Uyghur nation and nationalism. Firstly, the developments under research again attest to the role of Xinjiang as a pivotal conduit of ideas and ideologies among cultures and empires. Chapter 1 described the interrelation of an indigenous uprising with Khoqandi adventurism, Qing empire-building strategies and British diplomacy. Chapter 2 talked about the journey of the national idea and progressive modernism from Europe-inspired Turkic communities of Russia/USSR and Ottoman Empire/Turkey to Chinese Turkestan, where it interacted with ideas of modern Chinese revolutionary republicanism. Chapter 3 depicted the inclusion of theretofore largely isolated post-imperial satrapy of Xinjiang into the Sino-Japanese conflict and the growth of Soviet influence in the province, which led to combining of Soviet-inspired policies with Republican Chinese state ideology and practice. Chapter 4 illustrated the insertion of Xinjiang into global affairs of World War II, into the plethora of Sino-Soviet ties and into the Cold War, which generated a curious mix of East Turkestanian nationalism and cultural pan-Turkism with Kuomintang state ideology in areas under provincial control and an increased penetration of Soviet ideology into the insurgent Three Districts. It is in the early modern era between 1884 and 1949 that this dissertation delved into, when the immense geopolitical importance of Xinjiang as once vital hub along the Silk Road reemerged in unabated degree. Notably, the strong Russian and Soviet influence on Xinjiang's political, cultural, commercial, military and other affairs throughout the whole period under research in this dissertation is one of prominent traits of the region's central position. As a result, both Czarist Russia and the Soviet Union were regardless of their administrators' stance toward Islam viewed by Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia as a source of Western modernity and a model of progressive development. This mechanism to a certain degree survived founding of the People's Republic of China – the strong Soviet involvement in the Three Districts lasted until the Sino-Soviet split in early 1960s. Since then the Xinjiang border between the two powers became a divide between two openly hostile nuclear powers. In 1980s, as one of the many consequences of the Afghan war, Xinjiang Uyghurs became increasingly exposed to radical Islamist ideology stemming from Pakistan and the region became once again an epicenter of conflict between two antagonistic ideologies. Other nowadays' manifestations Xinjiang's importance in global politics have already been pointed to in the Introduction.

It was also shown by this dissertation that the two antagonistic dynamics outlined in Chapter 1, namely the *community principle* and the *disparity principle* influencing the cohesiveness of Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslim notions of communal identity and interest, remained active throughout the whole early modern era until 1949. The centripetal dynamics of common ethnic origin, religion, language, mode of life, culture, mythology, political heritage and other traits shared by the *Musulman* at the end of pre-modern era were in the following decades elaborated on by concepts such as common ethnonym, homeland, history, plight, liberation movement and many other characteristics, which eventually came to define the East Turkestanian, or Uyghur, nation. As regards communal interest, the pre-modern *Musulmans'* frenzied urge to overthrow ethnically and religiously heterogeneous administration evolved in early modern period into relatively well coordinated East Turkestanian and Uyghur national movement intent on improving their cultural level, attaining political sovereignty and preserving distinct identity in the immense Chinese

realm. However, these aspirations articulated by intellectual strata were confronted by actions taken simultaneously by their compatriots, which were a manifestation of the centrifugal disparity principle. Thus, in 1910s and 1920s when Abdukhaliq Uyghur, Memtili Tewpiq and other enlightened philanthropists promoted secular education and the idea of Uyghur nation, significant portions of religious establishment actively sabotaged the modernist initiative due to their fears of erosion of traditional values and principles of religious realm. At the time when Qutluq Haji Shewqi and other nationalist intellectuals propagandized the concept of East Turkestani nation in Kashgar in 1930s, Khoja Niyaz Haji and thousands of his troops allied with Sheng Shicai, who overtly strived to dissolve East Turkestani identity into fourteen nationalities of Xinjiang. At the time when the Three Gentlemen spread ideals of cultural pan-Turkism in Urumchi and the KMT-controlled eastern and southern Xinjiang in 1940s, their compatriots in the Three Districts asserted that ethnic distinctions among Xinjiang nationalities were not significant and all the people of the province, regardless of their ethnicity and religious creed, should unite in revolution against reactionary government, whose ethnicity in fact also did not matter much. It is worth remarking here that the disparity principle continues to shape Uyghur communal action today, as can be seen for example in the fact that only rarely in last years did Uyghur demonstrations or violent clashes simultaneously erupt in more than a few cities in Xinjiang.

However, this dissertation demonstrated that despite such diverse factionalism in thought and action, during the course of early modern era East Turkestani, or Turks, or Uyghurs, came to think of themselves as of a single nation and to pursue widely consented national interests. In particular, although some Turkic educators of 1920s are known to have pursued pointedly anti-Christian and anti-Western agendas, they at the same time participated in the modern educational enterprise run by Jadids. Although Mahmud Muhiti allied with Sheng Shicai and thus indirectly contributed to consolidation of his totalitarian regime in southern Xinjiang in 1930s, he also actively supported and operated new education projects bent on inculcating Turkic national consciousness. And even though in 1940s the Three Gentlemen and Turkic leaders of the Three Districts allied with directly antagonistic political powers, both groups were clearly aware that they belonged to the same national community and even drafted largely sets of national interest. The phenomenon of a community imagining itself as a nation regardless of varying interests defined and actions taken by its respective segments, or in other words awareness of shared national identity regardless of unity or disunity in articulating national interest and in exerting national movement, could be perhaps referred to as *divided nationalism*. Early modern Uyghur ideas of nation and nationalism reconstructed by this dissertation in fact suggest that a joint and unanimous movement exerted by the whole nation towards nationalist goals is a figment, a practically hardly attainable dream of nationalists, rather than a realistic political prospect. In contrast, it was shown that a community can feel as a nation even when its separate subgroups do not act as one and pursue diverging political objectives.

It is useful here to relate this assertion to the two major studies of early modern Uyghur and East Turkestani nationalism mentioned in the Introduction and referred to throughout this dissertation – the works of Andrew Forbes and Laura Newby. In conclusion of his research, Forbes disputes the idea that the various Xinjiang Muslim rebellions of the 1930s shared a common aim of founding an independent state. Instead, he posits that Xinjiang should be viewed as three separate areas, in each of which Turkic and other Muslim peoples possessed a different degree of loyalty to China. In particular, eastern Xinjiang Turks with long history of close relations to China and northern Xinjiang Taranchis, Kazaks, Huis and other agriculturalists were much less prone to secession than the Tarim Basin Turks. Given

these differing patterns of loyalties to China, the respective insurgent factions could hardly pursue the same political objectives, or, in terms of this dissertation, form a unified nationalist movement. In the following decade, Turkic nationalism was further manipulated and compromised by clash of interests of the USSR and the KMT, and finally quenched by the CCP's takeover (Forbes 229-33). In contrast, Laura Newby claims that despite the obvious fact that Xinjiang Turkic Muslim factions did not share a common objective of founding an independent state, '*...what they did share and what Forbes has perhaps failed to stress sufficiently, was a national consciousness.*' (Newby 1986: 238) This dissertation provided a substantial textual evidence to corroborate the thesis of Laura Newby.

The focus of this dissertation on the intellectual aspect of early modern Uyghur national movement and nationalism, or in other words on the history of early modern Uyghur national idea, also contributes strongly to what has been termed intellectual interpretation of nationalism (Breuilly 149-50). This approach ascribes the most decisive role in fomenting the emergence of nation and nationalism to enlightened intellectuals and modernist activists. Similarly to phases A and B outlined by Hroch (Hroch 1996: 81; Hroch 2000: 23), it was first the travelled and cultured Turkic entrepreneurs and educators who in late nineteenth and early twentieth century brought the national idea to Xinjiang and disseminated it within their community. At the same time, they were able to articulate various cultural interests and educated the first generation of progressive social stratum. Later, the first generation of educators took part in the initial wave of nationalist movement in the 1930s, while their students played a major role in defending national interests in the 1940s. In other words, the new intelligentsia was able to use knowledge and skills acquired in first secular schools to stage a complex political movement aiming to further national values and seriously challenge their alien government. It was this generation of East Turkestani, or Uyghur, intelligentsia who propelled the largely cultural national movement in the direction of heated political nationalism and who accomplished the intertwining of national idea with politics and statecraft. It has been pointed out numerous times throughout the dissertation that it is difficult to assess the degree of social penetration of the above examined early modern intellectual ideas of communal identity and interest. Regardless of this fact, Uyghur articulations of nation and nationalism after 1949 suggest that the albeit small, yet outspoken, circle of early modern Xinjiang Turkic nation workers did succeed in their mission to inculcate national values into minds of their fellow compatriots. This intriguing process is perhaps best exemplified by life and activities of Muhemmed Imin Bughra. Educated in traditional institutions during the first and second decade of 20th, he actively promoted modern education at the turn of 1920s and 1930s, became one of the leading figures of Turkic insurgency during 1930s, authored one of the most authoritative works of nationalist historiography at the turn of 1930s and 1940s and finally returned to the sphere of active nationalist politics in the 1940s. On the eve of communist takeover of Xinjiang, he fled via India to Turkey, where he continued to campaign for the East Turkestani cause until his death in 1965. Muhemmed Imin Bughra is thus one of the most prominent figures of East Turkestani intellectual history with a massive impact on the formation of East Turkestani ideas of nation and nationalism. The impact of his intellectual struggle for national interest is underlined by reverence for his life and work by today's Uyghurs.

A special mention should also be made here about the position of religion in emergence of modern Uyghur, or East Turkestani, national identity. Several studies pointed out that formation of modern nations is closely related to, if not directly caused by or dependent on, the demise of religious old world order (Gellner 1983; Anderson 1991). This dissertation has elaborated on this assertion by showing that even during the process in which

pre-modern imperial and religious Islamic realm in Xinjiang vacated the historical stage to East Turkestani and Uyghur national idea, religious affiliation retained its enormous significance for Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Turks. Despite the fact that in early modern era religion ceased to be the most important, indeed the only, prism through which the *Musulman* saw the world and themselves, becoming an East Turkestani and Uyghur also implicitly meant remaining Muslim. As shown in the above explored texts, virtually all theoreticians of East Turkestani and Uyghur nation and nationalism regarded Islam as one of the fundamental traits of national identity. And although on practical level Xinjiang Turks were since late nineteenth century heavily influenced by Russian and Soviet secular culture, and occasionally even subjected to overtly secularizing and anti-religious pressures by Xinjiang administrators, they never discarded the Islamic section of their identity. Even though some Uyghurs might not have practiced Islam actively, drank alcohol or engaged in other ritually proscribed activities, they still proclaimed their adherence to Islam and regarded religion a fundamental trait of their identity. This status of religious creed and practice within Uyghur national identity continues until today.

Finally, the second section of Chapter 3, which explored ideas of nation and nationalism during Sheng Shicai's administration, and the second section of Chapter 4, which examined ideas of nation and nationalism during the Three Districts' rebellion, can serve as an introduction to Xinjiang nationality policy of the Chinese Communist Party after founding the People's Republic of China. During the sixty years of existence of the PRC, there have been periods when the authorities 'relaxed' (放 *fàng*) or even took up an affirmative action toward identities of *minority nationalities* (少数民族 *shǎoshù mínzú*) of Xinjiang and other regions, such as in early 1950s, early 1960s or 1980s. In contrast, these stages alternate with periods when the party-state aims to 'repair' and 'put in order' (收 *shōu*) the national identity of minorities of China. In these periods, the state emphasizes that all fifty-six nationalities (民族 *mínzú*) of China form a unified 'nation of China' (中华民族 *Zhōnghuá mínzú*), which is bound together by common historical, cultural and political heritage, represented nowadays mainly by their allegiance to the party-state. During drastic socio-political experiments of the CCP such as the Anti-Rightist Movement (反右派运动 *Fǎn yòupài yùndòng*; late 1950s and early 1960s) or the Cultural Revolution (文化大革命 *Wénhuà dà gémìng*; 1966-1976), national identities and cultures of Chinese minorities were subjected to brutal assimilation pressures. Less radical, yet structurally identical efforts are being furthered by the Chinese party-state since early 1990s until today. The concept of the 'nation of China', formed by friendship of all China's nationalities, is an important tenet of current ideology tenet of 'harmonious society' (和谐社会 *héxié shèhuì*) defined by current president Hu Jintao (胡锦涛). According to Chinese policy makers, regional autonomy should not be nowadays understood as administration in the hands of a single nationality, but rather as 'collective rule by all nationalities in the region' (区域内各民族共治 *qūyù nèi gè mínzú gòngzhì*; Millward 2007: 348). Likewise, several Chinese theorists have recently questioned feasibility the concept of 'ethnic autonomy' (民族自治 *mínzú zìzhì*). According to these theories, China is today standing on the threshold of the age of ethnic 'post-autonomy' (后自治 *hòu zìzhì*), in which 'collective rule' (共治 *gòngzhì*) of all nationalities is the most suitable principle to manage inter-ethnic relations (Bovingdon 2010: 77). It is tacitly understood by Chinese policy makers that the leading role in the system of collective rule would be played by the Han as the most populous and advanced ethnic group. This imminent policy shift is also accompanied by increasing hard line stance of the party-state towards Uyghur discontent with Beijing policies. Beijing currently denies legitimacy to any kind of Uyghur dissent and brands all Uyghur actions and statements contradictory to government's vision of harmonious unity of the nation

of China as exhibits of so-called ‘Three Evil Forces’ (三股势力 *sān gǔ shìlì*; *üch khil küchler*) of ‘violent terrorism’ (暴力恐怖主义 *bàolì kǒngbù zhǔyì*), ‘religious extremism’ (宗教极端主义 *zōngjiào jíduān zhǔyì*) and ‘ethnic separatism’ (民族分裂主义 *mínzú fēnliè zhǔyì*).

In this context, besides presenting an outline of emergence of the idea of modern Uyghur nation and nationalism, this dissertation also adds to the discussion of the relationship of Uyghurs and communist Chinese state. In particular, it clarifies why current Chinese communist propaganda and scholarship are engaged in tireless and repetitive condemnations of nationally minded activists and nationalist figures of early modern, as well as contemporary, Uyghur history. In contrast with official portrayals by the PRC party-state of the first East Turkestan Republic and activities of the Three Gentlemen as a fundamentalist pan-Islamic undertaking of an irrelevant group of separatists massively supported by foreign imperialism, this dissertation illustrated that early modern Turkic nationalists in fact defended national interests of their people in accordance with valid legislature of the ROC. The findings of this dissertation actually imply that the concept of modern East Turkestani and Uyghur nation and nationalism emerged partially as a result of movement by Xinjiang indigenous sedentary Turkic Muslims pressed by Chinese abuse to defend their communal interests.

What is equally unpleasant for contemporary Chinese party-state about the emergence of East Turkestani and Uyghur national consciousness is the fact that, as the dissertation illustrates, mistreatment by China, lack of political and human rights, police brutality, official corruption, assimilation efforts, plundering of local resources, immigration of Hans and all other communist policies protested against by Uyghurs today have been condemned by the intelligentsia of their forefathers since the very beginning of modern era in Xinjiang. It is striking how the national interests articulated by nationalists and politicians some eighty years ago are virtually identical with demands of contemporary Uyghur dissent. Sadly, it appears that in the twenty-first century, there exists a place in our world where political and legal status of a group of over ten million human beings has not changed over more than a century. It is for this reason that early modern Turkic figures discussed in this dissertation, such as Muhemmed Imin Bughra, Mahmud Muhiti, Mes’ud Sabiri, Eysa Yusuf Alptekin, Akhmet Jan Qasimi, Osman Batur and many others, remain to be perceived today by dissenting Uyghurs as national heroes and symbols of national resistance to Chinese totalitarianism. The nationalist message of early modern Turkic thinkers examined by this dissertation continues to live clandestinely in today’s Xinjiang.

This dissertation also revealed that even under strongly authoritarian Kuomintang regime some sixty-five years ago it was possible for a Xinjiang Turk to publicly accuse top party officials of Han chauvinism and discrimination of ethnic minorities. Obviously, in KMT-run Xinjiang the discussion about social and political issues was colossally more open and free than in nowadays’ PRC, where public voicing of personal opinions on government policy is illegal. The case of Nurmuhemmet Yasin, Uyghur writer sentenced in 2004 to ten years for writing an allegorical story about a wild pigeon who chooses to commit suicide over living in captivity, signals that even a literary allusion to struggle for legitimate defense of national interest is today punishable by years of incarceration. As in other communist regimes in the past, in contemporary communist party-state the very status of national identity and national movement is ambiguous. The word ‘nationalist’ (*milletchi*) grew to possess strongly negative connotations, which can be fatal to those who became branded by it; even the status of the once positive term ‘one who cares for his nation’ (*milletperwer*) is unclear. It has been remarked in the Introduction that nationalism has been said to be able to function as a sustainable ideology not enforced by other doctrines exclusively in cases, when it propels

oppressed nations. This indeed pertains to the case of Uyghurs. This dissertation has shown that Uyghur nationalist have been engaged in maintaining national boundary, uplifting cultural standard, defending political interests in the face of flawed Chinese administration and other types of nation work from the earliest dawn of modern era until present day. Thus, besides examination of early modern Uyghur ideas of nation and nationalism, this dissertation also hopes to contribute to the increasingly relevant discussion of future of China's Xinjiang policy.

Illustrations

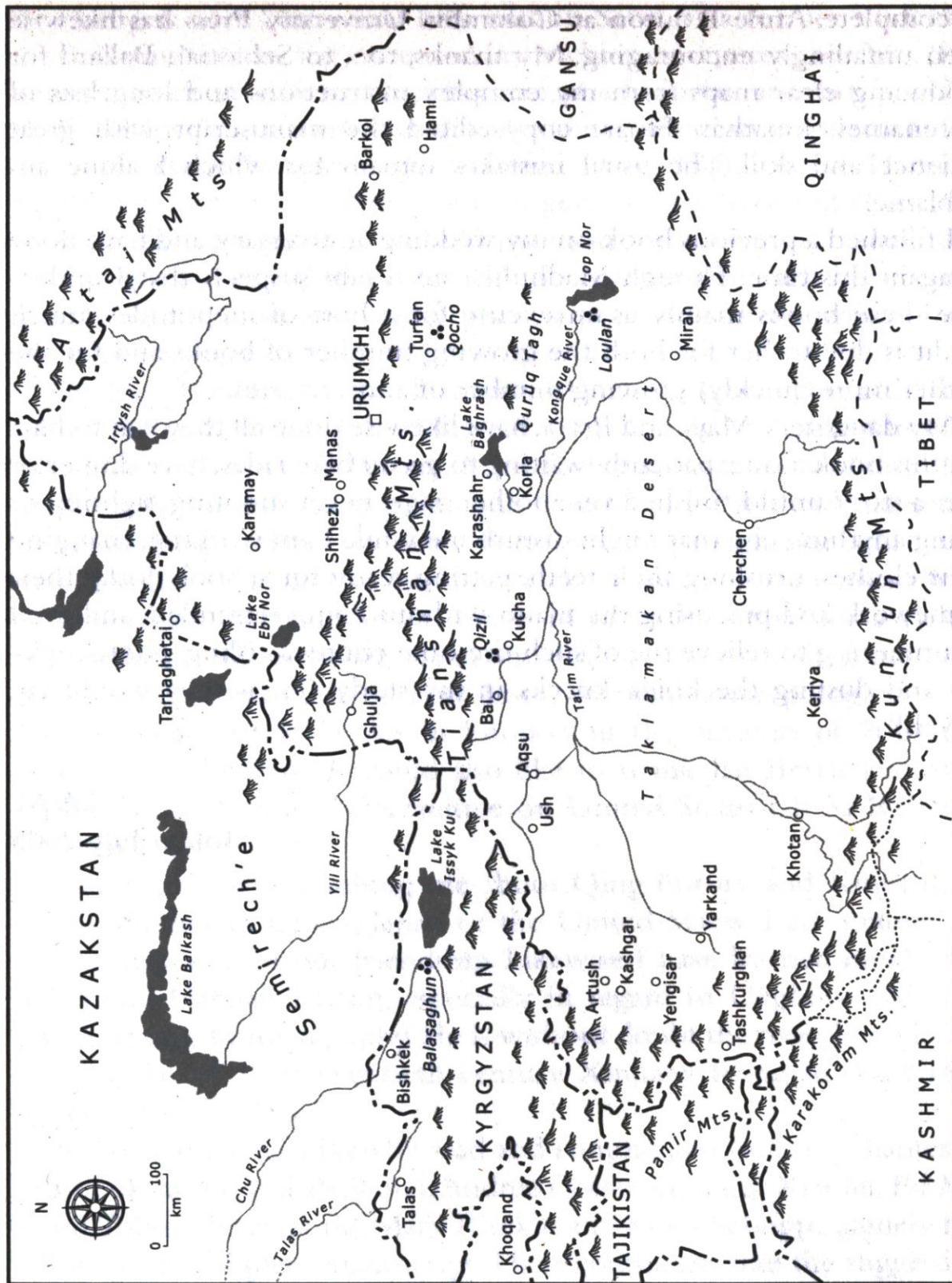


Fig. 1. Map of Xinjiang (Millward 2007: xx).

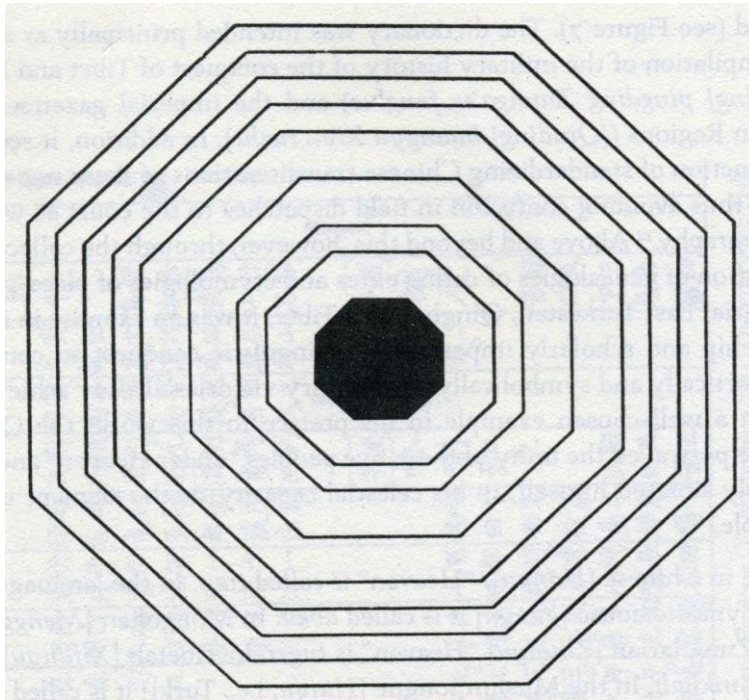


Fig. 2. Scheme of Chinese culturalist worldview with Chinese civilization as the center of the universe (Illustration on the cover of Fairbank 1968).

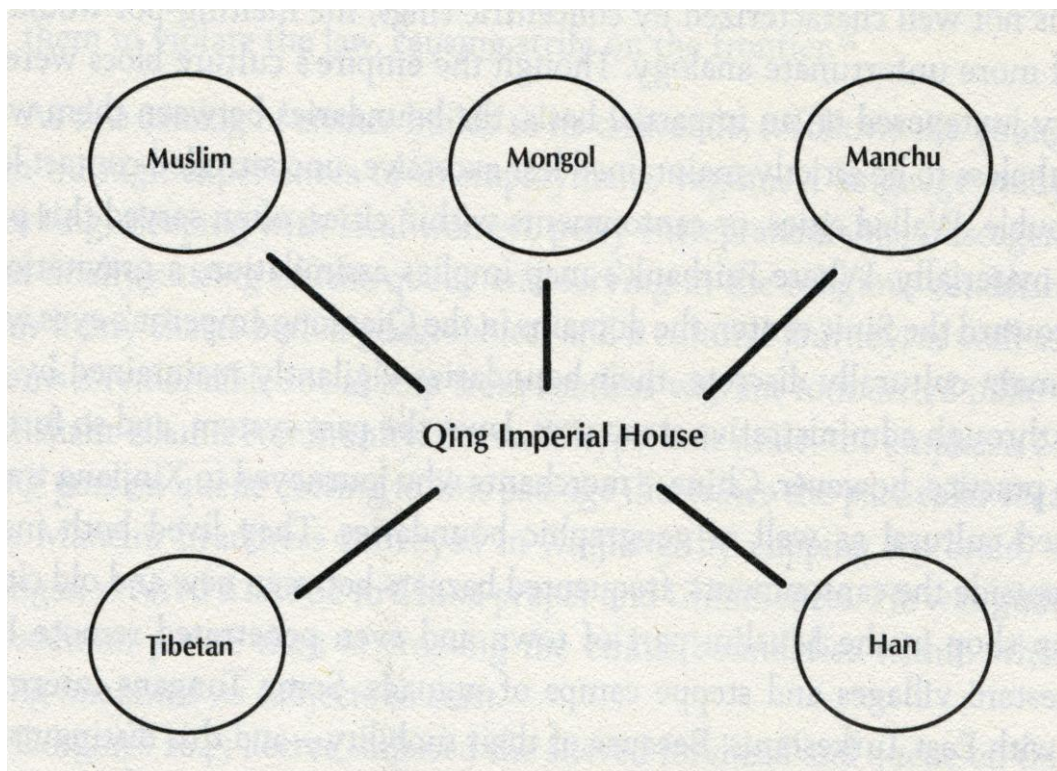


Fig. 3. Scheme of early Qing parallel emperorship (Millward 1998: 201).

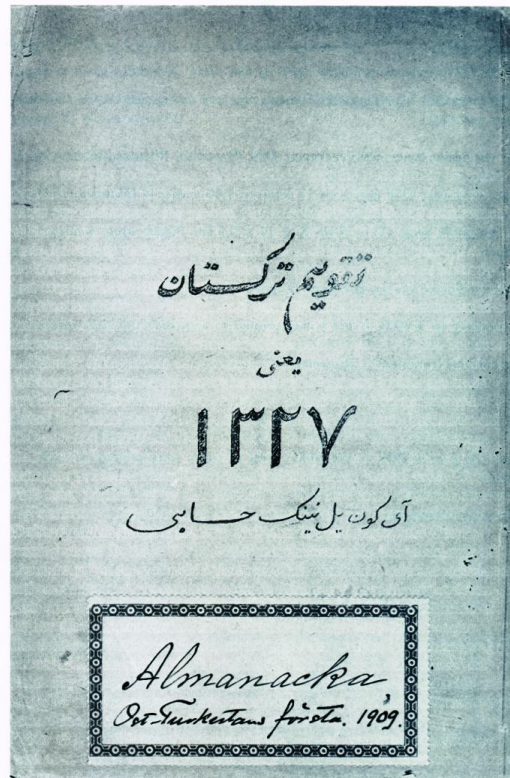


Fig. 4. Title page of *Turkestan Calendar*, i.e. *Calculation of the Months, Days and Year of 1327* (*Teqwayim Türkistan Ye'eni 1327 Ay Kün Yilning Hisabi*; i.e. AD 1909; PFK 1908: 1).



Fig. 5. Title page of *Independence* (*Istiqlal*; PFK 86).



Fig. 6. Title page of a manual *Rearing of Silkworms* (*Yépekchilik. Шелководство. Rearing of silkworms.*) of 1935 (PFK 1935: 3). Place of publication is stated as ‘Southern Uyghuristan’ (*Jenubiy Uyghuristan*).

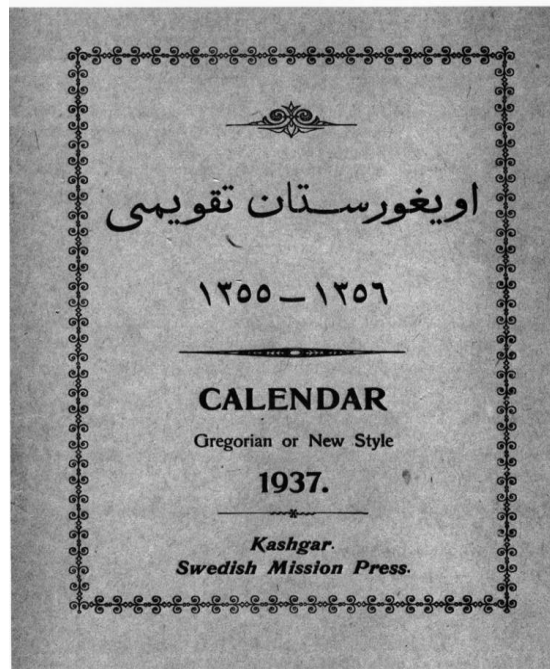


Fig. 7. Title page of *Uyghuristan Calendar* (*Uyghuristan Teqwayimi*) for the year 1937 (PFK 1936: 5).



Fig. 8. Title page of *Tatar Alphabet Book (Tatarcha Elifba Kitabi)*, published by the Ili Tatar Enlightenment Union (*Ili Tatar A'artu Uyushmasi*) in Tatar language in Ghulja in 1941 (Janishif 149).

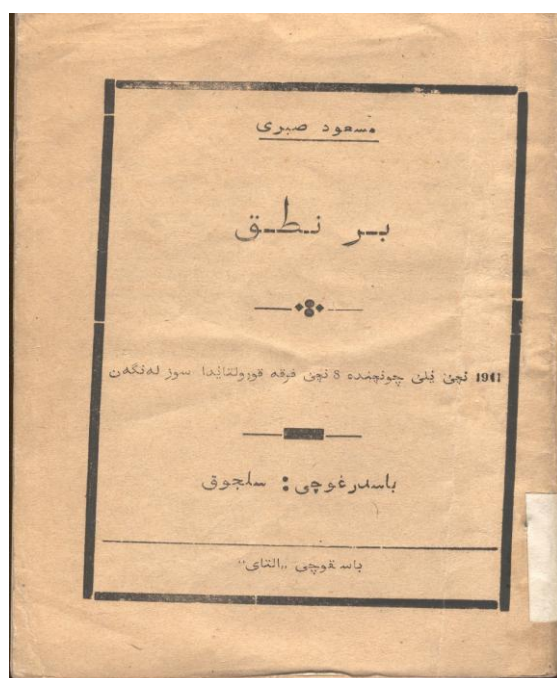


Fig. 9. Title page of Mes'ud Sabiri's *Speech (Bir Nutuq)*.

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ABSTRACT

The dissertation examines evolution of intellectual ideas of nation and nationalism of Uyghurs, a Turkic nation inhabiting today's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in northwestern China, throughout the period from 1880s to 1949. Primary sources of the research are texts written by Uyghur intellectuals throughout the period, in particular historiography works, poems, journalistic articles, memoirs, political essays and propaganda pamphlets. Most of the sources have not been previously researched, the dissertation therefore presents new information and conclusions. The perceptions of nation and nationalism in the sources are also juxtaposed to several general authoritative approaches to nation-formation processes, such as those of Benedict Anderson, Ernst Gellner, Anthony Smith, Miroslav Hroch and John Breuilly. Based primarily on the criteria of historical chronology and content of the respective sources, the dissertation is structured into four empirical chapters.

The first chapter examines perceptions of communal identity in late imperial period and illustrates that although at this stage Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals perceived their community as a clearly defined group, its communal interest did not outweigh interests of numerous local and social sub-groups. The second chapter outlines the transfer of the idea of Uyghur nation from progressive Muslim circles in the Russian and Ottoman empire to Xinjiang and shows that during this period Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals started to view their community as a modern nation and to define its national interest as a pursuit of cultural objectives. The third chapter shows that in 1930s, Xinjiang Turkic intelligentsia perceived their community as East Turkestani or Uyghur nation and articulated its political interests as establishing an independent nation-state or effecting autonomy within Xinjiang as a part of republican China. The fourth chapter illustrates that in 1940s, Xinjiang Turkic intellectuals either saw national interest in preserving the national boundary of Xinjiang Turks as a distinct nationality of the Republic of China, or strove to create a multiethnic society of Xinjiang people whose national identity was not significant.

In conclusion, the dissertation defines the principle of *divided nationalism* by asserting that although throughout the entire period under research Xinjiang Turkic Muslims often failed to act as a unified nation, they nevertheless strongly felt as one. Furthermore, the results of the research also underline the persistence of the region's historical function as a hub of world ideologies, to the prominence of religion among Uyghur national characteristics, to the importance of intellectuals in Uyghur nation-formation process and to the close connection of past Uyghur perceptions of national interest with demands of contemporary Uyghur dissent.

ABSTRAKT

Disertační práce zkoumá vývoj intelektuálních představ národa a nacionalismu u Ujgurů, turkického národa obývajícího dnešní Ujgurskou autonomní oblast Xinjiang v severozápadní Číně, v období od 80. let 19. století do roku 1949. Primárními prameny výzkumu jsou texty napsané ujugurskými intelektuály v průběhu zkoumaného období, zejména dějepisická díla, básně, články v časopisech, paměti, politické eseje a propagandistické letáky. Většina pramenů nebyla v minulosti podrobena zkoumání, práce tedy přichází s množstvím nových informací i závěrů. Představy o národě a nacionalismu v pramenech jsou také srovnány s několika obecně autoritativními teoretickými přístupy k národotvorným procesům, prezentovanými například ve studiích Benedicta Andersona, Ernsta Gellnera, Anthonyho Smithe, Miroslava Hrocha a Johna Breuillyho. Práce je členěna především podle kritérií chronologické posloupnosti a obsahu jednotlivých pramenů do čtyř obsahových kapitol.

První kapitola se zabývá představami společné identity v pozdně císařském období a ukazuje, že ačkoli v této fázi xinjiangští turkičtí intelektuálové vnímali svoje společenství jako jasně definovanou skupinu, jejich společný zájem nepřevažoval nad zájmy četných místních a společenských podskupin. Druhá kapitola nastiňuje transfer myšlenky ujugurského národa z pokrokových muslimských kruhů v Rusku a Osmanské říši a ukazuje, že v této době xinjiangští turkičtí intelektuálové začali pohlížet na své společenství jako na moderní národ a definovat jeho národní zájem jako usilování o převážně kulturní cíle. Třetí kapitola ukazuje, že ve 30. letech xinjiangská turkická inteligence vnímala svoji komunitu jako východoturkestánský či ujugurský národ, a spatřovala jeho politické zájmy buďto v založení nezávislého národního státu, nebo v uskutečnění autonomie v Xinjangu coby součásti republikánské Číny. Čtvrtá kapitola objasňuje, že ve 40. letech xinjiangští turkičtí intelektuálové považovali za národní zájem udržení hranice národa všech xinjiangských turkických skupin, anebo usilovali o vytvoření mnohonárodnostní xinjiangské společnosti, v níž národnostní identita neměla mít velký význam.

Závěrem práce definuje princip *rozděleného nacionalismu* tvrzením, že ačkoli v průběhu celého zkoumaného období xinjiangští turkičtí Muslimové nedokázali jednat jako jednotný národ, tak se nicméně jako jednotný národ nesporně cítili. Výsledky zkoumání dále poukazují na přetrvávající historickou funkci oblasti jako průsečíku světových ideologií, na významné místo náboženství v ujugurských národních charakteristikách, na důležitost role intelektuálů v procesu vzniku ujugurského národa a na úzkou spojitost minulých ujugurských představ o národním zájmu s požadavky současného ujugurského disentu.