

XINJIANG BETWEEN THE GLOBES:
THE OTTOMANS IN THE MAKING OF MODERN XINJIANG

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2010

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Thesis submitted to the
Institute for Graduate Studies in the Social Sciences
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
in
History

By
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Boğaziçi University
2010

Thesis Abstract

Uluğ Kuzuoğlu, “Xinjiang Between the Globes: The Ottomans in the Making of Modern Xinjiang”

This thesis examines the period from the 1860s to 1934 in disclosing the Ottoman, and later the Turkish, influence in Xinjiang. In doing so, this study has two main purposes. The first one is to use the nascent “global history” narrative which seeks to understand the influence of the non-West on the non-West, and opposes the Eurocentric approach to history that views modernity solely as a Western construction. The second purpose is to re-evaluate the ideologies of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism from the local context of Xinjiang. Conventionally, there are two viewpoints with regard to these ideologies. The first one is the viewpoint of the right-wing intellectuals, who regard them as ever-existing ideologies that may be realized once the socio-political conditions are ripe. The second viewpoint opposes the first one, and observes these ideologies as the futile struggle of the Ottoman Empire which is about to perish from the face of history. The Chinese literature on these ideologies is also problematic, for they are merely regarded as the main source of “Xinjiang separatism.” This study opposes these viewpoints, and argues that the Pan-Islamist and Pan-Turkist ideologies of the Ottoman Empire did not have a purpose of liberating Xinjiang from Chinese rule, at least until 1918. The 1930s, on the other hand, witnessed both a socio-political and an ideological transformation in Xinjiang, and the Pan-Turkism of this period was inherently different from the Ottoman period. Therefore, in observing the historical processes these two ideologies have followed, this thesis argues that it is not possible to observe these processes as indivisible components of the same linear line.

Tez Özeti

Uluğ Kuzuoğlu, “Küresellik İçinde Xinjiang: Modern Xinjiang Tarihinde Osmanlı Etkisi”

Bu çalışmanın temel olarak incelediği konu Osmanlı'nın ve daha sonra Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nin 1860'lardan 1934'e kadar Xinjiang bölgesindeki etkileridir. Bunu yaparken göz önünde bulundurulmuş iki önemli amaç var. İlki, Batı-olmayanın Batı-olmayan üzerindeki etkisini anlamaya çalışan ve bunu yaparken de moderniteyi yalnız bir Batı yapımı olarak gören Avrupa-merkezci söyleme karşı çıkan “küresel tarih” naratifini kullanarak bir çalışma vücuda getirmek. İkinci olarak da Pan-İslamizm ve Pan-Türkizm ideolojilerine Xinjiang yereli üzerinden tekrar bakmak. Bu ideolojiler hakkında iki geleneksel görüş bulunmakta. İlk görüş sağ tandanslı düşünürler tarafından ortaya atılan, bu ideolojileri hala gerçekleşmeyi bekleyen, zaman-üstü bir varlığa sahip ideolojiler olarak ele alan bakış açısı. İkinci görüş ise ilk görüşe karşı çıkan, bu ideolojileri kaybolmakta olan bir İmparatorluğun son çırpınışları olarak değerlendiren bakış açısı. Konuya Çin literatürü açısından bakınca da yine benzer sorunlar gözükmemekte çünkü bu ideolojiler şu anda varolan “Xinjiang Ayrılıkçılığının” ana çıkış noktası olarak değerlendirilmekte. Bu çalışma, bu görüşlere karşı çıkmaktadır. Bu tezde, Xinjiang üzerinden bakıldığında Osmanlı'nın etkisinin çok derin olduğu fakat aynı zamanda bu ideolojilerin 1918'e kadar ayrılıkçı bir amaca hizmet etmediği ileri sürülmektedir. 1930'larda ise değişen sosyo-politik ve ideolojik konjonktür neticesinde bu ideolojilerin de yeniden yorumlandığı, fakat bu yorumun Osmanlı döneminden ayrı tutulması gerektiği savunulmaktadır. Osmanlı'dan 1930'lara, bu ideolojilerin bölünmez bir çizginin unsurları olarak nitelendirilemeyeceği ve Xinjiang'da modernitenin kurulumunda lineer bir çizginin geçerli olmadığı ileri sürülmektedir.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study is a product of the years during which my intellectual worldview has fundamentally changed. In the process of this transformation, I am grateful to a lot of people who helped me find my way. First and foremost of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my thesis advisor, Prof. Dr. Selçuk Esenbel, who has not only been a caring advisor but also an excellent mentor in my graduate studies. Without her help, I would never be able to complete this study. Secondly, I am indebted to my jury members, Meltem Toksöz and İsenbike Togan, who have read every page of the study and made valuable comments on every detail.

There are countless other people to whom I would like to express my sincere thankfulness. Justin Jacobs was extremely patient and helpful in answering my endless questions on how to conduct a historical research in China. Although I never had the chance to meet him, he was generous enough to share with me some unpublished journals and documents he had found concerning the history of Xinjiang.

I am also indebted to Johan van Mechelen who has not only showed me that life in Shanghai was indeed different from Changsha, but also made everything possible to facilitate my research in China. Special thanks go to James A. Millward, Jun Sugawara and Kim Hodong who have taken the time to answer my questions on the history of Xinjiang.

I am also thankful to the staff in Shanghai Library, Shanghai Municipal Archives, Prime Ministry Archives in Istanbul and Atatürk Library. Besides, I am very grateful to Bahar, who taught me the basics of Uyghur language while I was living in Changsha. Her altruism was truly heroic, and without her help, I would never be able to read the Uyghur documents. I am also thankful to Li Wentao, who helped me decipher some of the Chinese documents.

As to the financial assistance I have received, I am thankful to TÜBİTAK, Asia Forum for Education, and Confucius Institute who have assisted me both in Turkey and in China.

I am infinitely grateful to my family who has supported me at every step of my life. Their belief in me was what kept me going on during my hard times. My parents Cenap Kuzuoğlu, Asuman Kuzuoğlu, and my brother Sina Kuzuoğlu have all encouraged me in my quest of knowledge and truth.

Finally, my first *xiannü*. Mine Akman was with me every minute during the years that I value the most, and she was truly an angel, or perhaps a romantic witch, who turned every single second of my life into eternal moments of bliss.

*To my family,
who lights the Way in my Quest...*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When the July 5 uprisings took place in the capital of Xinjiang, Urumqi, I was traveling around the western parts of China on my way to Xinjiang, and eventually Urumqi, where I would settle down for the rest of the summer and do some research concerning the current thesis. That day, I was first alarmed by the call that I received from an Uyghur friend of mine residing in the capital. Her voice was creepy and it occurred to me that the things she was telling were utterly surreal. When the fear in her voice was complemented with my family's worried phone calls, I realized that this time it was no simple phenomenon. The city was literally burning.

Although I changed my itinerary towards the southwest, I always had the time to read the news concerning the riot in Xinjiang; luckily, I was one of the people who could read about the incident in Turkish and Chinese newspapers as well as the international ones. Simply put, there was an absolute hysteria that was overwhelming the Sino-Turkish media. The words of Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan,¹ and the reaction it absorbed from the Chinese side were more like a political challenge for a duel.² However, as much as it was hysterical, the chivalric but not so gentle challenge was also the disclosure of a political and historical relationship between Turkey and China concerning the Xinjiang region and the Uyghur (Uighur) people.

In order to comprehend this political clash, it is necessary to take a look at the literature on Xinjiang in the concerned countries. The Turkish and the Chinese scholarship on the region emphasize the historical tie between Xinjiang and Turkey

¹ Turkish Prime Minister Erdoğan asserted that the situation in Xinjiang could be described as “genocide-like” (*adeta soykırım*). See: “Erdoğan: Adeta Soykırım,” NTVMSNBC, July 10, 2009. <http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/24982651>

² Hanzhang Dou, “Tuerqi zongli yao wei zijide huangyan fuze [Turkish Prime Minister Should Be Responsible for his Own Lies],” *Huanqiuwang*, 17 July 2009, <http://opinion.huanqiu.com/roll/2009-07/518017.html>

which started with the Pan-Islamist and Pan-Turkist ideologies respectively at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, and later with the Uyghur Diaspora following the Communist takeover of the region.³ Frankly put, the subject of this study is also to elaborate on the historical link between the Ottoman Empire and Xinjiang and illuminate the triangular connection between the Ottoman Empire, Xinjiang and China. In this work, I propose to handle the subject more in depth, underlining the historical framework of the period concerned. Therefore, to distinguish the current study from the existing Sino-Turkish literature on the subject, we should first analyze the shortcomings of the latter, and point to the necessity of an innovative and original approach to comprehend the historical politics of the region.

Situating Xinjiang – Historiographies of the Region

Chinese Scholarship

In a recent article, Nabijan Tursun makes a thorough analysis of the historiography concerning Uyghurs through the works of both the Uyghurs and the Chinese. Taking Molla Musa Sayrami's (1836-1917) *Tarih-i Hamidi* as a cornerstone of modern Uyghur historiography, he goes on to elaborate on the dynamics which has transformed history-writing fundamentally. Susceptible to foreign influence, Uyghur historiography was first influenced deeply by the Russians, especially after the October Revolution, and then it was the Chinese state to transform and posit “Uyghur history [as] a platform for the competing aspirations of the Uyghur people and the Chinese state”⁴. Staying within the limits of this platform, Uyghur historiography continued to change. During the period between 1949 and 1960, scholarship was under the tight control of the Communist

³ For a recent study on Sino-Turkish relations after 1949 that strictly scrutinizes the issue from an international relations perspective, see: Yitzhak Shichor, *Ethno-Diplomacy: The Uyghur Hitch in Sino-Turkish Relations* (Honolulu: East West Center, 2009).

⁴ Nabijan Tursun, “The Formation of Modern Uyghur Historiography and Competing Perspectives toward Uyghur History,” *China and Eurasia Forum Quarterly* 6, No. 3 (2008), 87-100.

State, and the pre-1949 works were all banned from publication. The Chinese scholarship during 1950s also had a political initiative which was devoted “to create and strengthen a distinct pro-China Uyghur ethnic and historical identity to counter Turkic nationalist sentiments.”⁵ After an academic stagnation during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), Uyghur scholarship resumed starting with the '78 reforms. During the '80s and especially the '90s when the policy reforms of China (*gaige kaifang*) arrived in the region, some Uyghur scholars started to conduct their own independent research like Turgut Almas who adopted an approach that underlined the unique history of the Uyghurs as independent from the Chinese, but his works were also banned. Chinese scholarship which argued for a certain proximity between the Chinese and the Uyghurs has continued to utilize the academia for political means. However, I would like to add one more category to Tursun's periods. As will be given in the following paragraph, Chinese historiography concerning the Uyghurs and Xinjiang has gone through a fundamental conversion after 9/11. Taking into account the post-9/11 scholarly shift towards Islam and everything related to it, I believe, it is quite logical to make a distinction between the pre-2001 and post-2001 scholarship.

With the 9/11 attacks, scholarship concerning Islam has taken acceleration and with Middle-East in the center, all the Islamic countries have become the objects of academic and non-academic studies. With the globalization of “terrorism”, Islam has also become a global phenomenon transforming the world into the Islamic one and the non-Islamic one with the latter, “fated by virtue of belonging to their civilization to act in a particular way,”⁶ loathing the former. This idea was (and still is) also strongly supported by Western scholarship.⁷ During this period, Chinese scholarship has also

⁵ *ibid.*, 91.

⁶ Adeeb Khaled, *Islam after Communism Religion and Politics in Central Asia* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2007), 6.

⁷ Khalid makes a careful analysis of how Western scholarship contributed to dividing the world as such

changed its attitude toward the “East Turkestan Separatism” issue, evidently as a result of the global attitude towards Islam. Especially when the impulsive effect of the 9/11 attacks started to fade, the emphasis on ETIM (East Turkestan Islamic Movement) became more visible in China. As Shen stresses, “on 12 November, ... addressing China's anti-terrorist efforts at the UN, [Tang Jia Xuan (Minister of Foreign Affairs)] showed further signs of switching China's anti-terrorist focus by linking the ETIM to 'international terrorist groups'.”⁸ As a matter of fact, this rhetoric continued during the war with Taliban and on the September 11, 2002 –the first annual commemoration day for 9/11– the US, China, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan appealed to the United Nations for the recognition of ETIM as a terrorist organization.⁹ Further, Beijing demanded that “any country harbouring East Turkish separatists ... meant 'harming the sentiments of the Chinese people’”¹⁰.

Earlier when it was quite impossible even to put the words “East” and “Turkestan” together, after 2001 we witness a proliferation in the number of works on “East Turkestan”, “Separatism”, “Terrorism”, “Pan-Islamism” and “Pan-Turkism” - the latter two often mentioned as *shuangfan* meaning the double Pans. The reason of this sudden change and the consequent burst of academic works on *shuangfan* and East Turkestan separatism lie in the desire of the Chinese academia to re-locate the Uyghur problem in an “Islamically globalized” world; and thus, this desire was manifested in a new scholarly genre that emphasized the influence of *shuangfan* on East Turkestan

in the work mentioned above.

⁸ Simon Shen, *Redefining Nationalism in Modern China – Sino-American Relations and the Emergence of Chinese Public Opinion in the 21st Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 105; Xu and Zhang also comment that the official usage of the term 'East Turkestan' started with Tang Jiakuan and his speech at the UN Congress, see Xu Haiyan and Zhang Yong, “Xueshujie guanyu 'dong tu' wentide yanjiu shulüe [A Research on the Strategies of Scholarship on the 'East Turkestan' Problem],” *Journal of Chongqing Institute of Socialism* 4 (2009).

⁹ John Z. Wang, “Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement: A Case Study of a New Terrorist Organization in China,” *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 47(5) (2003), 568.

¹⁰ Simon Shen, *ibid.*, 105.

Separatist Movement.¹¹ Some academic works may be pointed out in this regard.

A quote from an article entitled “East Turkestan's New Change and Its Motive since 9/11” elucidates the new Chinese attitude towards East Turkestan Separatism:

First of all, ['East Turkestan' terrorists] and the global “holy war” terrorism are merged into one another. Before 9/11, organizations such as “East Turkestan Islamic Movement” (ETIM) were basically still *secular* groups of terrorism, and sometimes even exclaimed Western banners of “liberal democracy”. However after 9/11, organizations such as ETIM started to get influenced by international terrorism's daily increasing consciousness, and slowly started to melt into the global trend of “holy war” terrorism. It is important to note that the terrorist organizations such as ETIM are merging with international holy war organization “Hizbut Tahrir” (*guoji shengzhan zuzhi 'yizhabute'*) which claims to build the country for the Caliph.¹²

It is evident that according to this passage, ETIM's religious foundation did not exist (indeed it was secular) before 9/11. As a matter of fact, it was a spectacular moment of illumination the ETIM members experienced when the planes crashed into the World Trade Center, and it was precisely that very moment that their liberal, secular and democratic hearts have decided to follow the path of Islam in their future struggle with the Chinese government...

As I have stated earlier, I believe that the reason behind the proliferation of works concerning East Turkestan was to re-locate the Uyghur problem in a world which was re-defined with strong Islamic connotations. Within this world where Muslims have

¹¹ This is not to say that the ETIM was not perceived to be a problem before 2001. Indeed, it always constituted a problem in the twentieth century. However, the problem had become more obvious after Xinjiang started to be perceived as a region full of natural resources ready to get exploited by the nascent Chinese industrial reforms. By 1990, the provincial GDP of the region was seven times higher than in 1978. Moreover, the apparent division between the northern and southern Xinjiang, with the former more integrated into China and the latter mostly remaining rural, created dissatisfaction within the population which led to an uprising near Kashgar in 1990. After this uprising, the Chinese state decided to tighten its control over the region; and after 1990, with the state-motivated Han immigration into the province, the region has evolved into an economically Han dominated one. Apart from the economic imbalance, another reason for the fear of East Turkestan separatism was the dissolved Soviet Union. In order to keep the region intact, and to ensure that Xinjiang does not get independent like the neighboring Turkic states, China has made the necessary political adjustments and starting in 1992, through many official statements regarding the Group of Five, assured that “its neighbors would not support movements threatening the internal stability of Xinjiang.” (Nicolas Becquelin, “Xinjiang in the Nineties,” *The China Journal* 44 [2000], 65-90)

¹² Guang Pan and Guojun Zhao, “9.11 yilai dongtu shilide xin bianhua jiqi dongyin”, *Modern International Relations* 10 (2008), 48. (Emphasis added)

become a common enemy with a devotion in bringing the Western world into pieces, Chinese academia has also re-defined its own territorial problem through a new religion-ethnicity paradigm.

Moreover, Chinese literature on the subject demands that the disturbance China witnesses is not a simple problem of Uyghur Islam, rather it is a more global problem which has its roots deep in history, in Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism, i.e. *shuangfan*. Accordingly, the contemporary Chinese scholars believe that if we are to understand the problem of East Turkestan separatism, we need to look deep into the Islamic connections which were established by the *shuangfan* ideologies headed by the Ottoman Empire in the end of nineteenth and beginning of twentieth centuries. Xie Weidong and Wang Yali wrote that the *shuangfan* ideologies were the primary reason of the formation of Sabit Damolla's East Turkestan Islamic Republic in 1933, and according to them, it is again *shuangfan* that continues to vex contemporary Chinese politics.¹³ In another article, Rong Xinwei was accusing Turkey as the center of *shuangfan*, and he claimed that Turkey came at the top of the list of countries that supported the separatist movements in Xinjiang.¹⁴ Gao Bingjiu and Li Dan, holding the same stance with Rong, stated that in Turkey, the Pan-Turkist and Pan-Islamist sentiments that resurfaced following the collapse of the Soviet Union indeed had their roots in the nineteenth century *shuangfan*.¹⁵ Furthermore, the idea of linearity that existed between the *shuangfan* of the nineteenth century and the Uyghur separatism of the twentieth was supported and bolstered by the contributions of well-known Xinjiang scholars of history on the subject-matter. Li Sheng, one of the foremost Chinese historian of Xinjiang,

¹³ Weidong Xie and Yali Wang, "Dong tu' de kongbuzhuyi shizhi ['East Turkestan' Terrorism's Essence]," *Guoji luntan* 4, no. 5 (2002).

¹⁴ Xinwei Rong, "Dong tu' wenti buduan shengjide yuanyin ji duice [The Reason of the Endless Rise of 'East Turkestan' Problem and the Consequent Policies]," *Xinjiang shifan daxue xuebao – zhaxue shehui kexueban* 26, no. 1 (2005).

¹⁵ Bingjiu Gao and Dan Li, " 'Dong tu' kongbu zhilide 'sixiang tixi' yanjiu' [Research on the 'ideological systems' of 'East Turkestan' terrorism]," *Xibei shi daxue bao* 43, no. 4 (2006).

wrote in the first page of his book titled “*East Turkestan*” *Separatism’s Origin and Development* that “Pan-Islamism and Pan Turkism are social ideologies that were formed in the second half of the nineteenth century, entered Xinjiang in the beginning of the twentieth, and under particular historical conditions, acted as the foundation of early ‘East Turkestan’ separatist idea”.¹⁶ Yet another major scholar in the field, Ma Dazheng, did not refrain from defending the same argument in his book co-authored with Xu Jianying, a student of his who had studied Xinjiang history for his PhD.¹⁷

Politically speaking, Turkey is a safe bet for this kind of an argumentation for two reasons. The first reason is that the *shuangfan* ideologies were indeed very powerful in Xinjiang as this study intends to show in detail, and the network created through propagandizing the ideologies probably still has some left-over connections which may have some clandestine links with each other in the region *shuangfan* expanded to. Nevertheless, as this study will display, while even a temporal linear line drawn from the nineteenth century to 1933 is erroneous, such an assumed linearity that persists until the twenty-first century is simply wrong. The second reason is the fact that many of the radical Uyghurs have immigrated to Turkey after the Communist take-over of Xinjiang in 1949. Although this diaspora also extends from Russia to Australia and from Sweden and Germany to the US, Turkey constitutes a strong foot in the location of radical Uyghur intellectuals. Furthermore, after China has made the deal with the above mentioned Central Asian states, some separatist organizations were forced by Kazakhstan to re-settle in Istanbul¹⁸. In short, though not in the same way as imagined by the Chinese authors, *shuangfan* did indeed have an influence in the region, and such historical existence enables the Chinese authorities to play on history for political ends.

¹⁶ Sheng Li, *Dong Tujuesitan fenliezhuyide youlai he fazhan* (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2007), 1.

¹⁷ Dazheng Ma and Jianying Xu, *Dong Tujuesitan mimengde huanmie* [East Turkestan Fades Away] (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2006).

¹⁸ *ibid.* 70.

Turkish Scholarship

As evident from the information given, the historiography concerning *shuangfan* is fundamentally a nationalist one which observes the history of these ideologies in a totally retrospective way. I certainly believe that this approach underestimates the way in which *shuangfan* has entered Xinjiang, and thus makes it utterly unintelligible to understand the real dynamics underlying *shuangfan* ideologies. However, de-Chinafying the regional history would still not be enough to understand the underlying dynamics, for on the Turkish side of the medallion, we still have a huge historiographical quandary about Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism, as well as Xinjiang.

The Turkish historiography on *shuangfan* is also a political as well as a socio-historical quagmire. Although the ideologies of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism should be thoroughly investigated for bearing a very fruitful mine to re-evaluate the late Ottoman period, approximately starting from the 1960s, it has unfortunately become the bailiwick of right-wing individuals who, preoccupied with ideas of Turkic nationalism, have also consumed the historical discourses of Islamism and Turkism according to their own political disguises. In the example of Xinjiang, the Uyghur scholars that have immigrated to Turkey have played a major role in entrapping the Uyghur problem to a simple question of “how to rescue the forsaken Uyghur nation from the evil hands of Communism”. Aslan Alptekin, the son of İsa Yusuf Alptekin who was the leader of the Uyghurs in Turkey, also stresses the shortcomings of this view-point. He believes that since they escaped from communism and took refuge in Turkey, where there was already a social fight over communism and anti-communism, Uyghurs were immediately absorbed by the latter camp and voiced their protest via a discourse of Islamism and Turkism.¹⁹

When Mehmed Emin Buğra, one of the leaders of the East Turkestan Islamic

¹⁹ Mine Akman’s interview with Aslan Alptekin, 24 May 2010. Used with the permission of Akman.

Republic in 1933, published his works in Turkey in the 1950s, he was the first one to introduce Uyghur nationalist cause to Turkey. His work *Sharqi Turkistan Tarihi* struggled to situate the Uyghurs and East Turkestan as a nation with a history independent from China.²⁰ İsa Yusuf Alptekin also utilized a similar narrative in his *Doğu Türkistan Davası* (The East Turkestan Cause), published in 1974, which first gave a general outline of an independent Uyghur history, and then claimed that it was a bounded-nation.²¹ Amaç Karahoca, on the other hand, argued in the 1960s that East Turkestan was a colony of China.²²

During the 1970s, besides the nationalist discourse of the Uyghurs, there also arose a need on the anti-communist camp to place East Turkestan in a greater Turkestan that suffered from communism at large. Baymirza Hayit's, an Uzbek born in Ferghana, *Türkistan Rusya ile Çin Arasında* (Turkestan between Russia and China) was such a work that emphasized a greater cause and thus rendered a greater meaning to the fight for East Turkestan.²³

Needless to say, such discourses and narratives still persist, such as İklil Kurban's two works on the history of East Turkestan, published in the 1990s, both underlining the necessary independence it should achieve.²⁴ In other words, within the political turmoil of the '60s and '70s, and as a matter of fact even now, it has become impossible to produce a research on Xinjiang that is devoid of nationalist propaganda.²⁵

²⁰ Mehmed Emin Buğra, *Sharqi Turkistan Tarihi* (Ankara, 1987).

²¹ İsa Yusuf Alptekin, *Doğu Türkistan Davası*, İstanbul: Otağ Matbaası, 1973.

²² Amaç Karahoca, *Doğu Türkistan-Çin Müstemlekesi*, İstanbul: Doğu Türkistan Göçmenler Cemiyeti, 1960.

²³ Baymirza Hayit, *Türkistan Rusya ile Çin arasında : XVIII-XX. asırlarda Ruslar ve Çinlilerin istilâları devrinde Türkistan milli devletleri ve milli mücadeleleri tarihi*, trans. Abdülkadir Sadak (İstanbul: Otağ Yayınları, 1975).

²⁴ İklil Kurban, *Şarki Türkistan Cumhuriyeti (1944-1949)* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, 1992); and İklil Kurban, *Doğu Türkistan İçin Savaş* (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1995).

²⁵ One exception may be Barış Adıbelli who tried to write a rather objective history of Xinjiang, but his

The rather arbitrary usage of the terms such as “the Chinese colony of East Turkestan” or “the Reds murdering our brothers” (in fact the concept of 'brother' was lastly used by the Turkish media after the July Fifth Incident) have trapped the region in a cage, the key of which was intentionally destroyed to keep it that way. As such, this monopolized incarceration of ideologies has made the topic unfavorable to be selected for individuals who maintained a scholarly distance to the topic; and thus the cage stood still, unshaken.

It will be my attempt to make a crack on this cage and hence on the official/national historiography concerning Xinjiang and thus endeavor to liberate the region from the heavy swamp of nationalism which not only distorts the facts but also damages and mars social memory. In order to achieve this goal, we need to double de-nationalize the history of Xinjiang, both from Chinese and Turkish nationalism. Thus, through following the steps of Duara in de-nationalizing Xinjiang, I will try to bestow upon it an original narrative which intends to globalize the region via linking it to global movements of the period concerned. The period I will be dealing with approximately starts with the reign of Abdulhamid II (1876-1909), continues with the Ottoman defeat in 1918 when Yang Zengxin (r. 1911-1928), the Governor-General of Xinjiang, bans all Turkish activity in the region, and ends in 1934 when the first treaty between the Republic of China and Turkey was signed. A quick summary of the objectives of this current study is crucial for informing the reader of the contents of the following chapters

Objectives of the Study

In this study, I have two main objectives. The first one is to de-nationalize the history of Xinjiang through globalizing the region; and the second one is to re-evaluate the

work is devoid of any originality: Barış Adıbelli, *Doğu Türkistan* (İstanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2008).

historiography concerning Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism, since *shuangfan* has played a significant role in this local globalization. A detailed description of these objectives is in order.

As I have mentioned in the earlier paragraphs, in my re-evaluation of the period I will lay emphasis on de-nationalizing the region from Chinese and Turkish nationalist historiographies. Thus my first aim is to globalize the region so as to disclose the effect of global movements on the region, rather than merely underlining European policies and the direct inflow of Western ideas. This approach is known as the ‘global history’ approach, which is quite new in the field of historiography.

“Globalizing the history”, “globalizing the local/national” are concepts that are still in their infancies. As a matter of fact, “global history” has not even been defined yet, and there is no consensus on its ingredients. There is, nevertheless, a scholarly compromise on what it is *not*. First of all, global history is *not* globalization, for such a synonymous usage reduces the content of the former concept to a mere parochial branch of ‘globalization’ which is commonly viewed as following a singular pattern of linearity since approximately the 16th century.²⁶ In this regard, when ‘global history’ and ‘globalization’ are taken together, they may have a hidebounded meaning of ‘the history of globalization’. However, I believe, ‘global history’ does not simply indicate the history of growing interconnectedness that has started to shape the modern world in the 16th century; nor is it just another way to define nineteenth century globalization that was primarily driven by the needs of capitalism. In contrast, it gives us a new tool to analyze history via disclosing the material and ideological connections between regions that were not necessarily the actual loci where global politics and economy were managed. In other words, ‘global history’ is not the narration of world-history, but a

²⁶ Barry K. Gills and William R. Thompson, “Globalizations, global histories and historical globalities,” in *Globalization and Global History*, eds. Barry K. Gills and William R. Thompson (London: Routledge, 2006), 3.

new way to imagine modernity as something created by the globe as a whole, not privileging some parts of it to others. In order to understand ‘global history’ and its purpose more clearly, the reasons of its surfacing should be stressed.

‘Global history’ as an independent field of study has arisen due to two main reasons. The first reason, which acted as the precondition, was the maturation of area-studies that became a major scholarly field during the 1980s in the US. As Manning suggests, area-studies produced the necessary grounds on which new information would be gathered and new experiences would be accumulated so as to provide a “critique of preexisting frameworks and creation of new paradigms and new categories of knowledge”, which in turn have made it possible to construct a new field for studying global history.²⁷ As such, “global history” was deemed as a novel approach that inherited a rich background from its predecessors, and thus could give rise to a new paradigm to make a contribution to earlier notions of history-writing—a challenge that no doubt contested Eurocentrism.

The second reason for the emergence of global history was indeed the need for a fresh breath for the ongoing challenge to Eurocentrism. “Global history” has emerged as a need to disprove Eurocentrism—which is definitely not a new endeavor—and in doing so the scholars of “global history,” such as Bayly who will be discussed below, suggested that the modern world was indeed created through a process that included world-wide actors, rather than just the European ones. Moreover, I believe that this need to globalize history in order to battle Eurocentrism has arisen out of the need to saturate the gap created by the unfulfilled promises of post-colonial literature.

This venture was firstly put forward by de-emphasizing the attention given to the discursive foundations of modernity. The post-colonial idea of modernity as an infinitely produced body of knowledge that entraps the ‘modern’ man into a world in

²⁷ Patrick Manning, *Navigating World History [Historians Create a Global Past]* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 154.

which there cannot rise an alternative epistemology to challenge modernity was put forward by prominent scholars such as Chatterjee and Chakrabarty.²⁸ However, the attack to this idea and therefore the reaction to post-colonialism were keen, as put forward by scholars from diverse fields of history.

Bahl and Dirlik argue that the postcolonialist project which emerged as a critique of modernity only serves to reinforce capitalist modernity because “in their repudiation of ‘metanarratives,’ ‘foundational’ concepts, and so on, they [contribute] significantly to minimizing issues of structural oppression and exploitation implicit in such concepts as capital and class.”²⁹ Indeed, Bahl and Dirlik also elicit the social repercussions of postcolonialism with the following remark:

It is put to use as Third World ideology by the Third World bourgeoisie, because it offers the double advantage of appearing critical of the West and Western analytical categories, while in fact it is part of a Western discourse that marginalizes the mass population of countries such as India.³⁰

Since the endeavor to repudiate modernity is intimately connected to the struggle to refute—to the extent of denying the existence of—Eurocentrism, the writers of the postcolonialist school have produced a narrative that “erased capitalism from history.”³¹ Meanwhile, other scholars who do not fall into the same ‘post-colonialist’ category tried to argue against Eurocentrism through occulting the hegemonic discourse of Eurocentrism via ‘re-orienting’ the history of the world economy, as attempted by Andre Gunder Frank. A few significant works in the field of Chinese history are instructive to understand the attack on the postcolonialist venture.

Andre Gunder Frank’s *ReOrient*, first published in 1998, was a work that

²⁸ Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London: Zed Books for the United Nations University, 1986); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

²⁹ Vinay Bahl and Arif Dirlik, introduction to *History After Three Worlds – Posteurocentric Historiographies*, by Arif Dirlik, Vinay Bahl and Peter Gran (Lanham: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 6.

³⁰ *ibid.*, 9.

³¹ *ibid.*, 6.

attempted to show the necessity to make a shift in the ideological balance of historiography, but did so in a rather awkward way. Since he was against the ideas of postcolonialism as they disregarded the structural dispositions, Frank's work was an attempt to re-write a world history to refute Eurocentrism through a political-economic emphasis. Frank positioned China in the center of the world, arguing for the rationality of Kondratieff Cycles (a strange synonym for a sort of 'invisible hand') that somehow distribute the economic and political power to different regions of the world during different periods.³² Despite his savvy and innovative approach, I believe, his work remained as a rather extreme attempt to strip Eurocentrism out of its hegemonic existence that failed in the end because a complete shift in writing the political economic history of the world does not necessarily mean a simultaneous epistemological shift in the common minds that might all of a sudden subvert the Eurocentric mindset.

Two years later, Pomeranz produced his work *The Great Divergence*,³³ and thus on the one hand he rubbed the hard edges off of Frank's book by putting forward a more concrete methodology, and on the other, he went one step further and prophesized a totally new argument that underlined the notion of 'luck' in the emergence of capitalism in Britain, rather than in the Yangtze region of China. His work may be stressed as a good representative of how to write world history, since he compared two distinct regions in a thorough manner to come up with a new theory to explain the rise of capitalism.

Rebecca Karl's *Staging the World* has the same concerns toward Eurocentrism but she adopted a rather different approach in problematizing it. Karl emphasized the potency of non-Western ideas in shaping the minds of Chinese intellectuals and in

³² Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: The Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

³³ Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000).

rendering them the ideological tenets to stage China in a global world at the turn of the twentieth century.³⁴ Her research on the Chinese intellectual encounters with the non-West is indeed an elaboration of the scheme set forward by Dirlik who argues that “what has been suppressed . . . are the actual interactions and the discursive interactions that non-European societies provided to one another in the course of their struggles against European domination to create native modernities.”³⁵ Furthermore, I believe that the difference between Karl and Pomeranz is indeed the distinction between world history and global history, with the former observing different regions as givens and figuring out the similarities and dissimilarities, while the latter discloses the potency of the regions that are hitherto perceived as inert, and argues for the mutually constitutive character of non-Western societies. This is the very idea that is promoted in this study, too, as will be revealed in the following paragraphs.

C. A. Bayly’s *The Birth of the Modern World* may be observed as the culmination point of the idea of ‘global history’, for in this work he argues for the need to observe the modern world not as a creation of Europe, but as a mutual creation in which the globe participated as a whole. As Bayly puts it, it was not only Europe which initiated revolutions all over the world, but indeed “many different agencies and ideologies across the world empowered [‘the revolution of modernity’] in different ways and at different times.”³⁶ Bayly’s contribution to the subject-matter is not that he believes in the economic as well as the ideological and socio-political movements in constituting modernity, but that he asserts the need to analyze all these thrusts *globally* to reveal the world-wide impacts the non-West had as well as the West. Therefore he

³⁴ Rebecca Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2002).

³⁵ Arif Dirlik, “Reversals, Ironies, Hegemonies: Notes on the Contemporary Historiography of Modern China,” in *History After Three Worlds – Posteurocentric Historiographies*, by Arif Dirlik, Vinay Bahl and Peter Gran (Lanham: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, 2000), 150.

³⁶ C. A. Bayly, *The birth of the modern world, 1780-1914 : global connections and comparisons* (Malden, MA : Blackwell Pub., 2004), p. 12.

stresses the need to write all local, national, or regional histories as global histories.

Despite the originality of his idea, I believe that his book did not really give the insights he had intended, and it cannot be regarded as more than a world-history textbook for an educated audience. However, it is evident that the task at hand would fill thousands of pages re-thinking world history; and at the same time, it is an exciting project that preaches the possibility of refilling the gaps of the post-colonialist endeavor.

In sum, despite the uncertainty of the actual content, it may be argued that 'global history' is a fresh look at all regions and localities under a new light; and it is this theoretical framework that I take as the basis of my study concerning the history of Xinjiang. In examining the history of this particular region, I argue that we need to globalize the region and disclose the currents that have deeply effected it and played a vital role in the making of its modern history. In this regard, I will underline the role played by a non-Western power, the Ottoman Empire, in the making of Xinjiang's history; and in particular, I will analyze Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism as the ideologies that shaped the social and cultural aura of Xinjiang during the period from the 1860s to 1930s.

The second objective of this study, which is indeed closely linked with the first one, is to re-evaluate the ideologies of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism, i.e. *shuangfan*. It is impossible to de-nationalize the history of Xinjiang without a re-assessment of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism which are misjudged in two ways. The first misjudgement occurs because of the monopoly of right-wing scholars' arguments on the subject. According to some conservative nationalist evaluations, *shuangfan* is discerned to be ideologies capable of permanent existence, the target of which may be achieved when the conditions are socio-politically ripe. Currently, this perception of *shuangfan* is actually a product of the '60s and '70s literature which re-wrote the history of *shuangfan* from the perspective of right-wing political needs and desires, as given above. These

desiderata led to creating a supposed unbreakable link between the *shuangfan* of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the period after the Second World War. Indeed, this attitude conforms to the Chinese extemporal argument of linking the nineteenth century movements with twentieth century separatisms.

The second misjudgement about *shuangfan* is made by non-rightist scholars who have overridden the importance of the ideologies by claiming that they were the last attempt of a falling empire to clench its claws to the world scene, resisting to get perished in an abyss of an unalterable imperial system; and thus they eventually ended up in failure.³⁷ Contrary to both of these misjudging visions, I will argue that the *shuangfan* ideologies were progressive and modern movements which only lasted for a certain, limited period of time. This idea was indeed iterated by some recent Turkish scholars such as Selçuk Esenbel and Cemil Aydın.³⁸ Esenbel's and Aydın's publications on the subject illustrate how these ideologies were utilized globally as they overlapped with Japanese Pan-Asianism, and how they shared a common view about modernity. One shortcoming of Aydın's work is that he purely focuses on Pan-Islamism, and disregards Pan-Turkism as if the latter is merely a synonymous extension of the former. Nevertheless, it is possible to discern from these works that Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism were neither ideologies that may be overridden in potency, nor were they ideologies that may have an element of permanency which enables them to be applied to any time and place.

In this regard, the notion of globalization is potent to comprehend, for it is this

³⁷ Orhan Koloğlu, *Abdülhamid Gerçeği* (İstanbul: Pozitif, 2005).

³⁸ Selçuk Esenbel has a couple of articles on the subject: Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan's Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900-1945," *The American Historical Review* 109, No. 4 (2004), pp. 140-170; Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan and Islam Policy During the 1930s," in *Turning Points in Japanese History*, ed. Bert Edström (Richmond: Japan Library, 2002), pp. 180-214; Selçuk Esenbel, "Osmanlı Hanedan Ailesinden Şehzade Abdülkerim Efendi'nin Gizemli Ölümü," *Toplumsal Tarih* 195 (2010), pp. 42-46. Cemil Aydın's book on the subject is also a detailed study: Cemil Aydın, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

very notion that makes it possible to refute the often used arguments about *shuangfan*. It will be my intention to argue that Pan-Islamism (and later onwards, Pan-Turkism) was not an attempt to resist perishment, nor is it an ever-existing idea that will be actualized one day; rather, it is the manifestation of a global imagination which demanded a re-definition of 'imperial' and 'national' boundaries. This global imagination was driven by the intense period of economic, political, and intellectual globalization when the Ottomans have also started to re-imagine the borders of their states. As such, the Ottomans' belief and enthusiasm in realizing the contents of their imagination were praiseworthy efforts in a borderless world which provided the intellectuals the will and the power to imagine some territories as parts of them, although never conquered or obtained by them.

In realizing these objectives, I believe that the current study may also have a contribution to the debate on Eurocentrism, for I argue that the non-West had such a major impact on Xinjiang's modern history that it would be fallacious to ignore it and give privilege to the influence of the West and China. However, in this regard, I also argue that the influence of the non-West had also stemmed from global conditions, and thus this impact should be taken as an end-product of many actors that have contributed to the making of a modern world. In order to clarify this point, I shall give a brief account on the structure of this study.

Outline of the Study

The history of Xinjiang does not follow a linear path of conquest by a foreign power which may generally be thought to be a process of reaction which slowly leaves its place to negotiation and ultimately to an acceptance of a 'nation' bigger than itself. The path is actually a “crooked line”³⁹ that embodies ups and downs, reactions and

³⁹ I borrow the term from Chatterjee for in the introduction of his well-acknowledged book *Nationalist*

acceptances, contesting narratives and discourses. Since the story I am going to tell is not simply a question of nationalism, the challenge starts once we rip the clothes of nationalism from Xinjiang, leave it naked and try to observe history as it progressed, not teleologically nor retrospectively, but naturally.

Briefly put, in this study, I identify four consecutive periods during which the Ottomans' (and later Turkey's) relationship with Xinjiang became more intense although the degree of intensity and the political motivations related to it were not the same. The first period under scrutiny is the 1870s, which falls under the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz, when the Sultan accepted to give military assistance to Yaqub Khan who was fighting the Chinese to consolidate his power in the Emirate he had formed in south Xinjiang in 1864.

The second period starts with the end of Yaqub Khan's rule in 1877, which almost coincides with Sultan Abdulhamid II's (r. 1876-1909) ascension to the throne. Abdulhamid's Pan-Islamist policy is indeed very different from his predecessor. Instead of persisting the military connection, Abdulhamid had a more global vision where he perceived himself as the Caliph – not merely as a prestigious title, but as a post that had political implications. Therefore, during this period, the connection with Xinjiang continued, albeit in a different way. The emphasis was more on maintaining the religious link, but this did not mean that Xinjiang had a privileged status because the same religious connection was valued everywhere the Ottoman Empire could reach – and in this case, China was one of those countries where Abdulhamid was willing to show his sublime presence.

The third period is the rule of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), which succeeded in establishing a new regime with the Young Turk Revolution in 1908,

Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse he claims that only if he had the chance to name his book by himself, free from the intervention of his friends in the publishing world, he would call his book *Crooked Line*, for he believes that the story of nationalism in India did not follow a linear pattern of realization but rather it was a 'crooked' line that involved deviant patterns and questionings of nationalism.

and dethroning Abdulhamid in 1909. This era witnessed the rise of Pan-Turkism, and the vision of this new ideology preached the need to unify all the Turkic people under one umbrella. During this period, the Ottoman interest in Xinjiang was different from the Hamidian Pan-Islamist policies, and the CUP was more active in the region with officers sent there under the banner of the Secret Organization (*Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*, presumably established in 1911), a clandestine organization that controlled intelligence activities inside and outside of the imperial borders.

The last period I will analyze is the Republican period (1923-1934), and within this period I will specifically examine the 1930s. The 1930s witnessed a period of nationalistic upheavals in Xinjiang that were supported by certain individuals who were either ex-Ottoman Turks that somehow escaped from the Russian hands, and joined the uprisings in Central Asia – known as Basmaci Uprisings during the 1920s – and slipped into the east Turkestan territories; or devoted soldiers who went to Xinjiang to join the fight in purpose. What distinguishes this period from the rest is that during this period, there was absolutely no government support given to the east Turkestanis or the Turkish soldiers who were helping them. Indeed, the Republican government was attempting to form a new foreign policy that completely disregarded, and later on banned, the Pan activities, as will be seen in the 1934 Sino-Turkish Friendship Pact.

To show the “crooked” process of Turkish involvement in Xinjiang, I have divided the chapters into five. The second chapter of the study is a brief introduction to the history of modern Xinjiang which, I believe, starts with the Qing imperial annexation of the region in the 1750s. In this chapter, emphasis is given to the economic and administrative alterations the region has gone through from the 1750s to the Communist Revolution in 1949. Since this study confines itself to the period from the mid-nineteenth to 1934, i.e. the signing of the Sino-Turkish Friendship Pact, this period will receive more attention. It is, nonetheless, crucial to give a brief account of the

period until the communist take-over, in order to inform the reader about the general historical background in the era of the Republic of China.

The third chapter is on the beginning stages of Xinjiang as an arena of global changes. Since Xinjiang may be posited as a geographical region in which the so-called “Great Game” was played between Britain and Russia, this chapter will firstly analyze the dynamics of this global game in the nineteenth century. Stressing the relative disinterest of the British in Xinjiang, who adopted a discreet policy of watching over the Russian activities, the Russian role in the region will be analyzed in detail. This analysis is not simply to suggest the potency of the Russians in Xinjiang, but to disclose the social and economic conditions that paved the way to Tatar activities. Thus, a sizeable part of this chapter will be dealing with the *usul-u jadid* movement, which stemmed from Russian Tatars and demanded the need to reform education in a modern way. My object of analysis will be the way in which the jadidist ideas were disseminated in Xinjiang, and how they influenced the production of a modernist discourse in the region – a discourse that facilitated and demanded the Ottoman interaction.

The fourth and fifth chapters constitute the core of this study. In these chapters, I examine the Ottoman perception of Xinjiang and China both through the lens of *shuangfan*, and through a secular lens that envisioned China as belonging to the same world of oppression the Ottomans also participated in. My intention is to display that Xinjiang was never perceived as a region in need of liberation from China during the Ottoman times. Instead, I argue that it was observed as a part of China, and hence as a part of a country that suffered from Western imperialism. To support my argument, the fourth chapter examines the period from the 1860s to roughly around the beginning of the Great War. In this chapter, the Ottoman-CT and Sino-Ottoman relations will be disclosed along with the Ottoman perception of China in general and Chinese Turkestan in particular. The fifth chapter, on the other hand, will be deciphering the paradoxical

situation CT was in due to the geographical contradiction between the ideology of Pan-Turkism and that of Pan-Islamism during the Great War period, and how this paradox was resolved. This chapter will also examine in detail the Ottoman official activities in the region. However, while dealing with the CUP activities in Xinjiang during the Great War, this chapter will certainly not resolve all the questions that have been hitherto left unanswered. The CUP era and the Secret Organization that was formed during this period still await serious studies, and my contribution to the subject will merely be “educated speculations” on what purpose the CUP had in Xinjiang.

Besides the utilization of secondary sources in Chinese, English, Turkish and Uyghur, these two chapters also draw a substantial amount of information gathered from the Prime Ministry Archives (*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivi*) in Istanbul. I have immensely benefited from the documents concerning Internal Affairs (*Dahiliye*), External Affairs (*Hariciye*), Sultan’s decrees (*İrade*), and Yıldız Palace Archives, besides various other indexes. Moreover, in order to obtain more information on the Turkish people in Xinjiang during the 1910s, I have also used Yang Zengxin’s (r. 1911-1928), governor general in Xinjiang, telegrams which are published in *Buguo zhaiwendu*. However, since I emphasize the ‘perception’ of Xinjiang, it was not possible to rely solely on unpublished materials. Therefore, I have also used published periodicals and books in the writing of this chapter. Periodicals such as *Tearif-i Müslimin*, *Şehbal*, and *Sebilürreşad* which provided a significant amount of information on how China and Xinjiang were perceived; and the daily newspapers *İkdam* and *Tanin* gave me an insight as to whether the 1911 revolution in China was ever scrutinized. I have also thumbed through the volumes of *İslam Mecmuası* and *Sırat-ı Müstakim* but there was very scattered information on China and Xinjiang, so I find it convenient not to include them in my analysis.

The sixth chapter is again on the influence of the Turks in Xinjiang, but it

deserves to stand as an independent chapter because this chapter argues for the necessity to separate the *shuangfan* of the Ottoman Empire from the *shuangfan* of the 1930s. This chapter shows the way in which the Turkish Republican policy towards Xinjiang changed and evolved, and how the global vision of the Empire left its place to a shrunken consciousness that devoted its energy and power to the territories of the nation-state rather than the globe. Having underlined the erroneous approach of both the Chinese and the Turkish scholars in drawing an ideological and a temporal linearity between these two eras, I argue that the perception about Xinjiang has fundamentally changed during the 1930s and the Turkish activities during this period was the product of this change, not a product of the Ottoman ideological background. It was, I argue, in this era that “Chinese Turkestan” became “East Turkestan”, and hence a part of a greater Turkic world that needs unity and liberty. However, it was also in this period that official Turkish support ceased, and the Turkish activities in the region were through individual connections with the region and the powers concerned with the region, such as Japan. In revealing the new age of *shuangfan*, this chapter also emphasizes the Japanese connection, since there was an overlap in the imagination of the Turks and the Japanese concerning Xinjiang. In supporting my arguments, I have used the Turkestani periodicals of *Yaş Türkistan* and *Yeni Türkistan* for they provide a snapshot of the transformation from Chinese Turkestan/Xinjiang to East Turkestan.

Since this study ends with the 1934 Sino-Turkish Friendship Pact, it is also important to understand the historical background of the treaty on the Chinese side. Thus, the sixth chapter also discloses the Chinese perception of Turkey and its relationship with Xinjiang. Given the paradoxical situation created by the place of Xinjiang, how did the two sides agree to sign a treaty? In answering this question, I have greatly benefitted from the Chinese periodicals *Dongfang Zazhi* 東方雜誌,

Shenghuo 生活 and *Xin Minguo* 新民國, and many books and materials on the subject published in China during the period concerned. I have also used the Shanghai Municipal Archives (*Shanghai shi danganguan*) in obtaining information on this era.

This study will end with a re-evaluation of the ideas put forward, and suggestions for further Xinjiang history studies that may hopefully liberate the Turkish scholarship on the region from conservative mind-sets and unproductive thought-patterns; and instead create a new intellectual consciousness that may spearhead further studies on Xinjiang.

I do sincerely believe that the country we live in has a distinguished advantage that renders us a unique opportunity to contemplate on this problematic region. The fact that the most radical Uyghur intellectuals chose Turkey as their destination during exile, the linguistic similarities of Turkish and Uyghur languages, and the sources available to the researchers in the Turkish libraries give Turkey a crucial advantage in determining the destiny of the studies concerning the region. The current work is just a modest attempt to take a little glimpse at the wide opportunities that await more serious and devoted researchers.

CHAPTER II

A MODERN HISTORY OF XINJIANG: 1759-1949

The modern history of Xinjiang, the region designated by the name bestowed upon it as late as 1884, starts in the eighteenth century when the Qing Empire conquered and hence unified the area. I believe that mid-eighteenth century may be asserted as the beginning of Xinjiang's modern history, for it was with the Qing occupation of the region that it started to get incorporated into the Chinese policies, a process that has evolved during the consequent decades. The conquest of Xinjiang was completed in 1759, but it only became an official province of the empire in 1884. As will be explained in this chapter, this provincialization was also bolstered by the Yaqub Beg rebellion in 1864 followed by the formation of a Muslim khanate that lasted until 1877. After it became a province, Xinjiang was intimately affected by all the turmoils the empire was going through, and it also stood up to the Manchus in 1911. After the province was 'liberated' for a short period, however, the power was consolidated again by the governor generals who ruled the region until 1949, when the Communist Party took over. This chapter will describe this process of historical change in detail.

Nevertheless, this process, as also argued in the introduction of this study, should not be reduced to a mere conqueror-conquered interaction; and neither should it be taken as a monolithic process of 'Chinese' domination, for such a conception intrinsically reveals an implicit idea of an immutable, ever-existing 'China' and its respective policies. Rather, we should make a distinction between imperial Qing policies, and the policies of the Republic. However, even these periods, though admittedly having certain common elements, are *not* unaltered within themselves. For example, as the following paragraphs hope to disclose, the Qianlong Emperor's (r. 1735-1796) policy concerning Xinjiang cannot be claimed to be in tune with the principles

Guangxu Emperor (r. 1874-1908) followed; nor is it possible to take it in conformity with the governance of Yang Zengxin, governor general of the region from 1911 to 1928. In other words, the process of Xinjiang's integration into Qing politics, and later on the Republican politics and lastly the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) politics is a process that could be described as a 'plait', not even *a* curved line but many lines curved and twisted into one another.

This chapter will be an attempt to show this twisted process of Xinjiang's integration into the Qing and later the Republican policies. I will write a brief history of the region until 1949, i.e. the Communist takeover. Since the current study is mainly an attempt to understand modern Xinjiang, I have confined my analysis of its history to the period starting with the eighteenth century. Thus, after a short description of the geographical characteristics of the region, our historical analysis will start with the year 1758, when the Qing Empire overcame the Zunghars, and started to expand towards the south.

Geography of Xinjiang

Xinjiang, known as the “Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region”, is the largest province in China today. It lies in the northwestern territories of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and it borders with Mongolia, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India. The region is split into north and south by the Tianshan Mountains that extend roughly from the east of Urumqi, the capital city, to the border of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan in the north, and the Hindu Kush mountain range in Pakistan in the south. The north of Tianshan is known as the Zungharian Basin, and the south forms the Tarim Basin which is mostly dominated by the Taklamakan Desert.

Due to its strategic location on the Silk Road, Xinjiang is home to various oasis cities that still play important roles in the cultural life of the region. In the east, closer to

mainland China lie Hami (in Uyghur, Qumul or Kumul) and Turfan oases which historically had more affinities with the mainland due to their lucrative location. On the other hand, the far west is home to Kashgar, an old city that today borders Kyrgyzstan. Earlier in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Kashgar's neighbor was the powerful Khoqand Khanate (1709-1883) until it was invaded by the Russian forces. Other important oases towns around the Taklamakan are Khotan and Yarkand in the south, and Aqsu, Kucha and Korla in the north. Among other significant frontier prefectures may be included Ili, Tarbagatai, and the Altai mountain ranges, all lying on the western borders. While writing or reading the history of Xinjiang, the substantial amount of land it occupies should always be kept in mind because its great size has made it impossible to create a homogeneous culture, and whereas the eastern oases of Turfan and Hami were always favored by the Qing, the western borders were always vulnerable to outside forces. Taking into account that it would take one month to travel from Kashgar to Urumqi, and at least another week from Urumqi to Turfan, the fragmented cultural structure of the province may well be understood.⁴⁰ As will be apparent in the following pages, the geographical characteristics of the region were very significant in the formation of local as well as imperial politics from the eighteenth century onwards.

Qing Imperial Expansion and the New Territory

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the life in the Central Asian steppes was threatened by three powers, all of them equally excited about building their state power over the vast steppe lands, and the nomadic inhabitants it had. Out of the three powers which were the Russians, Chinese and Zungharians, the first two had the victory; last one was literally burned down to ashes. Although there are abundant sources on the Chinese and Russian expansion to Central Asia, little has been done on

⁴⁰ Justin Rudelson, *Oasis Identities* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 42.

the Zunghars.

During the seventeenth century, a Western Mongol chieftain by the name of Galdan (r. 1671-1697) claimed rule over a land that comprises today's Xinjiang, Inner and Outer Mongolia and parts of Tibet, Kazakhstan and Tibet. As Perdue puts it, it was a nomadic-state building project, and just as its counterparts Qing and Tsarist Russia, the Zunghars' state-building was an outcome of increased military and commercial expansion.⁴¹ However, Zungharian expansion clashed with the interests of the Qing Dynasty, and starting with Kangxi Emperor's three wars against Galdan from 1690 to 1697, and ending with Qianlong Emperor's complete victory, the Zunghars no longer constituted a threat to Central Asian expansion. Vague and recondite as it is, the Zungharian power in the Central Asian steppes vanished in the hands of Qing expansion, and Russian acquiescence.⁴² Thus, moving gradually towards the heart of the Zungharian state, northwest China, the Qing eliminated its rival and asserted its own imperium that was to persist for the following centuries.

When Xinjiang was conquered in 1759, the Qing was already aware of the hardships it might face taking into consideration this huge piece of land without any integrity, shared by *begs*, peasants and nomads. During late 1750s, the alien Muslim inhabitants of the region were referred to as *hui*, though written together with a canine radical, thus meaning "dog-Muslim."⁴³ However, the canine radical ceased to be used after 1760, possibly stressing a conscious endeavor to incorporate Xinjiang into the Qing imperial system. As Millward suggests, "[t]he changed terminology seen in Yang Yingju's [governor general of Shaanxi-Gansu] official correspondence with the court was but the first step in the ideological promotion of East Turkestanis from semicanine

⁴¹ Peter C. Perdue, "Military Mobilization in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century China, Russia, and Mongolia," *Modern Asian Studies* 30, no. 3, Special Issue: War in Modern China (1996), 758-759.

⁴² *ibid.*

⁴³ James A. Millward, *Beyond the Pass: Economy, Ethnicity, and Empire in Qing Central Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 194.

barbarians to full members of the Qing imperial polity.”⁴⁴ This polity, which was not immediately realized, displays a novel Qing imperial conception of the regions it governed. As opposed to Fairbank who for the first time asserted the existence of a Han-centric hierarchy within the empire, Millward argues that approaching the end of the eighteenth century, the Qing State did not favor one ethnicity above another; instead, Qianlong Emperor's endeavor to unify the “five races” (i.e., Manchu, Han, Tibetan, Mongolian and Hui) under one roof was to constitute the Great Harmony (*da tong* 大同) in which “[n]either Han Chinese, nor the Chinese civilization, enjoy[ed] a privileged position.”⁴⁵ In other words, during this early phase of imperial expansion, there was not a simple idea of exploiting the barbarians, and thus it would be more appropriate to argue for a transformation of the imperial mindset during the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, this imperial mindset brought with it new economic and social policies that fundamentally altered the structure of the region.

In order to provide a gradual process for complete unification, the Qing yielded to policies they did not have on the mainland. Thus, firstly the military troops moved in to establish their headquarters in Ili (in Huiyuan, today's Yining), which was to be the locus of administration until 1884. The military governor in Yining only answered to the emperor and the Grand Council in Beijing. Under his authority, the councillors based in other important districts such as Tarbaghatai, Ili and Kashgar-Yarkand areas were supervising individual cities.⁴⁶ Despite heavy militarization of the north and east of Xinjiang –i.e. the region from Ili to Hami–, the Tarim Basin in the south was left to the local *begs* for managing administration. The latter reported to the military powers and

⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 197.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 199.

⁴⁶ James A. Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads – A History of Xinjiang* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 99-100.

they were appointed by *Lifanyuan* 理藩院, the Ministry for Administering the Outer Provinces. However, as Millward and Perdue stress, the role given to the local begs did not mean that Xinjiang was merely a vassal state prior to 1884. Xinjiang *did* become a part of the Qing Empire after 1760s, though the flexible policies of governance differed from the innerland.

Elif Akçetin argues in her PhD dissertation that the eighteenth century witnessed an administrative transformation concerning the border regions, especially after the conquest of Xinjiang, that elicit the extent of flexibility the regime sought to allow. Only five years after the conquest, in 1764, Gansu governorship was incorporated into the post of governor general, hence the former was eliminated. What this meant was that the governor general was solely in charge of military affairs and rationing, and he enjoyed more autonomy from the central state.⁴⁷ In other words, the frontier governance in Shaanxi-Gansu was going through a fundamental change that strengthened the power of the periphery. Therefore, the change in the imperial administrative system was not confined to Xinjiang; rather, the flexible policies in Xinjiang were an extension of the change in the empire's frontier policies. In order to understand the extent of flexibility imposed by the Qing authorities on Xinjiang, a detailed account of the administrative system is given in the following pages.

Flexible Administration in the New Territory

As mentioned, the whole region was under the sole command of a military governor stationed in Yining, and other councillors were managing some important smaller regions. These councillors, until the 1880s, were mainly composed of Manchus and Mongols, and they were known by the Manchu name of *amban*, or the Chinese word

⁴⁷ Elif Akçetin, *Corruption at the Frontier: The Gansu Fraud Scandal* (PhD Dissertation: University of Washington, 2007), 72.

dachen 大臣. Apart from these authorities, there were also the rulers known as *jasaks*.

The latter were governing the nomadic people in the region, and followed a hereditary model of succession, though still under the power of the Qing government. Similar in essence, there were also two important 'princes' (*wang* 王) that ruled in Hami and Turfan. They were granted this post due to their support for the Qing military during the conquest.⁴⁸ However, to understand their position, we should examine the *beg* system, which is the trademark of Qing rule in the Tarim Basin.

Southern Xinjiang and partly the Ili Valley occupied by the *taranchi* farmers, a name given to the east Turkestanis who were moved to Ili by the Zunghars to develop the agricultural lands,⁴⁹ were governed by local begs. After the conquest, these begs became the collaborators of the Qing rule, and while keeping the old administrative structure intact, they adjusted it to conform to the Qing governance. The begs in this region dominated the politics since the seventeenth century, despite power struggles.⁵⁰ During this period, the begs were immediately concerned with their rule vis-a-vis the religious authorities, known as *akhunds*, who were responsible for administering daily affairs.⁵¹ The *hakim* (the ruler was known as 'hakim', only to receive the title 'hakim-beg' with the start of Qing policies) had to be approved by the *akhunds* (foremost by the *A'lim akhund* – the head of *akhunds*) after performing his act of worship in the mosque

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 100.

⁴⁹ Justin Rudelson, *ibid.*, 20.

⁵⁰ The most prominent struggle was between the Ishaqiyya and the Afaqiyya, two rival lineages formed by two relatives of Makhdum-i A'zam. See: L. J. Newby, "The Begg of Xinjiang: Between Two Worlds," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 61, no. 2 (1998), 279. More detailed information about these sects will be given under "Yaqub Beg Rebellion and the Formation of Xinjiang as a Province" in the following pages.

⁵¹ According to the Encyclopaedia of Islam, "akhund" is a title given to scholars. In east Turkestan, "it is used after the name as 'Mister', in Western Turkestan it is given to 'ulama' of higher rank, in the district of Kazan to the chief imam of a place." See: "Akhund," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 1 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960). Togan gives a more detailed etymology of the word in Ahmet Zeki Velidi Togan, "Ahund," *Islam Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 1 (Eskişehir Anadolu Üniversitesi Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, 1997).

at the Muslim New Year. If the akhunds approved, he got to resume his office, if not, “the *akhund* would hand him over to the crowds to be killed.”⁵² In short, there was a sturdy ground for political clashes between the begs and the religious authorities.

With the complete conquest of the Zungharian region in 1758, the governor general in Ili decided to channel his power to the above mentioned southern regions. The next months witnessed the overcoming Qing power in the oasis towns, and in accordance with the conquests, the administrative style of the region was also laid bare, and the Qing imperium followed a policy of maintaining the concurrent political structure. Therefore, a hakim was retained in the cities, towns and villages of the Altishahr region, and also in the region of Ili due to the migrants that moved here for land cultivation. Below the hakim were the officials appointed according to the local circumstances. For example, in Aqsu, a Dolon-*beg* resumed office due to the huge Dolon population.⁵³

The Qing also introduced a ranking system for the begs, ranging from the third to the seventh, with the former as the highest. The system of ranking was essential for Qing dominance, for due to this system, as Newby asserts, “the three religious functionaries, the *qadi-beg* (responsible for interpreting the shariat), the *muhtasib-beg* (responsible for religious education and public morality), and the *padishab-beg* (responsible for policing) ... were now placed under the hakim and his assistant, as opposed to alongside them.”⁵⁴ In other words, while the religious functionaries enjoyed an equal status with the begs prior to the Qing intervention, after the conquest they lost their privilege and obtained a lower rank than the begs. This was undoubtedly a crucial intervention which struck the religious powers while enforcing the power of the begs.

The power-enjoying begs were the strongest allies of the Qing Empire in the

⁵² Newby, *ibid.*, 280.

⁵³ *ibid.*, 282.

⁵⁴ *ibid.*, 284.

new territory, and the system produced gained a quite potent character in 1760s. By then, there already were 270 *beg*-officials in the south, and 15 in Ili. These begs were going on tributary missions to Beijing, their expenses covered by the *Lifanyuan*; and there was not much local resistance to this system, with the Ush-Turfan rebellion in 1765 constituting a strong exception. However, an exception it may be, the bloody oppression of this rebellion by the Manchu troops was engraved in the local population's memory.⁵⁵

It goes without mentioning that loyalty was a quintessential component of Qing appointees. This is evident in the 'prince-system' (very similar to the *jasak* system as mentioned earlier) that ensued in Turfan and Hami until the Republican times. As a reward for Abdullah who brought Hami into the Empire, and for Emin Khoja (*khwaja*) who assisted the Qing in their conquest of Turfan, they both received *jasak*-statuses. Abdullah was appointed as the prince (*wang*) of Hami in 1698, whose descendants continued to rule it until 1930, when Jin Shuren, the governor general of Xinjiang, abolished the khanate; and Emin Khoja as the prince of Turfan, in 1756.⁵⁶ It is still possible to enjoy the elegant architecture of the Emin Minaret in Turfan, in the middle of vineyards, with a caption that expresses gratitude to Emin Khoja for supporting the Qianlong Emperor in unifying the country. As such, confident of the leaders' fidelity, Hami and Turfan enjoyed a privileged status and their administrative structure was completely different from the Tarim Basin *beg*-system.

Briefly put, the differences of administration in different parts of this huge territory is a sign that displays the flexible administrative policies adopted by the Qing state. Negotiations of power in certain parts (as in southern parts), allowing semi-autonomous khanates in others (such as Hami and Turfan), and yet virtual conquest of

⁵⁵ Newby notes that before the revolt in Ush-Turfan in 1765, there were 34 begs, whereas the number shrunk to merely 4 after the huge reduction in the number of the population. *ibid.*, 289.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, 286-288.

the north (Ili and Tarbaghatai) were all evident measures to perpetuate Qing control over the region in the long run. Nevertheless, it was not only the administrative measures that helped incorporate the region, but also the economic ones which changed the composition of the population while boosting agricultural production and bringing the region economically under Qing control.

Economic Policies and the Tuntian

With the conquest, the military moved in first to assure a dominant governance of the region. In this regard, an essential part of the Qing policies concerning Xinjiang was the establishment of stationed garrisons which took part in the agricultural production of the region in order to develop it in terms of sustainability. These stationed garrisons were referred to as *tuntian* 屯田, and were the successors of Han and Tang Dynasties' stationed garrisons, as well as the predecessor of the Communist Era's Production and Construction Corps (*shengchan jianshe bingtuan* 生產建設兵團)⁵⁷; and in fact, they were not only confined to Xinjiang but were spread throughout many regions across China, from Manchuria to Guangdong, Fujian to Gansu.⁵⁸ I find it necessary to examine the Xinjiang *tuntian* in order to understand the economic as well as social structure of the province, and to comprehend how the production process was controlled and promoted during the imperial times.

Starting with the Kangxi reign (r. 1661-1722), but reaching their highest level of efficiency after Qianlong, *tuntian* were stationed military garrisons that apart from engaging in military training and affairs also took part in agricultural production, hence they were assumed in the end –at least in Xinjiang– to evolve into an institution that

⁵⁷ For more information on the Communist period's Production and Construction Corps, see: Dazheng Ma, *Xinjiang shengchan jianshe bingtuan licheng [The Development Process of Xinjiang Production and Construction Military Corps]* (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2007).

⁵⁸ Tingyu Wu, "Qingchao tuntian [Qing Dynasty's Tuntian]," *Shixue jikan*, no. 4 (1996), 32.

could develop the region agriculturally and provide the army with its material necessities, especially with food. Thus, the idea behind the Xinjiang *tuntian* was the creation of a self-sustaining military institution.

The first Qing *tuntian* formations in Xinjiang start during the first half of the eighteenth century. Li Min designates the period from 1716 to 1756 as the commencing period. During this time, although not large in scale, *tuntian* were mainly stationed in the Turfan-Hami area, and they were basically providing service for the military activities in the region.⁵⁹ However, during the Qianlong period the *tuntian* have expanded enormously and obtained an institutional character.

Starting with the complete abolition of the Zungharian power in the region, and the consequent 'unification' of Xinjiang in 1750s, the character of the *tuntian* also started to change from a small unit that provided service, to an institution that introduced significant economic and social changes to the area. Expanding outwards from the base in Turfan-Hami, the garrisons were established in other big cities such as Urumqi, Ili and Tarbaghatai. The expansion of the *tuntian* to all of northern Xinjiang also meant increasing problems of controlling money and resources. The soldiers were not enough to make all the revenue needed for supporting the army. Moreover, as Millward and Perdue point out, exploring the water sources as well as the steppes to find suitable places for land agriculture needed large sums of money and labor.⁶⁰ In this regard, the Qianlong Emperor –in conformance with the suggestions of the ministers in Xinjiang such as Nu San, Tiao Hui and Fan Shishou– decided to promote migration into the region, in order to open up the vacant lands to production. The Beijing government also inaugurated a policy of private landholding in order to stimulate productivity,

⁵⁹ Li Min, "Lun qingdai xinjiang tuntian de zhongda lishi zuoyong [A Discussion about the Historical Effect of the Qing Period Xinjiang Tuntian]," *Xiyu Yanjiu* 3 (2001), 9.

⁶⁰ James A. Millward and Peter C. Perdue, "Political and Cultural History of the Xinjiang Region through the Late Nineteenth Century," in *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland*, ed. S. Frederick Starr (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe Inc., 2004), 58.

which meant a shift of the earlier notion of state landholding.⁶¹

Thus started a period of state-supported immigration. The soldiers were encouraged to move in with their families permanently, provided that they will receive long-term leases or private ownership of the lands. This also implied another serious transformation in the social and military composition of the region: the Qing military garrisons were changing from rotating army groups into institutions that were to remain in the region permanently.⁶² Furthermore, as a part of a country-wide policy of developing the *tuntian*, the Qing government also established a system of awards and punishments that promised the officers promotion once their incumbents succeed in opening a certain amount of land to cultivation.⁶³

As a result of these transformations, the *tuntian* first started to alter in its own composition. Whereas during the formation period it was fundamentally comprised of soldiers (*bingtun* 兵屯), now there were other stations, such as Banner stations (*qitun* 旗屯), which had the same essence with the *bingtun*, the only difference being the former constituted by the bannermen; Civilian stations (*mintun* 民屯), which were the immigrants that settled in Xinjiang following Qianlong's policy; Muslim stations (*huitun* 回屯), that are today referred to as the 'Uyghurs' in the Chinese documents, and

⁶¹ James A. Millward and Peter C. Perdue, *ibid.*; and Dachun Ji, “Qingdai xinjiang tuntian yanjiude lizuo – ‘Qingdai xinjiang nongye kaifashi’ duhou [The Masterpiece of Qing Period Xinjiang Tuntian Research – ‘Qing Period Xinjiang Agricultural Development’],” *Zhongguo bianjiang shidi yanjiu* 4 (1997), 113.

⁶² Millward and Perdue, *ibid.* Millward and Perdue also draw our attention to the Sibe (Xibo) ethnic minority in Xinjiang who are the only remaining Manchu-speaking people. Together with Chahars and Solons, they were sent to Xinjiang from today's Heilongjiang, Shenyang, and Zhangjiakou (all in the northeast) as bannermen during the eighteenth century; see: Haizhen Niu and Xiaoying Li, “Qingdai xibei bianjiang tuntian zhengce yu jingji kaifa [The Qing Policies of Northwest Borderland Tuntian and the Economic Development],” *Shihezi daxue xuebao – zhexue shehui kexueban* 19, no. 4 (2005), 13.

⁶³ Li Min, *ibid.*, p. 32.

that mainly occupied the *tuntian* in Ili⁶⁴; and Criminal stations (*fantun* 犯屯, also referred to as *qiantun* 遣屯, or 'transfer stations'), which were composed of criminals that were sent to Xinjiang.⁶⁵

Following the immigration supported by the state until 1781, close to 20,000 households left for the vacant lands of east and north Xinjiang. Even though the government's policy of support ceased in 1781, the immigrations continued, and by 1800s one-quarter of the region's population was comprised of the new settlers.⁶⁶ However, despite the expansion of the *tuntian*, Qing government's policy was mainly restricted to the east and north of Xinjiang, south Xinjiang not receiving due attention, hence rendering the region susceptible to foreign invasion. Therefore, the time between 1796 and 1864, i.e. the period that starts with Jiaqing Emperor (r. 1796-1820) and ends with the Yaqub Beg rebellion (1864-1877), may be referred to as the period of hardships for the *tuntian*, due to the endless Khoqandi invasions from the south. In spite of the Qing government's caution against the Khoqandis after their first invasion during the 1820s, and the consequent stationing of garrisons in the south, they were never as capable as the northern counterparts. Especially with the Yaqub Beg rebellion, a serious blow was dealt on the *tuntian*, which were to enjoy a period of revival only after the suppression of Yaqub Beg in 1877, continuing until 1911.

Despite the administrative and economic policies which in the long run happened to act as the basis of supreme Qing control in the region, there was no policy of Sinicization pursued, at least until 1884 when the region officially became a province of the Empire. Before then, although a policy of immigration and permanent settlement

⁶⁴ For more information on the Hui *tuntian* in Ili, see: Chen Yang, "Qingdai Ili huitunde tuntian tizhi wenti [The Problem of the Qing Period Yili Huitun Tuntian System]," *Zhongguo nongshi* 18, no. 2 (1999), 38-45.

⁶⁵ Yan Yang, "Qingji xinjiang tuntian dui dangdi shaoshu minzu renkoude yingxiang [The Qing Period Xinjiang Tuntian's Influence on the Local Minority Populations]," *Zhongyang Minzu daxue xuebao - zhehue shehui kexueban* 29, no.1 (2002), 16-17. Also see: Haizhen Niu and Xiaoying Li, *ibid.*, 10-13.

⁶⁶ Millward and Perdue, *ibid.*, 59.

was maintained, intermarriages were prohibited. Even after the Khoqandi Jahangir invasion during 1820s, when the Qing decided to increase military settlement in the south, the policy of prohibited intermarriage still continued.⁶⁷ This policy is indeed an indication of the limited cultural influence the Qing was after. In other words, the Qing policies of incorporating the region into the Empire did not possess Chinese cultural imperialist notions of changing the customs of the local population and adapting them to the 'civilized' way. However, these were all to change after the suppression of the Yaqub Beg rebellion and the consequent claiming of the region as an integral provincial part of the Qing Empire.

The Yaqub Beg Rebellion

The khanate of Yaqub Beg, established after the chaotic Muslim upheaval that took place in Chinese Turkestan in 1864, was a product of several related and unrelated factors. Yaqub Beg, it seems, was the 'lucky' one who assumed leadership of the Khoqand invasion into the Chinese dominion right after the Muslim rebellion (instigated by the *hui* 回, i.e. Chinese Muslims, not the Turkic Muslims) that started in Kucha. In order to comprehend the causes of the rebellion completely, I will first examine the ideological/religious basis of the rebellion in relation with the economic reasons of the Khoqandi invasion. Afterwards, I will describe how the Yaqub Beg Khanate was founded following the rebellion, and how it crumbled down to pieces after a short period of time.

With the conquest of the region in the 1750s, the Qing court decided to cut the trade routes that connected Xinjiang with Inner Asia. This was a great threat for the Khoqandis who enjoyed a substantial amount of commercial interest, for they were the main traders between east Turkestan and Russia. The loss of trading privileges was the

⁶⁷ Newby, *ibid.*, 296.

main reason of the Khoqandi interest in the Chinese region, however, this interest was stimulated by the religious order of Khoqand which competed with that of east Turkestan, for the two main lineages pertaining to these territories were descendants of the same order – Makhdumzadas.

Makhdum-i Azam, meaning “the Supreme Teacher”, was an influential figure who became the leader of the Naqshbandi order that gained influence in the Altishahr region of today's Xinjiang. Makhdum-i Azam's real name was Ahmad Kasani (1461-1542) whose ideas penetrated Altishahr rapidly although he never went there himself.⁶⁸ It was Makhdum's son Ishaq Wali (d. 1599) who arrived in Altishahr and together with his followers –known as Ishaqiyya– he became the head of various Naqshbandi masters in the region, and established his influence over the Altishahr population.⁶⁹ The challenge came with the arrival of another Makhdumzada, Muhammad Yusuf (d. 1653), who was supported by the Moghul khans for the latter's authority was harmed by the Ishaqis, and the newcomer was to be their salvation. Muhammad Yusuf gained lots of supporters not only in Altishahr but also in Western China – so much that he was ultimately poisoned by the Ishaqis. His son, Hidayat Allah (d. 1694) who is commonly referred to as Khoja Afaq (“the Master of Horizons”) established the rival branch known as the Afaqiyya.⁷⁰ Fletcher gives a detailed account of Khoja Afaq's journeys into today's Gansu, and describes the way in which his teachings came to be accepted by Chinese Muslims,⁷¹ but for our purposes, I shall continue to examine how these two rival branches came to dominate adjacent geographies.

With the Qing conquest of Altishahr, the Ishaqiyya lineage diminished

⁶⁸ Joseph F. Fletcher, ed. Beatrice Forbes Manz, *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia* (Norfolk: Variorum, 1995), 7.

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, 8-9.

⁷⁰ *ibid.*, 10.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, 13-20.

substantially in number, the remaining ones becoming the cooperators of the Qing rule; and the Afaqis were exiled to the Khoqand Khanate, where they obtained a supreme position. According to the accounts of the ethnographer Valikhanov, there were around two hundred Ishaqi followers in Khoqand during mid-1800s whereas the number of Afaqis surpassed fifty thousand households, which indicates the immense power of the latter.⁷² As Kim suggests, the Afaqis “claimed to represent the aspiration of those Muslims seeking to throw off the 'infidel rule'” in the Chinese territory “by means of a 'holy war'.”⁷³ As such, during the first half of the nineteenth century, the Qing rule in the new territory was constantly compromised by the Khoqandi invasions that had an ideological stimulus for supporting the Afaqis in the name of controlling the ‘holy lands’. Nevertheless, their religious enthusiasm was, in fact, an outcome of the economic benefits they sought in the region.

Justifying their raids into east Turkestan via the sectarian claim of the Afaqis, the Khoqandis' real purpose was to gain exemption from custom duties. Their demand for such an exemption was refused by the Qing in 1817, and consequently the attacks started in 1820s, continuing until 1832 when the Qing submitted to the demands of the Khoqand Khanate. The treaty signed in 1832 between Khoqand and the Qing Empire is taken to be the first ‘unequal treaty’, and it was after the concessions granted to the Khoqandis that Kashgaria “became an awkward bone being gnawed apart in the struggle between the Qing and the Khoqand for dominance in the region.”⁷⁴

Khoqand, even after the treaty, still pushed for further grants from the Qing, such as the occupation of the Sariqol region in the Pamirs which was an important trade route; and once the stability of the region was shaken by China's internal problems

⁷² Hodong Kim, *Holy War in China – The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia 1864-1877* (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 14-15.

⁷³ *ibid.*

⁷⁴ *ibid.*, 29

following the defeat of the Opium War, the Khoqandis again took arms to obtain further concessions. The internal problems were a result of the Opium War defeat in 1840s and the consequent rebellions of Taiping (1850-1864) and Nian (1851-1868). It was during these periods that the Khoqandi invasions intensified, and with the Muslim rebellions in Shaanxi and Gansu in 1862, the power of the Qing in east Turkestan was highly undermined. It was the result of this power vacuum that the southern territory was invaded by the Khoqandis, and a new state under the leadership of Yaqub Beg was assembled. However, this new khanate was not merely a result of the Khoqandi invasion but rather that of a general discontent among the Muslim population towards the Qing authority.

It was in 1864 that the first uprising took place in Kucha which quickly spread out to Urumqi, Yarkand, Kashgar, Khotan, and Ili. Despite the labeling of the 1864 revolt as an “Uyghur national-liberation movement,” Kim suggests that “there was no concept of Uyghur nationality among the people in Xinjiang at that time and even no expression to designate all the population there.”⁷⁵ Instead, he assumes that the common element which united all the people from different ethnic backgrounds was their Muslim identity, and therefore, it was Islam –and the fight against the ‘infidel’ rule– that provided a unifying meaning to the revolt. It would be an exaggeration to assert that the revolt had erupted solely as a result of religious sentiments, since the underlying reason for the uprising was evidently the exacerbation of the social conditions of the local people, especially peasantry. However, once the revolt had erupted, it immediately possessed an Islamic character; and it was Yaqub Beg (not Khoja Buzurg who was formerly the head of the Khoqandi expedition) that assumed leadership and formed an Islamic state in 1867 uniting Kucha, Ili, Khotan, Yarkand, and Kashgar, i.e. the Althishahr region, declaring the latter as the capital city.

⁷⁵ *ibid.*, 68.

The conquest of Altishahr was not sufficient for Yaqub Beg, and thus in 1870 he moved towards the east and annexed the region until Turfan, including Urumqi. Having established a huge khanate, Yaqub Beg was shrewd enough both to realize the 'great game' between Russia and Britain and act quickly to sign treaties with both of them, and to realize the importance of obtaining an ideological legitimacy from the Caliph, the Ottoman Sultan Abdulaziz.⁷⁶

Despite Yaqub Beg's willingness to sign a treaty with Russia, it took some time until Russia realized that Yaqub Beg was persistent in his rule over Kashgar and Urumqi. When Yaqub Beg first invaded Kashgaria, Russia was extremely uncomfortable with this new rival, for since the "Sino-Russian Ili-Tarbaghatai Trade Regulations" signed in 1851, it was already enjoying the trade privileges and the economic concessions the Qing State had endowed. With the sudden emergence of this new power, Russia was afraid to lose its advantages - a fear that led to the occupation of Ili in 1871. However, realizing that Yaqub Beg might indeed hold power for a long period of time, the Russians at last signed a "Free-trade Treaty" on June 2, 1872. As will be elaborated in the next chapter, the Russians, despite their treaty, never possessed an advantage in their trade with Kashgar until the region was re-conquered by the Chinese in 1878.

On the other hand, the British involvement in the region was also demanding. The British interest started when the Russian expansion toward east Turkestan was realized after the Russo-Kashgar Treaty of 1872.⁷⁷ Kim suggests that the commence of British relations with Kashgar owed a great deal to individual expeditions of the British. For instance, R. B. Shaw's writings on Kashgar according to the impressions he'd

⁷⁶ The details of the Russo-British conflict will be analyzed in the third chapter, and the relationship between Yaqub Beg and the Ottoman Empire will be examined in detail in the fourth chapter.

⁷⁷ It should be remembered that the "Sino-Russian Ili-Tarbaghatai Trade Regulations" signed in 1851 was kept as a secret by the Russians in order to avoid any conflict with the western powers, especially Britain. See: Sheng Li, *Xinjiang dui su (e) maoyishi, 1600-1990 [History of Xinjiang and Soviet (Russian) Trade, 1600-1990]* (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 1992), 60.

gathered during his visit to the region in 1868-9, made an impact on the British policies concerning east Turkestan, for he depicted a “rosy picture of the wealth and security in Eastern Turkestan” and argued for the involvement of Britain in Kashgar, which is “a kind of Eldorado.”⁷⁸ Officially, however, the region became the center of attention after 1872; and during the first days of December 1873, the British mission headed by T. D. Forsyth reached Kashgar, and on the 2nd of February 1874, the Anglo-Kashgar commercial treaty was signed.

The Formation of the 'New Territory': Xinjiang between 1884 and 1911

Despite Yaqub Beg's brave thrust into east Turkestan and the consequent establishment of a Muslim state, the Yaqub Beg Khanate did not prove to be strong enough to confront the Qing advance into the region in 1877. It is a well-known fact that the Qing Empire re-conquered the region in 1877-8 under the command of the governor general of Gansu and Shaanxi, Zuo Zongtang, however, it deserves attention to observe the policy-debates between great political figures and hence the process of province-formation.

Overcoming Yaqub Beg and reconquering the Western Territory was a grave challenge for the Beijing government, for in 1874 Japan conquered Formosa and the Qing officials realized the urgent need to strengthen naval defense. The military progress of the new global actor, Japan, from the sea, and the Russian and British threat that would intensify with the loss of northwest created a dual necessity, with only enough resources to cover one of them. The great debate that ensued during this period was between two high-ranking officials; one of them, Li Hongzhang, who was a controversial figure that argued for strengthening the naval coastline, and the other, Zuo Zongtang, the governor general of Shaanxi and Gansu who earlier served as the governor general of the important coastline provinces of Fujian and Zhejiang. The latter,

⁷⁸ Hodong Kim, *ibid.*, 144.

conciliating his knowledge of naval defense with the necessities of securing the northwestern frontier, pressed hard for the need to pacify the northwest in order to avoid the plausible expansionary motives of Russia and Britain.⁷⁹ In the end, it was Zuo Zongtang who became victorious in this debate and the Qing government agreed to undertake an extremely laborious and expensive military expedition.

I believe that this debate between Li and Zuo should not be reduced to a mere debate between the modernists and the traditionalists, with Li on the side of the progressive modernists who envision China as in need of adapting to the new global transformations, and Zuo on the side of the traditionalists whose “views reflected China's traditional fear of invasion by barbarian hordes from the Central Asian steppes,” as Hsü puts it.⁸⁰ The dichotomous categories of 'modern' and 'traditional' connote a temporal difference with the former as ahead of time and the latter as lagging behind. However, what we witness in this debate is a simultaneous interpretation of the political and military situation via two different lenses, thus it would not be rightful to claim that Li's opinion was intrinsically superior to Zuo's and that the Qing Empire's decision in favor of the latter represents the backward and traditional imperial mindset that still governed the political vision. Instead, the fact that Zuo Zongtang's policy was indeed supported by the central government displays a new state ideology that defines the frontier as an internal part of its imperial system. It was this new vision that resulted in the defeat of Yaqub Beg through a very tactical military strategy, and the incorporation of the Western Territories (*xiyu*) into the Qing Empire under the name *Xinjiang*, the New Territory, in 1884.

After the Qing conquest of Xinjiang in 1878, the only place still left unconquered was Ili, which was by then under the jurisdiction of the Russians, since

⁷⁹ Immanuel C. Y. Hsü, “The Great Policy Debate in China, 1874: Maritime Defense vs. Frontier Defense,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 25 (1964-65), 212-228.

⁸⁰ *ibid.*, 212.

their invasion of the region in 1871. However it was not long before the negotiations started between the two sides, with Sui Hou representing the Qing government. On March 1879, there was an official meeting during which it was stated that the focal point of bilateral relations was basically trade rights. The Russians agreed to give back Ili in return for trade rights, compensation for losses, and steps to ensure some rights in the Tianshan Mountain and the northern places. Accordingly on October 2, 1879, the two sides agreed to sign the Treaty of Livadia which allowed the Russians to do free trade in Mongolia and Xinjiang. Besides Ili, Tarbaghatai and Kashgar, the Russians also obtained the right to build trade-related consulates in Hami (Qumul), Turfan, Urumqi, Gucheng, and Jiayuguan, the last of which is a city in modern day Gansu Province's Hexi Corridor that connects Xinjiang with inner-China.⁸¹

However, the signing of this agreement aroused great opposition in the country, and so it was not ratified by the Qing government; and Sui Hou suffered great humiliation on his return to Beijing, luckily escaping death penalty. Instead, on February 1881, "The Ili Treaty" –also known as the Treaty of St. Petersburg– and "Revision of Land Route Trade Regulations" were signed, the latter having some modifications such as imposing restrictions on the trade rights concerning Jiayuguan, changing of the article "exemption from taxes in Tianshan Mountain's north and south parts" to "temporary exemption from taxes" in the mentioned regions, and leaving out the right to build up trade-related consulates in Hami and Gucheng. Ili was given back to Qing, but the right to build up consulates in Ili, Tarbaghatai, Kashgar, and Urumqi was granted to Russia together with the right to build trade circles.⁸²

At last, all the regions that earlier belonged to the Qing Empire were recovered; however, this recovery no longer connoted the earlier universal visions of the Qianlong

⁸¹ Sheng Li, *ibid.*, 95.

⁸² Sheng Li, *ibid.*, 95-99 and Michael Edmund Clarke, *In the Eye of Power: China and Xinjiang from the Qing Conquest to the "New Great Game" for Central Asia, 1759-2004* (PhD Dissertation: Griffith University, 2004), 79-80.

Emperor. The exhaustive struggle to retrieve the northwestern territories now signaled a different perception concerning the region. As Clarke states, “Xinjiang was beginning to be no longer perceived as an Inner Asian dependency where concessions to external powers in order to buy peace and stability were feasible ... as they conflicted with the imperial goals of integrating and assimilating Xinjiang with the rest of the Empire.”⁸³ Thus, the region was re-named as *Xinjiang*, no longer only a part of the Empire, but an indispensable province that possessed the same bureaucratic structure as the inner provinces, which meant that the *beg* system was to be curbed.

Dismantling the old Qing policies came together with an immense inflow of Han immigrants. Besides the resettlement of Han population, the Qing authorities realized the need to impose Chinese education on the population to assimilate and 'civilize' them. Thus started an era of education, and as early as 1883, there were seventy seven schools established, fifty of them in more Turkic areas such as Kashgar, Aqsu, Yarkand and Khotan.⁸⁴ The primary focus was to teach the students (most of whom were Uyghur notables) the Chinese ways (*huafeng* 華風) and thus the curriculum had classical elements in it such as the standard works of Trimetrical Classic, the Classic of Filial Piety, the Book of Odes, and the Analects. However, there were also some local modifications for facilitating learning since many of the students did not even speak Chinese. For example, there was a glossary called Chinese and Muslim (Language) Juxtaposed; and in 1879, Annotated Arabic Character Sampler was ordered to be printed 500 copies to be distributed in Turfan and four eastern and four western cities of Xinjiang.⁸⁵

This classical mode of education was to be abandoned only in 1907 when Du

⁸³ Clarke, *ibid.*, 81.

⁸⁴ Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 142.

⁸⁵ *ibid.*, 143.

Tong was appointed as provincial superintendent of schools. Having received his education in Japan, Du adopted a very modern way of education. Only a few years after he assumed duty, the number of schools expanded to over 600 and the number of students, who were not confined to the children of notables, increased up to an amount of 15,000. These new schools were located at both cities and rural areas, educating the common people as well as the elite.

Proliferation of schools with an aura of assimilation also inaugurated discontent among the local population. İsa Yusuf Alptekin's, the leader of Uyghur diaspora in Turkey after 1950s, father and his family were among those who were uneasy with the new Qing policies. Alptekin writes that the elite families of those times refused to send their child to the idolatrous schools. Most of the time, these families replaced their children with poor boys and sent them instead. İsa Yusuf Alptekin's grandfather had also refused to send his son to these schools, and thus he hid him in a cottage in the grass lands, and sent a poor kid instead. However, when this farce was uncovered, he (İsa's father) was forced to enroll. Thereafter, the boy was not allowed in the house unless he changed his clothes, and once he changed the clothes, his mother could only hold them with a pair of tongs.⁸⁶

These new imperial policies were the main factor behind the 1911 İli Uprising which was an outburst of the civilian discontent as well as an extension of the Wuchang Uprising that took place in inner China and quickly spread out virtually to all of the country. It was in early 1912 that Emperor Xuantong (r. 1908-1912) abdicated and the Qing Empire ceased to exist. What we observe after this date is the Republican period that started with the Guomindang (GMD), the Nationalist Party, as the leading political force. However, as the country politically dismantled after a short period of time, what followed was a period known as the Warlord Era; and during this phase, the GMD's

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, 145, and İsa Yusuf Alptekin, *Esir Doğu Türkistan İçin: İsa Yusuf Alptekin'in Mücadele Hatıraları* (İstanbul: Doğu Türkistan Neşriyat Merkezi, 1985), 36.

power vacillated between being a mere nominal exercise and a real one that controlled the whole country.

Xinjiang between Revolution and Oppression, 1911-1949

The period between 1911 and 1949 is sealed by events that still await disclosure.

Nominally a province of China, Xinjiang was indeed acting as an autonomous state; and due to its distance from the Guomindang headquarters as well as the national turmoil the whole country was in, Xinjiang simply became a self-governed entity loosely connected to China proper. It was during this phase that other actors came into play, altering the political and social stage of Xinjiang. One such actor was Soviet Russia that inherited the Tsarist policies on Inner Asia, and another one was Japan that, having established the Manchukuo in Manchuria during the 1930s, turned its imperialist gaze on Xinjiang that could act as a buffer state between Russia and China, facilitating Japan's dream of a unified Asia. And yet there existed another actor, right at the core of Xinjiang: the Uyghur intellectuals, and their mature national consciousness that made them a focal element of Xinjiang politics after the 1930s.

The events that took place in Xinjiang during the warlords era cannot be reduced to a few pages, but nevertheless this part of my study will reveal the basic character of this age. I will confine myself to describing what happened in Xinjiang proper, and will not directly deal with the Japanese influence, for I will be examining the policies of the latter in the following chapters of this study. For our purposes here, I will start with the 1911 Ili Uprising, describing the path to this uprising and its significance. Afterwards, the policies of the governor general Yang Zengxin, his assassination and succession by Jin Shuren, the consequent riot in Xinjiang and the establishment of the East Turkestan Islamic Republic in 1933 will be explained. Since this work concerns itself with the era until 1934, I will end my analysis on this date, and will only briefly touch the period

after 1934 during which Xinjiang witnessed the start of Sheng Shicai's reign, the founding of the East Turkestan Republic in 1944, and the coalition government that took place between 1946 and 1947. Describing these events in respective order, I will end my analysis with the “peaceful liberation” (*heping jiefang*) of Xinjiang by the Communist forces in 1949.

“Wuzu gonghe 五族共和”: The Rise of Revolutionary Dreams

Approaching the fall of the centuries-old Qing Dynasty, amid nascent ethno-nationalist anti-Manchu discourses, there was an unresolved contradiction of keeping the Qing territories intact while reversing the status quo and positioning the Han race above the others. The ambiguity was that the race-based nationalist arguments could render the frontiers a basis for revolt and secession.

This inherent contradiction was resolved, quite ironically, by a group of Manchu intellectuals publishing the Great Harmony Journal (*Datongbao* 大同報) in Japan.

Headed by the imperial clansmen Hengjun, a re-interpretation of Qianlong's emphasis on five races was at hand with the novel concept of “five races in unity” (*wuzu gonghe*). The term was coined in 1907, and it claimed to unify Manchus, Han, Mongols, Muslims and Tibetans.⁸⁷ However, despite all its promising character, this unifying message was not granted by Beijing, and in 1909, “the Chinese comprised three-fourths of the [National] assembly,⁸⁸ Manchus were awarded around 20 percent of the seats, and the Mongols, Muslims, and Tibetans together shared fourteen of two hundred slots.”⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Gray Tuttle, *Tibetan Buddhists in the Making of Modern China* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 59.

⁸⁸ The National Assembly is what Rhoads calls the Consultative Assembly (*zizhengyuan* 资政院) which was formed by Empress Dowager Cixi in 1907 in order to hold her promise to institute a constitutional regime. See: Edward J. M. Rhoads, *Manchus and Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861-1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 118.

⁸⁹ Tuttle, *ibid.*, 61.

Apparently, the unchanging imperial mindset of the Manchus was to lead the Qing to dissolution; and instead, it was going to be the Republican revolutionaries who were to utilize this concept in their fight to overcome the Qing Dynasty.

In Xinjiang, we may clearly discern this policy of using the concept of *wuzu gonghe* to overthrow the Manchus. The best example is the Ili Vernacular Gazette (*Yili baihuabao* 伊利白話報), published by the Revolutionary Party member Feng Temin, in 1910. This was the first private publication to be made in Xinjiang, and moreover, it was a manifestation of the Republican dream that was inherited from imperial Manchu intellectuals, for it was published in Chinese, Manchu, Mongolian, and Uyghur.⁹⁰ Furthermore, members such as Gu Hongjun, Zhang Yingjie, Wan Changfeng, Deng Xianxin and Liu Xianjun arrived in Urumqi after 1908, and started to disseminate revolutionary ideas via publications and contacts with Han businessman, and most significant of all, with the clandestine organization *Gelaohui* 哥老會.⁹¹

Zuo Zongtang, the governor general of Shaanxi-Gansu, had a substantial number of Hunanese in his army that reconquered Xinjiang in 1877. After the conquest, the members of this army were settled in different parts of Xinjiang, and according to Wang Shixiang, half of these Hunanese belonged to the anti-Qing organization known as the *Gelaohui*, formed during the Tongzhi Emperor reign (1851-1874).⁹² Thus, these members constituted the Xinjiang foot of a country-wide secret organization. Moreover, the members of *Gelaohui* were not confined to Han, but also included Manchus,

⁹⁰ Zhanghong Wei, “Yili xinhai geming shiqi jizhong wenxian jianjie [An Introduction to Some Publications During the Ili Xinhai Revolution],” in *Xinjiang wenshi ziliao jingxuan*, vol. 1, ed. Junsheng Yu (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe), 50. I did not have the chance to see the Ili gazette myself, so my knowledge about the gazette and the languages used in it are confined by Chinese secondary sources.

⁹¹ Zhanghong Wei, “Dihua xinhai qi yi fengyun [The Turmoil of Urumqi Xinhai Uprising],” in Junsheng Yu, *ibid.*, 1-2.

⁹² Shixiang Wang, “Xinhai geming shiqide kashi gelaohui [*Gelaohui* in Kashgar during the Xinhai Revolution],” in Junsheng Yu, *ibid.*, 9.

Muslims, Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Mongols and other minority groups.⁹³

It was the region-wide spread of the *Gelaohui* members that facilitated the concretization of an anti-Qing rebellion in Xinjiang; and the Revolutionary Party members, such as Liu Xianjun, were quick enough to establish contacts with this clandestine mafia.⁹⁴ Even though they were not successful in their attempt to make a revolution in Urumqi, the assassinations carried out by the *Gelaohui* members facilitated the success of the Ili Uprising in 1911, and a separate administrative regime was founded in Ili.

The uprisings of Urumqi and Ili were an extension of the countrywide anti-Qing movements. As a provincial part of the Empire, what followed in the inner parts immediately influenced the situation in Xinjiang, and the period between 1911 and 1949 is commonly regarded as a period when Xinjiang was neither a true part of the Republic nor an autonomous power.

Yang Zengxin: The Fall of Revolutionary Dreams

Yang Zengxin, a native of Yunnan, was born in 1867 and obtained his *jinshi* 進士 degree in 1899, thus enrolling in the Imperial Civil Service. First serving as the District Magistrate, and later the Circuit Commissioner (*daotai* 道台) in Gansu and Ningxia, in 1908 he was appointed to Aqsu, Xinjiang, where he became the Circuit Commissioner. Serving under Yuan Dahua, the last Qing governor of the province, he succeeded in becoming the *daotai* and Commissioner for Judicial Affairs at Urumchi.⁹⁵

⁹³ *ibid.*

⁹⁴ Zhanghong Wei, *ibid.*, 3. Mehmed Emin Buğra also comments on this organization as an anti-Chinese organization, however, he also adds that since they meanwhile bullied the local population, the local people referred to them as “predators” (*talanchi*); see, Mehmed Emin Buğra, *Sharqi Turkistan Tarihi* (Ankara, 1987), 498.

⁹⁵ Andrew W. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republican Sinkiang 1911-1949* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 11.

In 1911, when the Urumqi uprising erupted, the governorate was strong enough to suppress it and eliminate all the ringleaders. However, the following Ili uprising did not end the same way and a separate administrative regime was declared. Nevertheless, the rapid political transformation of the country with Sun Yatsen (1866-1925) declaring himself as the Provisional President of the Republic of China on January 1, 1912, and his transfer of power to Yuan Shikai on March 10, had an immediate effect on Xinjiang. Yang Zengxin, who asserted his rule over the region after the flight of Yuan Dahua, received confirmation by Yuan Shikai as the Civil and Military Governor of Xinjiang “with the concurrent post of Military Governor of Ili Region.”⁹⁶ It was not long after that Yang convinced the Ili group to re-incorporate themselves into the region, and in July 1912 Ili was a de jure part of Xinjiang.

What followed was a series of assassinations and buying-offs of many leaders of the *Gelaohui*. Wary of their clandestine power of mass social mobility, Yang spent his first years with the elimination of the *Gelaohui* and the Revolutionary Party members. His tranquil reception of death for the purpose of consolidating political power is best observed in the famous dinner party in 1916. He invited all of his officials to dine with him, including the ones he knew were betraying him. When everything was in order, and the cups were filled with wine, Yang stood up and went outside. When he re-entered the salon, a young officer came with him with a sword hidden behind him. All of a sudden, Yang, using his Yunnanese dialect, gave the order to behead two of his distrusted officials right in front of the eyes of the rest; and according to Wu’s account, “then, having spoken, he applied himself to the dishes which were set before him, and to the astonishment of the company he made a hearty meal, finishing two bowls of rice as usual.”⁹⁷

⁹⁶ *ibid.*, 12.

⁹⁷ Ai-chen Wu, *Turkistan Tumult* (London: Methuen, 1940), 43-44, quoted in Forbes, *ibid.*, 15.

Yang was also quick to prohibit all activities assumed to be detrimental, and he sealed the region as he banned everyone from entering or exiting the country.⁹⁸ When Alice Mildred Cable and Francesca French, two Protestant Christian missionaries who have spent numerous years travelling and evangelizing, arrived in Xinjiang, they described the scene as follows:

The policy of this strong autocratic ruler is that of complete segregation of his people from the turbulent nations which surround them. To this end, he allows no newspaper to be published in his territory, and the postal, telegraph, and wireless offices are under the control of his appointed censors. News from the outside world filters through but slowly, and all restaurants are posted with the announcement: 'No political discussions allowed'.⁹⁹

Such a strict segregation strengthened with the complete annihilation of dissidents had a positive outcome, in the sense that the region witnessed a period of political and economic stability until 1928. Isolating the region from any outside influence, Yang more or less acted quite autonomously, though he obeyed GMD tongue-in-cheek. The very fact that he had established consulates in Russian Turkestan confirms the argument that Xinjiang in reality was not a part of the Republican China.¹⁰⁰

Writing in 1933, Owen Lattimore, a scholar and an adventurer who devoted his life to Chinese frontier studies, was already aware of the actual political status of Xinjiang: “The power of the Chinese in Turkistan is largely a fiction, and in so far as it is real is maintained not by the real strength of the Chinese themselves, but by playing off against one another the different subject populations,”¹⁰¹ and he further asserted that this fiction indeed worked and thus “[i]t is politically, economically, and socially

⁹⁸ Sheng Li, “*Dong tujuesitan” fenliezhuyide youlai yu fazhan [The Origins and Development of “East Turkestan” Separatism]* (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2007), 16.

⁹⁹ Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *Through the Jade Gate* (London: Constable and Co. Ltd.), 1927.

¹⁰⁰ Alptekin writes of the agreement between the Russians and Yang Zengxin which allows the Russians to build five consulates in Xinjiang and the government of Yang to build five consulates in western Turkestan. This in fact shows the de facto autonomous rule of Yang; see, Isa Yusuf Alptekin, *ibid.*, 87.

¹⁰¹ Owen Lattimore, *Studies in Frontier History – Collected Papers 1928-1958* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 185.

backward, but probably more stable and contented ... than any region of equal area in the world.”¹⁰²

According to Lattimore, the fundamental reason behind regional stability was the Governor's cunning use of currency. Although there was a small amount of silver in circulation, money was basically paper and copper. Furthermore, there were four regional paper currencies used in Urumqi, Turfan, Kashgar, and Ili. Their value was mainly maintained at par but they all had different exchange rates. Lattimore comments that “this in itself is a safeguard against insurrection, for no insurrection could come to a head unless it were financed, and with several currencies in use unusually large transfers of money can be detected.”¹⁰³ Moreover, since the Government accepted its own paper money, and since there was a great distance between the province and inner China which resulted in a slow transit of goods, the province did not get affected by the monetary policies of China proper. And lastly, Lattimore stresses, “there is not a single bank, not even a provincial bank (that favorite engine of Chinese governors) to complicate exchange with credit transactions. The province is hermetically sealed.”¹⁰⁴

Contary to Lattimore’s claim that the region was “hermetically sealed,” Forbes argues that with regard to the information provided by C. P. Skrine, the British Consul-General at Kashgar, on the actual conditions of trade and economy, “Yang [Zengxin]’s economic policy, in both its mercantile and fiscal aspects, was bleeding [Xinjiang] to death.”¹⁰⁵ The ruling elites, mostly composed of Han officials, were transferring their private wealth and some scarce precious metals to private banks outside of the region. Yang Zengxin himself had a private bank account under American protection in

¹⁰² *ibid.*, 191.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, 209.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Forbes, *ibid.*, 31.

Phillipines.¹⁰⁶

It seems that the region was not hermetic enough, for Yang was assassinated in 1928 by a certain Fan Yaonan, an extremist educated in Japan. Yang's death was ordered in a dinner party, just as he ordered the deaths of his own men. However, Fan was also eliminated by Jin Shuren, who became the next governor of the region.

Jin Shuren and the Formation of the East Turkestan Islamic Republic (ETIR)

A native of Gansu, Jin Shuren's (1879-1941) rule was quite reminiscent of Yang's. Tightening his control over population, and increasing taxes, Jin paid the cost for the despotism of Yang. It was during Jin's reign that the Hami (Qumul) uprising erupted in 1931, which in a small period of time threw the whole region into a state of chaos that ended in the formation of the East Turkestan Islamic Republic (ETIR).

As mentioned in the earlier paragraphs, the rulers of Hami and Turfan were given privileges by the Qing Empire due to their aid to the empire during the Qing conquest of the region. As Maqsud Shah was enjoying the status of *wang* in Hami, his death brought with it the dissolution of the system established by the Qing. With Maqsud's death in 1930, Jin Shuren seized the opportunity to incorporate the prosperous city into the governorate of Urumqi. Although the abolishment of the khanate was welcomed by the local population, the hope of better governance was shattered when Jin imposed double agricultural taxes while expropriating the farmlands of some Uyghurs and giving them to Han settlers instead.¹⁰⁷ The discontent with the new regime erupted in 1931 when a Chinese named Zhang, who was a tax collector and police chief near Hami, coerced a Uyghur father into giving her daughter to him. During the wedding, a frustrated group of Uyghurs attacked them, and the incident ignited an

¹⁰⁶ Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 184.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, 191.

uprising.¹⁰⁸ The spontaneous uprising quickly became a movement led by Khoja Niyaz (d. 1937) and Yulbars Khan (1888-1971). As the fight turned more ferocious as the local populace was massacred, Yulbars Khan decided to travel to Nanjing to seek help, however his voyage abruptly ended when he met Ma Zhongying, the 'Baby General'.

Ma Zhongying (1911-?) was a native of Gansu, and he belonged to the famous Chinese Muslim family of Ma who ruled northwestern China. His military career was quite extraordinary, for he became the commander-in-chief of his uncle Guzhong's army in Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia and Suiyuan at a very early age.¹⁰⁹ His nickname "Baby General" (*ga siling* 尕司令) comes from the local Gansu dialect in which the word "little", *xiao* 小, is pronounced as *ga* 尕, and 'ga siling' basically refers to his age of seventeen when he assumed the commandership of the army.¹¹⁰

When Yulbars Khan met Ma in 1931, his tamed impatience already constituted a major problem for him because he had familial problems and thus he was sent to far north-western Gansu by his cousins. Convincing Yulbars Khan that he could help them succeed in their fight against Jin Shuren, he gathered a force of around five hundred Chinese Muslims, known as Tungans, and attacked Jin's army. Supported by White Russian troops, Jin's army under the command of Zhang Peiyuan overcame Ma Zhongying, and Ma himself was wounded during the fight.¹¹¹ As Ma was recovering, the region witnessed a period of uprisings that simultaneously took place in diverse regions of the province, although they were not necessarily inter-related. Indeed, the uprisings in Turfan, Hami, Khotan, and Kashgar were all managed by different cliques

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, 193.

¹¹⁰ Zhongli Wu, "Gǎ Siling' Ma Zhongying qiren [That Man, "Baby General" Ma Zhongying]," *Huizu Yanjiu*, no. 3 (2004), 46.

¹¹¹ Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 193.

of power. Despite their difference in characteristics, the uprisings between 1931 and 1933 throughout the region which diminished the central power of Urumqi –a process bolstered by Ma Zhongying– culminated in the establishment of the “Eastern Turkestan Islamic Republic” on 12 November 1933, in Kashgar.

The constitution of this new republic announced Sabit Damulla as the head of the state and Khoja Niyaz as “president-for-life”, however, there are some controversies as to the religious character of this state. Shinmen Yasushi claims that “the Republic, as reflected in its constitution, was founded not only on Islam, but on the modernizing, nationalistic ideals of the jadidist movement of the 1910s and 1920s,”¹¹² and therefore it may be possible to name the republic as the “East Turkestan Republic.” The jadidist impulse in the Eastern Turkestan (Islamic) Republic will be displayed in the third chapter of this work, but suffice it to say that although there surely was a jadidist influence, I believe that it is more appropriate to name the Republic as the “Eastern Turkestan Islamic Republic”, for according to Mehmed Emin Buğra's accounts, the passports issued had the bearing “Eastern Turkestan Islamic Republic” (*Sharqi Turkistan Cumhuriyet-i Aliyye-i İslamiyyesi*) on them, which suggests that the official name of the republic was the ETIR.¹¹³ In other words, wary of the connotations of the usage of “Islamic”, I would still argue for the official terming.

Only a few months later, in January 1934, that the ETIR was exterminated by the army of Ma Zhongying who in the first place arrived in east Turkestan for the sake of helping Yulbars Khan and Khoja Niyaz. Ma's abrupt transfer to the other side is in fact understandable, for even in his first attack, he justified his actions as if they were the orders of the GMD in Nanjing; and in 1934, he again used the same discourse with the

¹¹² Shinmen Yasushi, “ ‘Higashi Torukisutan Kyowakoku’ (1933-34 nen) ni kansuru ichi kosatsu [An Inquiry into the Eastern Turkestan Republic of 1933-34],” *Ajia-Afurika gengo bunka kenkyu*, nos 46-7 (30th anniversary commemorative no. 1), Tokyo gaigokugo daigaku Ajia-Afurika gengo bunka kenkyujo, quoted in Millward, *ibid.*, 202.

¹¹³ Mehmed Emin Buğra, *ibid.*, 600.

difference that this time he was truly acting on behalf of the Nanjing Government, for since the ETIR was not welcomed by the GMD, he could bolster his own military strength through an alliance with Nanjing. However, it should also be remembered that Ma is famous for his enigmatic soul and his life has still not been studied enough to understand the true nature of his actions. The most 'weird' of them all was his sudden decision to flee to Soviet territories in 1937 with his 280 men.¹¹⁴ What happened afterwards is still a mystery. According to the memories of Ma Yanliang (1904-1987), a close correspondent of Ma Zhongying, there are three alternative stories as to his fate. Either his plane crashed as he was flying it, or he joined the Spanish Civil War and died in battle, or he died fighting for the Soviet Army.¹¹⁵ The details of this remarkable figure's actions and his Turkish assistants will be disclosed in the following chapters.

The Rule of Sheng Shicai, Ili Rebellion, and the *Peaceful Liberation*

As the rebellions grew intense during 1933, Jin was overthrown by the Soviet-backed Sheng Shicai who helped crush the Eastern Turkestan Islamic Republic in 1934. The role of the USSR was decisive in overthrowing the ETIR, for it feared a plausible Japanese attack on Xinjiang. The Japanese, chasing a Pan-Asian dream, had already invaded Manchuria and established the Manchukuo, and it was hesitantly assumed that their expansionist policies could indeed reach all the way to Xinjiang. The Japanese Pan-Asianist policies on Xinjiang and the immediate social web they have constructed via contacting the former members of the Committee for Union and Progress (CUP) will be narrated in detail in the sixth chapter of this study. For now, it would be sufficient to state that the Japanese policies on Xinjiang were perilous for the Soviets, and thus in 1934, the USSR invaded the region from the north while it aided Sheng

¹¹⁴ Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 200.

¹¹⁵ Xilong Wang, "Ma Zhongying fusu ji qi xialuo [Ma Zhongying's Flight to the Soviets and his Whereabouts]," *Huizu Yanjiu*, no.3 (2004), 55.

Shicai to help Ma Zhongying to topple over the ETIR in the south. After the dissolution of the ETIR and the restructuring of the region, Sheng became the military governor of Xinjiang.

Until his loss of power in 1944, Sheng Shicai maintained his predecessors' oppressive policies. On top of Sheng's oppression, the region became extremely vulnerable to the outside economic influences. As Benson points out, besides the persistence to issue its own currency, Xinjiang's local economic system also made use of Mexican silver dollars, gold taels, and Russian rubles; moreover, "reestablishment of Nationalist control meant an inevitable increase in the amount of inflation-ridden Nationalist currency, certainly an unwelcome development for merchants and local people alike."¹¹⁶

When the economic hardships joined with a political rhetoric of independence, which was realized in 1933, the Ili rebellion in 1944 became inevitable. After some armed clashes between the Chinese forces and the local rebels in Ili, Ali Han Töre, who was a renowned Islamic scholar announced the founding of the East Turkestan Republic (ETR) on November 12, 1944. It is interesting to note that this republic is exquisitely referred to as the East Turkestan Republic¹¹⁷, without any direct reference to Islam, although Ali Han Töre refers to the republic's government as "the Turkestan Islam Government" as he issues the new ETR's objectives: "The Turkestan Islam Government is organized: praise be to Allah for his manifold blessings!"¹¹⁸

The Chinese response to the ETR was also fierce, but the USSR was tacit this time and without its aid to the Chinese authorities, the ETR's military forces headed by

¹¹⁶ Linda Benson, *The Ili Rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944-1949* (New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1990), 35.

¹¹⁷ "Ulkemizdiki Herbir Millet Halklarına Müraca'at" [An Appeal to Every Nation of Our Country], in *Han Tengri*, no.2 (1946), 6. The author of this article is unknown but yet since he/she uses the term "East Turkestan Republic", it indicates that the intellectuals of the period also refer to the Republic as the ETR.

¹¹⁸ Benson, *ibid.*, 45.

Osman Batur succeeded in overcoming the Chinese militia, and the three districts (Ili, Altai, and Tarbaghatai) became the established grounds of the ETR. The GMD's next move was conciliatory, for Chiang Kai-Shek (1887-1975, head of the GMD) had understood the necessity of recognizing the independence movement of the East Turkestanis. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek dispatched his trusted fellow General Zhang Zhizhong to Urumqi in 1945 to inform him about the local situation. Before his departure, Zhang contacted three important nationalist figures, who are referred to as the Three Efendis (*Üç Efendiler*) by Uyghur scholars.¹¹⁹ Mesud Sabri (Baykozi or Baykuzu) who was a doctor educated in Istanbul, Mehmed Emin (Buğra), a native of Khotan who was involved in the ETIR, and İsa Yusuf (Alptekin) who was a China-educated political figure demanding the right for self-autonomy had all offered their suggestions to Zhang Zhizhong regarding the future of Xinjiang; and furthermore, they were given the permission to fly to Xinjiang with Zhang.¹²⁰ It is no wonder that the suggestions of these political figures were also influential in the formation of a coalition government.

After General Zhang discussed with Ali Han Töre for eight months, they at last agreed upon the formation of a coalition government. Thus, Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government was the result of a peace agreement made between the ETR and the GMD. According to the articles published in *Han Tengri*, it seems evident that the coalition government was welcomed by the Uyghur intellectuals. An unknown writer exclaims:

Brothers! The day has come that ends the suffering of our millions, ends the tricks played on the sweet desires, and flourishes our lofty wills. Starting from this day, our people who were the toys of the ruling officers have the chance for upward mobility, and the possibility to choose the people they reckon as loyal

¹¹⁹ The Uyghur official nationalist website has a special webpage devoted to the "Three Efendis": <http://www.hurgokbayrak.com>. Their portraits are also revered by the Uyghurs in the Waqf of East Turkestan (*Doğu Türkistan Vakfı*) in Zeytinburnu, Istanbul. As one strolls through the corridors of this waqf, the pictures of the triumvirate are seen with a caption below it that reads "Three Efendis".

¹²⁰ Benson, *ibid.*, 53.

for the offices.¹²¹

As the tune of hope makes clear, this government was formed on a principle of national equality, thereby incorporating Han and the other nationalities alike, however, it disintegrated in the summer of 1947 due to disagreement, although the ETR held its rule intact until 1949. With disintegration, the ETR maintained its rule over the three districts and the Chinese government's power was kept intact in the rest.

This political environment ensued until 1949 when the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) became victorious in its fight with the GMD. Before the announcement of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on October 1, 1949, the Communists wished to incorporate Xinjiang into the new regime, and thus summoned the leaders of the ETR to Beijing to carry out peace-talks. However, an unexpected accident occurred on the eve of peace. When the plane that carried the most significant figures of the government from Almaty to Beijing crashed, there were no survivors. Shen argues that this was the Soviet's "gift" to the CCP, for according to the Russian archives the Soviets had agreed to eliminate the ETR, which was going to be detrimental to the Soviet's political and economic interests in inner Asia, in return for some concessions in Outer Mongolia and Manchuria.¹²² With the heads of the ETR now dead, all the power was transferred to Burhan Shahidi who was appointed by the central government in January 1949 to become the head of the Xinjiang province replacing Mesud Sabri, who was renowned for his Pan-Turkic ideals.¹²³ It was on 12 October that Burhan Shahidi welcomed the People's Liberation Army into the region, hence Xinjiang's incorporation into the PRC is known as the "peaceful liberation"

¹²¹ "Ulkemizdiki herbir millet halqlarına müraca'at", *ibid.*

¹²² Zhihua Shen, "Zhongsu jiemeng yu sulian dui xinjiang zhengcede bianhua (1944-1950) [Sino-Russian Alliance and the Transformation of the Soviet's Policies Toward Xinjiang 1944-1950]," *Lishi Jiaoxue*, no. 12 (2005).

¹²³ Benson, *ibid.*, 172-176.

(*heping jiefang* 和平解放), for there was almost no resistance – at least during the first months.

Conclusion

As this chapter briefly elucidates, the modern history of Xinjiang is not merely one of oppression and violence. The ensuing Chinese rule over Xinjiang basically has three phases; the first one under the imperial rule of the Qing, the second one under the GMD, and the third one (which still continues today) is the one under the CCP. As I have explained, an arbitrary division of its history into three phases is definitely not sufficient to comprehend the modern history of the region, for these phases also have sub-phases that sometimes contradict with one another. The policies of the Qing Empire were never unchanging policies of control and oppression, as may be deduced from the complex set of economic and administrative policies starting with the end of 1750s. Moreover, as argued, 'Sinicization' was not an ever-existing policy, too. It came into the picture only with the official recognition of the region as a province in 1884, and continued until the founding of the Republic of China in 1911. The policies during the post-1911 period should also be observed under the light of a semi-autonomous governance, for the region was loosely connected to the center. Besides, during this period, with the rise of Uyghur nationalism emerged a dialectic existence that was most of the time determined through a bloody negotiation between the Uyghurs and the GMD.

What I have consciously left out of my narrative was the influence of global powers on the local politics of Xinjiang. As the next chapter will reveal, the modern history of Xinjiang can never be fully comprehended unless we pay the necessary attention to the global actors of the age. Two of these actors were Russia and Britain, and thus the activities of these two empires will be discussed in the next chapter,

however, as this study argues, there was yet another indispensable empire that determined the flow of history in Xinjiang – the Ottoman Empire. After an analysis of the Russo-British interests, the next chapter will divert the attention to the Tatar activities in the region which paved the way for the Ottoman activities in Xinjiang.

CHAPTER III

TATARS: VICTORS OF THE RUSSIAN “GREAT GAME”

Sitting in an old chair in the aged Jesuit Zi-Ka-Wei Library in Shanghai, and thumbing through the pages of North China Daily, which is the most prominent foreign newspaper published in China from 1850 to 1951, I have come across a little clipping dating back to 1884 that heralded the discovery of a new wild horse. The notice goes as such:

PRZEVALSKY'S WILD HORSE – Great interest attaches to the question of the origin of our domestic animals, and especially to that of the horse ... Every fact bearing upon this subject is of importance, and the discovery by the great Russian traveller, Przevalsky, of a new wild horse ... is certainly well worthy of attention. This new animal was described in a Russian journal by Mr. J. S. Polistow, and dedicated to its discoverer as *Equus przewalskii*.¹²⁴

Although fascinating for the scholars of the animal kingdom and the historians of taxonomy, the horse that was discovered by Przhevalsky during one of his excursions in Chinese Turkestan authorized by the Russian Geographical Society (RGS) actually connotes a lot more meaning than yet another novel horse name.

This chapter will analyze the Russian intrigues concerning Xinjiang during the nineteenth century – intrigues that were concealed by activities such as finding new horses. The significance of the Russians in Xinjiang is not only restricted to the “Great Game” played in Central Asia between the British and Russian Empires, but it also unveils the conditions that made it possible for Xinjiang to open itself to the dynamics of global politics. Therefore, after explaining the Russo-British rivalry in Xinjiang in the first section of this chapter, I will devote the second section to the Tatars, a Turkic-speaking ethnic population in the Volga and Crimean regions in Russia. As will be discussed in the following pages, their diaspora in Central Asia enabled them to emerge as the genuine actors who initiated the process of globalization for the indigenous

¹²⁴ *North China Daily News*, November 24, 1884.

population of Xinjiang, for the Russian influence in Xinjiang enabled them to accumulate capital and promote ideas of Pan-Turkism in the region by opening schools, sending students to Russian and Ottoman lands where they would be exposed to ideas of “progress and modernity”, and by importing teachers (*muallim*) from these lands to educate the local population. A thorough understanding of the Tatars in Xinjiang is a precondition for analyzing and comprehending the Ottoman influence, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

The Great Game in Xinjiang

Scientific Actors of the Great Game

Nikolai Przhevalsky (1839-1888) was one of the most significant figures of the "Great Game" in Central Asia played mostly between the British and the Russians. Other influential figures included Sven Hedin (1865-1952), Aurel Stein (1862-1943), Albert von le Coq (1860-1930), and Francis Younghusband (1863-1942) together with many other adventurers who have devoted their lives to bring into light what had been buried under the sand, hidden inside a cave, or shrined on the top of a mountain. However, these figures' research in Central Asia, Xinjiang and Tibet are not merely confined to the 'innocence' of archaeology –the field used to justify the plundering of the artifacts and sending them back to Western Europe where they still occupy the places assigned to them in world famous museums. Indeed, the geographical explorations were in direct connection with the imperial policies of expansion; and besides gathering information on the fauna of the regions concerned, the explorers' mission was also to gather intelligence concerning the domestic politics.

Some of the explorers, such as Sven Hedin or Aurel Stein for whom exploration was a lifelong passion, were indirectly tied to the Great Game imperial politics. Due to their research in Xinjiang and the maps they drew, the region was no longer considered

as *terra incognita*,¹²⁵ and as a result, their discoveries were lauded by any power interested in the region. Moreover, during the 1930s, Sven Hedin also worked for Chiang Kai-shek for exploring Xinjiang, providing Generalissimo with the knowledge that he had not possessed before.¹²⁶ As mentioned above, Przhevalsky was another important figure on the Russian side who had produced invaluable information for the Russian Empire concerning Xinjiang.

Przhevalsky's book *Flora Tangutica*, published in 1889, is at first glance a book on taxonomy and plants in the Tibetan region. Geographically speaking, however, the book has detailed information about Tibet, Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan. In fact the first part of the book draws a detailed map of these regions through a meticulous calculation of longitudes and latitudes of loci where certain species are found, as well as the altitudes of mountains and also the distances concerned.¹²⁷ Yet it was not only the scientific knowledge obtained through these expeditions that urged Przhevalsky but also the political aims.

As a matter of fact, Przhevalsky did not even try to conceal the political nature of his expeditions. Indeed, in the 1880s when he proposed the need for an expedition to Tibet, he claimed that "scientific research will mask the political aims of the expedition and ward off the interference of our adversaries"¹²⁸ –the adversaries being none other than the British. Also very active in the Ministry of War, Przhevalsky's obsession with

¹²⁵ For detailed information on Aurel Stein and Sven Hedin's explorations: Aurel Stein, *Innermost Asia: detailed report of explorations in Central Asia, Kan-su, and Eastern Iran carried out and described under the orders of H.M. Indian Government* (New Delhi: Cosmo, 1981); Sven Anders Hedin, *My Life as an Explorer* (New York: Boni & Liveright, 1925).

¹²⁶ Folke Bergman, *Archaeological Researches in Sinkiang – Especially the Lop Nor region* (Stockholm: Bokförlags Aktiebolaget Thule, 1939).

¹²⁷ N. M. Przewalski and G. N. Potanin, *Flora Tangutica sive Enumeratio Plantarum Regionis Tangut (Amdo) Provinciae Kansu, nec non Tibetiae Praesertim Orientaliborealis atque Tsaidam* (Petropoli: Typis Academiae Imperialis Scientiarum Petropolitanae, 1889).

¹²⁸ Donald Rayfield, *The Dream of Lhasa: The Life of Nikolay Przhevalsky (1839-1888), Explorer of Central Asia*, (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1976), quoted in Kyrill Kunakovich, "Nikolai Mikhailovic Przhevalsky and the Politics of Russian Imperialism," *IDP News* 27 (2006), 4.

exploration-for-intelligence was culminated in his endless proposals for war in Inner Asia which were constantly turned down by the authorities.¹²⁹

Figures such as Przhevalsky and others as narrated in the earlier paragraphs are an essential part of the “Great Game” in Inner Asian lands. These exploration-cum-intelligence policies were one of the vital veins flowing through Inner Asia towards Xinjiang. It was the result of such intelligence gathering that nineteenth and early twentieth century Russo-British policies on Xinjiang were to be decided.

Since my primary focus will be on the Russians, I will first briefly describe the British interests, and continue with the Russian counterpart. I find it convenient and sufficient to limit my analysis to the nineteenth century, for during the last years of the nineteenth century, the Russian influence becomes an established fact which endures until 1917, when it experiences an ephemeral period of evanescence only to recuperate again in the 1920s. Therefore, a study confined to the nineteenth century would be sufficient to inform us about the social and economic background of the Tatar émigrés in the region, who disseminated the ideas of Pan-Turkism, and thus paved the way for Ottoman penetration into Xinjiang.

The Russian Expansion and the British Dread

During the nineteenth century, Russian interest in Xinjiang was evident as understood from the publications concerning China and its history, and 'scientific' journeys conducted by many travelers. In this regard, the above mentioned Przhevalsky may even be considered as a late-comer. Pyotr Semyonov-Tienschansky (1827-1914), chairman of the Russian Geographical Society from 1873 to 1914, received his second last name due to his immaculate Tianshan explorations in Xinjiang, in 1856-57. Another geographer and ethnographer, Mikhail Venyukov (1832-1901) travelled widely not only

¹²⁹ *ibid.*, 5.

in Xinjiang but also in mainland China and Japan; Grigory Grum-Grzhimailo (1860-1936) was another traveler in Kashgar, Altai regions and Tianshan; Mikhail Pevtsov (1843-1902) and Grigory Potanin (1835-1920) were yet other travelers that have been to Xinjiang, Tibet and Mongolia.¹³⁰ Nevertheless, Przhevalsky was the most influential of them all.

Przhevalsky's reputation was not confined to military or scientific chambers, which shows us that the Russian activities in the Far East and Inner Asia were also closely watched by intellectuals and common people. Anton Chekov, the famous Russian writer, praised Przhevalsky with the following words:

If positive types created in literature constitute valuable educational material, the same types yielded by life are, indeed, priceless. In this respect, such people as Przhevalsky are especially precious, because the meaning of their life, their exploits, their aims, and their moral image are incomprehensible even to a child. The closer a person stands to the truth, the simpler he is and the easier to understand...¹³¹

Despite the popularity of these expeditions, and the alleged information they had helped to gather, these journeys were, as mentioned above, a reflection of the Russian desire to expand its influence into inner China, and bolster the lucrative trade –if necessary, by force. In this respect, it is significant to explain the economic relations Russia had with Xinjiang.

With the start of the nineteenth century began the Russian military interest in Central Asia, in which the khanates of Bukhara, Khiva and Khoqand were ruling. It was first in 1820 that Russia made its move and conquered the city of Bukhara, thus started bullying the khanates that were already seeking ways to compromise with Russia.¹³²

¹³⁰ S. N. Goncharenko, "Russian Travellers in China in the Latter Half of the nineteenth Century," in *Chapters From the History of Russo-Chinese Relations - 17th-nineteenth Centuries*, ed. S. L. Tikhvinsky, trans. Vic Schneierson (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1985), 330-332.

¹³¹ A. P. Chekhov, *Collected Works*, Vol. 16 (Moscow, 1979), 236-37, quoted in S. N. Goncharenko, *ibid.*, 334.

¹³² Edmund O. Clubb, *China & Russia: The "Great Game"* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), 95-96.

The complete conquest of Bukhara came in 1866 which, having realized absolute consolidation of power on the steppe, led to the formation of “Turkestan” as a new district in 1867 with a new governor, General Konstantin P. Kaufman (1818-1882).¹³³

This swift expansion into Central Asia was observed with dread and anxiety by the British who felt threatened by the nascent Russian imperialism. The British, in the wake of the Russian threat, started to gather intelligence on Xinjiang and Central Asia. In 1812, Mir Izzet Ullah, a British agent, travelled from Kashmir to Yaqand and from Kabul to Bukhara, a journey that “disclosed the main routes by which Russian traders could communicate with China, Afghanistan, and the Punjab.”¹³⁴ These explorations continued until 1849, when Punjab was conquered and thus the new possession of northern India was believed to render the British the key to Central Asian trade.¹³⁵

The pace of the British activity, however, was not as swift as the Russians, and when the Yaqub Beg Emirate was founded in 1864 in Kashgar, the British involvement owed a great deal to individual expeditions. During 1860s, a British surveyor named Johnson visited Khotan briefly and another surveyor, Hayward, made his way into Yaqand. Yet, it was in 1869 that the first British, Robert B. Shaw, reached Kashgar.¹³⁶ It was during the same year that Yaqub Beg sent an envoy to India, and he was warmly welcomed by the British who believed that an Islamic front against Russia would be practical and valuable.¹³⁷ This intention was sealed with a treaty in 1874 when Forsyth headed the British mission into Kashgar, and signed the Anglo-Kashgar Treaty, as mentioned in the last chapter.

¹³³ *ibid.*, 99. The power of the remaining two khanates were curbed after the conquest, and ultimately, they were all conquered by Kaufman –Khiva in 1873, and Khoqand in 1876; see, *ibid.*, 100-101.

¹³⁴ H. W. C. Davis, “The Great Game in Asia (1800-1844),” *Proceedings of the British Academy* XII (1926), quoted in *Pivot of Asia*, ed. Owen Lattimore (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1950), 25.

¹³⁵ *ibid.*, 29.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, 30.

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, 34.

Observed as an important milestone in Anglo-east Turkestan relations, the gravity of the treaty should still not be exaggerated. Quoting Alder, Kim argues that although this treaty “marks the peak of British influence in Kashgar, it was at the same time an important landmark in the progressive British disillusionment with the commercial capacity of the country.”¹³⁸ It was further reported that a Russian invasion of India from the Karakorum Mountains would not be a plausible option when it was much easier to attack India from the Pamirs or the Hindu Kush.¹³⁹ Thus, after this date, the British did not pursue an active policy like the Russians; rather, their interest in the territory was more discreet and was reduced to a mere surveillance over the Russian activities in the region.

The Russians in Xinjiang

During the nineteenth century, as a result of the relative weakness of the Qing government after the humiliating defeat of the First Opium War, the Russians –now bordering neighbors– have started to increase their demands for Xinjiang, especially in terms of economic policies. On August 6, 1851, Ili General Yi Shan and the Russian representative Kovalevskiy have signed the “Sino-Russian Ili-Tarbaghatai Trade Regulations” which stated that Tsarist Russia was to establish consulates, trade circles (*maoyi quan* 貿易圈) and Russian emigrant community areas in Ili and Tarbaghatai,¹⁴⁰ moreover, within the trade circles, Chinese officials did not have the right to question the Russians in anyway whose right of exemption from taxes, again granted by the same treaty, rendered them a huge power on the Chinese lands. During the next decades,

¹³⁸ G. J. Alder, *British India's Northern Frontier 1865-1895: A Study in Imperial Policy* (London: Published for the Royal Commonwealth Society by Longmans, 1963), quoted in Kim Hodong, *ibid.*, p. 145.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ The Russian businessman trading circle in Ili and Tacheng was established in 1852 (Dezhu Li et al., *Tatarzu jianshi [A Simple History of the Tatars]* [Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2008], 16).

based on the rights enjoyed by the trade regulations, and the enforcement of these regulations by other treaties such as “Tarbaghatai Agreement of Compensation” in 1858, “Revision of Land Route Trade Regulations” in 1869, and “Sino-Russian Ili Treaty” in 1881,¹⁴¹ the Russians also established trade circles and emigrant community areas in Yining and Dihua (Urumqi), latter in 1881, enhancing their power in the region.¹⁴² The volume of trade increased from seven hundred thousand rubles in 1850 to around two hundred fifty million rubles in 1914.¹⁴³ It would be helpful to look at this process of increasing Russian integration into the Chinese northwest in detail.

The Russian economic interest in Xinjiang in fact starts in 1805 when Russia sent a diplomatic corps headed by Golovkin to Beijing to demand the opening of borders for Sino-Russian trade which were by then constricted to Kiahta (today on the Mongolia-Russia border) according to the “Kiahta Treaty” signed in 1728 between Russia and China. Golovkin had two demands at hand: opening of north-east borders through allowing Russian ships into the Amur River, and opening of north-west borders through Ili and Tarbaghatai. Although the Qing government was ready to welcome the corps, due to a problem in ritual correctness (*liyi* 禮儀), representatives from the two sides never met. From this date onwards, in spite of the Chinese government's continuing prohibitions on trade with Xinjiang which originally started at the end of the eighteenth century, trade volume started to expand.¹⁴⁴

Although trade volume started to expand after 1805, reaching more than 700.000 rubles which equaled to almost 1.3 tons of gold by 1850 (with tea constituting more

¹⁴¹ Baoerhan, “Yang Zengxin tongzhi shiqi [The period of Yang Zengxin’s Rule],” in *Xinjiang Wenshi Ziliao [Xinjiang History Materials]*, ed. Junsheng Yu (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe), 77.

¹⁴² Dezhu Li, *ibid.*, 13-16.

¹⁴³ Sheng Li, *Xinjiang dui su e maoyi shi [History of Xinjiang-Russian Trade], 1600-1990* (Urumqi: Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe, 1992), 9-10.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid.*, 42-43.

than 90% of the trade)¹⁴⁵, the official opening of Ili and Tarbaghatai, and hence official trade, started with the 1851 regulations. However, speaking for the Russians, it was a difficult process to convince the Qing Government in opening up the borders.

In 1844, Russia dispatched Liubimov, the head of the Foreign Affairs Asian Department, to the borders of Central Asia in order to make a report on the contemporary situation. Liubimov was experienced enough to change clothes to fit in with the Kazakh traders and hence reach Ili and Tarbaghatai. When he returned from his mission in 1845, he wrote a detailed report claiming that the British were transporting goods from Kashgar to the East coast through land, from where they were exported to different places. Therefore, legitimizing the Russia-China northwest trade was a must.

On February 1846, the Russian government notified Tong Zhenghu, the head of the Beijing Missionary Group and asked him to write an official letter declaring the Russian demand for the opening of northwest borders. On the 17th of July 1847, Tong wrote a letter to the *Lifanyuan* describing the difficulties of having just one place (Kiahta) for trade and demanding the need to open Ili, Tarbaghatai and Kashgar. However, this petition was refused by the Qing government. On June 1848, Tong Zhenghu once again made a request but was once again refused. In 1850, the Russian Privy Council once again made a request to *Lifanyuan* to open up the northwest borders. This time the Qing government replied that it was difficult for one to overlook the fact that there was already a serious amount of “illegal” trade going on, and thus it would not be right to directly refuse the demand once again. Thus, on April 1851, a Russian delegate headed by Kovalevsky was dispatched to Ili, and reached there in July. His primary mission was to demand the opening of Ili, Tarbaghatai and Kashgar; to build up consulates in Tarbaghatai and Ili; exemption from taxes in Ili and Tarbaghatai for both sides; and to propose the establishment of a direct communication line between Ili

¹⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 7.

General and the Governor of Siberia. Except the opening of Kashgar, the Russian demands were all accepted, and the “Sino-Russian Ili-Tarbaghatai Trade Regulations” was signed on the 6th of August 1851. In order to avoid interference with Western powers, especially Britain, this treaty was kept as a secret by the Russians.¹⁴⁶

In conformance with the 1851 treaty, on September 1853 the Ili trade circle (*maoyi quan*) and on November the Tarbaghatai trade circle were completed. These trade circles were indeed buildings that were alienated from the rest of the city through the construction of tall walls. According to Qing statistics, in 1853, there were 86 people in Ili trade circle and 92 in Tarbaghatai. It is important to note that, with the signing of the treaty (and hence 'legitimizing' the already existent trade), the Russo-Xinjiang trade volume increased enormously, and the total trade volume almost tripled between 1851 and 1854.¹⁴⁷ It was in 1855 that the Russo-Xinjiang trade stagnated for some period. To protest the Russian encroachment into the Balkash Lake area and the invasion of a certain gold mine, on the night of the 26th of August 1855, the people of Tarbaghatai set the haystack not far from the trade circle on fire. The fire spread by the wind ignited another fire, this time in the Russian trade circle. After this incident, although the Qing government notified the Russian Privy Council that there is nothing for the tradesmen to be afraid of and that trade can go on as normal, the Russians decided to use this incident as a leverage to realize further aims on the region. They withdrew their consuls in Ili and Tarbaghatai as well as the tradesmen, and thus the Russo-Xinjiang trade halted for some time.¹⁴⁸

Only after the signing of Aihui Treaty and Tianjin Treaty, Russia found it convenient to start negotiating the problem of Ili and Tarbaghatai, again. On October 1858, the two sides signed the “Tarbaghatai Agreement of Compensation” which stated

¹⁴⁶ The information given in these paragraphs are taken from Sheng Li, *ibid.*, 51-60.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 61.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 64.

that the Tarbaghatai government should compensate the Russian losses of the trade circle as well as trade, and thus agreed that the Qing would allow another trade circle, and that under the name of 'subsidy', it would give the Russian side 6.7 tons of silver and 150 tons of tea.¹⁴⁹ It was only in 1860 that the Russo-Xinjiang trade recuperated, only to halt again in 1864, with the start of the Yaqub Beg rebellion.

Realizing the impasse of trade with Xinjiang after Yaqub Beg established his emirate in Kashgar, expanding all the way to Hami in the east, the Russians kept an open eye on Ili –the only strategic location Yaqub Beg still had not conquered. Given the circumstances, it would not be unlikely for Yaqub Beg to seize Ili, too. According to Stremoukhov, the Directory of the Asiatic Department of Russia's Foreign Ministry:

This would be exceedingly unwelcome, because we know from the writings of British travellers and merchants that the Indian trade is expanding rapidly in Eastern Turkestan and enjoys the protection of the ruler of Djetishaar. It is hardly open to doubt that the spread of his possessions north of the Tien Shans would be tantamount to the spread of British trade to all parts of Middle China which would, in favourable circumstances, have opened its markets exclusively to Russian enterprise.¹⁵⁰

Such reasoning led to the invasion of Ili by Russian forces in 1871, and trade recovered immediately, at least in Ili.¹⁵¹

The Russian Trade with South Xinjiang

It seems that Russia, prior to its recognition of Yaqub Beg as the *de facto* ruler of Kashgaria, tried to secure its trade relations with the Qing government via alternative routes.

Indeed, by the 1840s, the Russians were already aware of the benefits of Kashgar; and although they could not open up Kashgar for free trade in 1851, their

¹⁴⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ CSAMH, Section of Military Science, file 6823, sheet 17, quoted in B. P. Gurevich, "The History of the 'Ili Crisis'," in *Chapters From the History of Russo-Chinese Relations - 17th-nineteenth Centuries*, ed. S. L. Tikhvinsky, trans. Vic Schneierson (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1985), 309.

¹⁵¹ Sheng Li, *ibid.*, 73.

“illegal” trade activities continued to expand. In 1857, Valikhanov and Semenov, two Russian surveyors, examined the southern territories of Xinjiang, and during the same year it was declared by the General of Western Siberia that “the transformation of Kashgar into a State independent of China under a Russian protectorate would render a great service to its people, for whom the Sino-Manchurian tyranny has become insupportable.”¹⁵² Accordingly, the Russian interest continued to expand in this area.

By 1862 the tea that was imported into Russia through Kashgar had already reached an amount of 4.500 to 8000 tons. So much that in September 1863, the Qing government informed the authorities in today's Aqsu and Uqturpan (Wushi) that they should be prepared for Russian traders.¹⁵³ However, the region was conquered by the armies of Yaqub Beg in 1864.

After the establishment of a government by Yaqub Beg, the Russians demanded a right for trade; however, Yaqub Beg was only willing to do trade once his state was recognized. Refusing recognition, the Russian government encouraged traders to continue their trade privately. Thus in 1868, a group of traders carrying Moscow-made textiles and commodities for daily use reached Almaty from where they headed towards Kashgar. This was the first group that wanted to reach Kashgar and establish a route for trade, however they were attacked and looted on the way, and their goods were all gone.¹⁵⁴

With the support of the Russian government, the head of the first group prepared another journey, this time of greater scale. First, he sent gifts to Yaqub Beg together with a letter that said he wanted a safe passage into Kashgar. His request was accepted

¹⁵² N. Vakar, “The Annexation of Chinese Turkestan,” *Slavonic Review* XIV (1935-1936), quoted in Owen Lattimore et al. *ibid*, 28.

¹⁵³ Sheng Li, *ibid*. 85.

¹⁵⁴ *ibid*.

by Yaqub Beg and he made his way into Kashgar.¹⁵⁵ After this 'trade expedition', Russia convinced Yaqub Beg to sign the "Free Trade Treaty" on the 2nd of June 1872, and with this treaty, it recognized him as the *de facto* ruler of Kashgaria. However, despite the treaty and the safe passage allowed for Russians, the Russian traders never had insurance for trade at all. Indeed in October 1876, when a Russian diplomatic corps arrived in the region, they were overwhelmed by the problems Russian traders experienced in the region.¹⁵⁶ Moreover, as was observed in the trade deficit, Yaqub Beg's state had considerable advantage; and compared with the northern Sino-Russian trade through Ili, the southern trade was not considered to be strong. Another problem with the southern trade was the competition with the Indian (hence British) trade, the imports of which already surpassed that of Russia's between 1873 and 1874. Although the Russian representative Kuropatkin wrote a report on how to ameliorate the trade relations in favor of Russia, it did not have enough time to be utilized by the Russian authorities, for in 1878, Qing Empire had already conquered the lands of Yaqub Beg and not only refused to recognize the treaties signed, but also ordered the local people to return the goods bought from the Russians and ordered the Russians to return the money earned.¹⁵⁷

Recovery of Trade and the Return of Ili

After the Qing conquest of Xinjiang in 1878, the only place still left unconquered was Ili, which was by then under the jurisdiction of the Russians. However it was not long before the negotiations started between the two sides, with Sui Hou representing the Qing government. On March 1879, there was an official meeting during which it was stated that the focal point of bilateral relations was basically trade rights. The Russians

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.*, 86.

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*, 88.

¹⁵⁷ *ibid.*, 90-93.

agreed to give back Ili in return for trade rights, compensation for losses, and steps to ensure some rights in the Tianshan Mountain and the northern places. Accordingly on the 2nd of October, the two sides agreed to sign the Treaty of Livadia which allowed the Russians to do free trade in Mongolia and Xinjiang. Besides Ili, Tarbaghatai and Kashgar, the Russians also obtained the right to build trade-related consulates in Hami (Qumul), Turfan, Urumqi, Gucheng, and Jiayuguan, the last of which is a city in modern day Gansu Province's Hexi Corridor that connects Xinjiang with inner-China.¹⁵⁸ However, the signing of this agreement aroused great opposition in the country, and so it was not ratified by the Qing government; and Sui Hou suffered great humiliation on his return to Beijing, luckily escaping death penalty.¹⁵⁹

It was evident that the Treaty of Livadia had to be revised. It should be noted that Russia, financially suffering due to the 1877-78 Russo-Turkish War, was also “more than willing to seek a compromise solution.”¹⁶⁰ Thus, in February 1881, "Ili Treaty" and "Revision of Land Route Trade Regulations" –known as the Treaty of St. Petersburg– were signed, the latter having some modifications such as imposing restrictions on the trade rights concerning Jiayuguan, temporary exemption from taxes in the north and south of Tianshan Mountains, and leaving out the right to build up trade-related consulates in Hami and Gucheng. Ili was given back to Qing, but the right to build up consulates in Ili, Tarbaghatai, Kashgar, and Urumqi was granted to Russia together with the right to build trade circles.¹⁶¹

Recovery of trade and the establishment of Russian consulates were realized not long after the signing of the Ili treaty. Especially after the region became a province of the Qing Empire with a new name "Xinjiang", trade relations got even more intricate.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid.*, 98.

¹⁵⁹ Michael Edmund Clarke, *In the eye of power: China and Xinjiang from the Qing conquest to the New Great Game for Central Asia, 1759-2004*, *ibid.*, 80. Clarke gives the Chinese name as Chong Hou, however it is a misreading of the word *sui* (崇) for *chong* (崇).

¹⁶⁰ B. P. Gurevich, *ibid.*, 322.

¹⁶¹ Sheng Li, *ibid.*, 99.

Nevertheless, Xinjiang after all apparently became a region where the so-called “temporary exemption from taxes” was in reality already turned into “exemption from taxes for an undefined period of time”. With the privileged rights enjoyed by the Russians, trade volume continued to grow not only in the north, but also in the south via Kashgar. It was this increase in trade volume that ended up in Russia building up the trade headquarters in the capital of Xinjiang, Urumqi, on the 13th of April 1896,¹⁶² sealing the Russian influence on the future of the province.

Tatars: the Unexpected Leaders of Xinjiang

As a result of the expanding Russian trade networks, the Volga Tatars who had emigrated to Xinjiang played a crucial and determining role in the future of Xinjiang. The Tatars had a unique capability to accumulate huge amounts of capital and invest in the area of education, an interest that has captivated the Tatars from the 1880s onward. In order to understand how the Tatars became the prominent actors that promoted modernist education in Xinjiang, *usul-u jadid*, a brief introduction to the Russian Tatars’ history is at hand.

Tatars in Russia

The Volga Tatars' acquaintance with Imperial Russia started in 1552 when Kazan was annexed by the armies of Ivan IV. The ensuing centuries experienced an overwhelming policy of promoting Christianity which sought to see “the unbelievers receive the True God”.¹⁶³ These policies of conversion persisted until the reign of Catherine II (r. 1762-1796) when the perception about Islam started to alter slowly. However, it should still be noted that “the enlightened despot” also continued to fund the missionary activities,

¹⁶² *ibid.*, 106.

¹⁶³ Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars: A Profile in National Resilience* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1986), 38.

albeit the structural changes she had established; moreover, her policies were also pragmatic in nature, having realized that the “expansionist policies in the east could succeed only if the persecution of Muslims stopped”.¹⁶⁴ Therefore, it was during the end of the 18th century that Tatars acquired rights that were to transform their social and political agenda during the nineteenth century.

From an economic perspective, starting with the reign of Catherine II, they were granted the right to engage in trade and commerce which provided them the opportunity to embark upon new careers not only in the Volga region but also in Central Asia where they were forced to migrate due to the earlier policies of religious suppression. This right to trade, though, was only given to the nobles, and was still not extended to include the peasants. Since the conquest of the Volga region, the Tatar peasants who maintained Islam as their religion were not permitted to acquire land, leaving trade as the only option for survival – an option that could not get realized until 1821 when the peasants were also granted the right to engage in trade.¹⁶⁵

It was not long after the Tatar peasants were also given the right to trade that they proved to be one of the most dynamic groups that engaged in commercial activities. Bolstering the commercial activities of the nobles, the Tatars gained an upper-hand in Central Asian trade, and even in the Far East. Indeed, they had even established tea plantations in Hankou, China.¹⁶⁶ Thus, in the nineteenth century, Tatars emerged as the new class of merchants that accumulated substantial amounts of capital.

From a religious perspective, Catherine II's establishment of “Muslim Ecclesiastical Council” (*muftiat*) in 1789 was of enormous value for the Tatars, for it signaled a breathing space for the Muslims in general. As Rorlich argues, the

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*, 42.

¹⁶⁵ Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, *Transition into the Twentieth Century: Reform and Secularization Among the Volga Tatars* (PhD Dissertation: The University of Wisconsin Madison, 1976), 108.

¹⁶⁶ *ibid.*, 110.

establishment of the *muftiat* strengthened the self-esteem of the Muslims which had a great impact on their philosophical interpretations of Islam.¹⁶⁷

As an immediate product of these developments in the 18th century, the idea of 'reformism' dominated the minds of some Tatar intellectuals. This reformism which first started at the end of the 18th century was religious in its essence. One of the first Tatars to be drawn into this new aura of Islamic reforms was Shihabeddin Merjani (1818-1889) who, following the earlier Muslim reformist Abu-Nasr al-Kursavi (1776-1813), argued for *ijtihad* which stated that every individual should seek his/her own interpretation of the Quran.¹⁶⁸ Starting with Merjani, a plethora of Tatar intellectuals commenced a journey of radical reforms, not only influenced by the Russian atmosphere but also exposed to ideas that emanated from different geographies.

In this respect, Rızaeddin Fahreddin (1858-1936), an ardent follower of Merjani, is a good example. He was not only influenced by Tatar intellectuals, but also by non-Russian figures such as Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani of Persia, and Ahmed Midhat of the Ottoman Empire, both of whom defended the need to integrate Islam into the rapidly changing political and economic conditions.¹⁶⁹ These reformist ideas culminated in the need to establish secular Tatar schools that would be different both from the existing *maktabs* and *madrasas* which were “completely cut off from the realities of the Russian state,” and the existing secular Russian schools which had a propensity for assimilationist policies.¹⁷⁰ In this regard, Ismail Gasprali deserves the utmost attention, for his active promotion of education as well as his Pan-Turkist ideas infiltrated all of Central Asia, including the Ottoman Empire in the west and Xinjiang in the east.

Ismail Bey Gasprali (1851-1914), or Ismail Gasprinski, was a Crimean Tatar

¹⁶⁷ Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars: A Profile in National Resilience*, 43.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*, 49-51.

¹⁶⁹ *ibid.*, 55-56.

¹⁷⁰ Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, *Transition into the Twentieth Century*, 169.

whose global influence has been spectacular. During the late 1870s, Gasprali has systematized the idea of reform in education, formulating “the new method” (*usul-u jadid*) which became widely known as jadidism. A significant component of jadidism was a fundamental change in the phonetic system. Thus, he modified the Arabic alphabet so as to fit the needs of the Tatar language.¹⁷¹ Observing in his own school in Bahcesaray, Crimea, that the new method could teach the students how to read and write in a very limited period of time, he fervently started to demand the necessity of jadidism – a demand that did not fall on deaf ears.¹⁷² What needs emphasis at this point is that Gasprali never intended to overthrow Russian authority; rather, he was in favor of co-existence, given that the Tatars were not to be assimilated by the Russians. In this regard, he even sent a letter to the governor general of Turkestan, Rosenbach, demanding the need to found jadidist schools in the region.¹⁷³

Indeed, the jadidist curriculum had become so reformist that Russian was taught as an independent subject of study, just as Arabic and native language were. However, not unexpectedly, the conservative ulama was not fond of this new method; and consequently, a divide has occurred between two groups, with jadidists defending the new method, and the *qadimists* defending the old one.¹⁷⁴ Despite the clashes, by the early twentieth century, the jadidists were victorious – a victory, it should be remembered, that was mainly achieved through the financial support of the Tatar merchants.

The dissemination of jadidist ideas to the rest of the Islamic world was maintained again by Gasprali and his periodical *Tercuman* which started its publication

¹⁷¹ *ibid*, 171.

¹⁷² Mehmet Saray, *Türk Dünyasında Eğitim Reformu ve Gaspıralı İsmail Bey (1851-1914)* (Ankara: Türk Kültürünü Araştırma Enstitüsü, 1987), 45.

¹⁷³ *ibid.*, 47.

¹⁷⁴ Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, *Transition into the Twentieth Century*, 172-3.

in 1883. With *Tercuman*, Gasprali had a motive of culturally uniting all the Tatars and Turks, who belonged to one and the same race according to his articles published in 1881.¹⁷⁵ His periodical was a sensation, for it reached everywhere in Central Asia; and, as a result of the Asia-wide establishments of the Tatars, the ideas of Gasprali and other Tatar intellectuals were also welcomed among the Turco-Muslim population of China, mainly Xinjiang, where jadidism took hold simultaneously with the developments in Russia.

Tatars in Xinjiang

Although there is quite a detailed literature on the Tatars in Russian territories, the works on the Tatars in China are extremely scarce. Apart from a couple of Chinese books that have been used in this section of the study, we may suggest that there exists almost nothing on the subject. Given the impact the Tatars had in Central Asia, including Xinjiang as will be elicited, it is confusing to see that the subject has not received due attention. Therefore, in this part of the study, I will bring together the scattered information I have gathered on the subject, and try to draw a coherent picture of the Tatars in Xinjiang and their massive influence on the region.

The Chinese sources divide the Tatar immigration into Xinjiang into two parts, with the first one dating from 1830s to late 1850s, and the second from 1860s onwards. The first part of Tatar immigration into Xinjiang, starting from 1830s, can be traced back to the period when Tsarist Russia started to expand its borders into Central Asia. After 1831, when the Russian troops had invaded all the land almost until the Chinese borders, many Tatars, including the clergy men, intellectuals, small-industry owners as well as the nomadic people had started to immigrate into Xinjiang, mainly the

¹⁷⁵ Nizam Önen, *İki Turan: Macaristan ve Türkiye’de Turancılık* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), 100.

Tarbaghatai area.¹⁷⁶ The second part in the history of Tatar immigration started in 1861 when Russia abolished serfdom. Following the abolishment, many former serfs in the European parts migrated to the Asian inner lands where the population was scarce and the land vast. The occupation of the formerly empty lands by these immigrants forced some of the Tatars to move eastwards toward Xinjiang.¹⁷⁷ The Tatar population in Ili reached 1900 in 1892; however it increased even more after 1905 when the failed revolution of Russia forced more intellectuals to flee from Russian lands.¹⁷⁸ Even after the Bolshevik Revolution, the Tatars who returned back to Russia were very small in amount, having already settled in the region and intertwined with the politics of Xinjiang.

On the other hand, I believe that the Tatar migration could have started earlier. Since Rorlich states that the conversion policies starting with Ivan IV “prompted the beginning of an exodus of the Volga Tatars toward Bukhara, the Kazakh steppes, and Central Asia,”¹⁷⁹ it is highly likely that starting with the 17th century, some Volga Tatars' had already reached Chinese Turkestan. Regardless of the actual period of immigration, we certainly observe a very intimate relationship between the capital accumulation of Tatars and the dissemination of modernist ideas in nineteenth-century Xinjiang.

Following the rights enjoyed by the Russians after the “Sino-Russian Trade Regulations” in 1851, the Russian economic activities increased in Chinese Turkestan. Among the Russian émigrés in the cities, where they were granted the right to establish emigrant community areas, there were a lot of Tatars, too. In order to understand the influence of the Tatars in founding jadidist schools, and therefore in the formation of an organic link between the Ottoman Empire and the Chinese Turkestan, an investigation

¹⁷⁶ Dezhū Li, *ibid.*, 12.

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.*, 13.

¹⁷⁸ *ibid.*, 14.

¹⁷⁹ Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, *The Volga Tatars: A Profile in National Resilience*, 39.

of the Tatar economic and educational activities is at hand.

During the end of the Qing rule, the Tatars were mainly located in the cities of Tarbaghatai, Urumqi, Ili and Yining in Xinjiang, as well as in the cities at the other end of the empire such as Harbin, Tianjin and Shanghai. It was the Tatar population that played a leading role in the trade between China and Inner Asia. As narrated, the Tatars were quick enough to establish tea plantations in Hankou during the nineteenth century. It may be suggested that their linguistic abilities which enabled them to communicate with Russians, Kazaks, Uyghurs and Chinese made them indispensable for central Asian trade. Tatars firstly worked as warehousemen, purchasers, salesmen, accountants and cashiers; however in time they became the Russian agents in business and deserved the name of “chief traders” (*zong shang* 總商).¹⁸⁰

The Tatar traders purchased and sold a variety of goods from Xinjiang including livestock, cotton, leather (of various animals such as cow, sheep, camel, fox, marten, weasel and marmot), camel and sheep hair; they also purchased tea leaves, silk and satin from inland China selling them in the Russian markets where they were joyfully accepted by the European Russians. From the other side, they purchased mainly manufactured goods such as cotton knitwear textiles, needlework, stationery, porcelain, cosmetics, sugar, match, paper and toys, and sold them in the bigger cities of Xinjiang.¹⁸¹

With the influence of Russian firms increasing, the Tatar businessmen started to build up their own companies, some of which enjoyed great popularity. As a matter of fact, in Urumqi, three of the eight big Russian firms belonged to Tatars.¹⁸² One of these foreign firms was *jixiangyong*, the foundation of which is still in dispute. According to

¹⁸⁰ *ibid.*, 16.

¹⁸¹ Jianhua Zhou and Bingying Guo, *Tatarzu [Tatars]* (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 1993), 18-19.

¹⁸² Zhou and Guo, *ibid.*, 17.

one narration, it was founded by a Tatar named Ramazan who escaped Russian military conscription in 1861 and migrated into Xinjiang. He served Russians, hence accumulated knowledge and experience in trade, until 1879 when he opened up his own business in Tarbaghatai. In 1907 he was confident enough to open up a branch in Urumqi with another Tatar named Nasir, accumulating capital that amounted to three million rubles, which equaled around 5.7 tons of gold.¹⁸³ Another account reads that it was founded by two Tatar brothers, named Husayin and Hasan, and that by the beginning of the century it possessed around 1.3 million rubles.¹⁸⁴ The second firm was that of Ishak Brothers who established the *tianxing* firm in Xiemi, later opening up branches in Tarbaghatai, Urumqi and Turfan; and by 1914, reaching up to a level of capital accumulation amounting to a million rubles. The third such firm was *zhishengxing* built by Ziya Bay.¹⁸⁵ Besides the three biggest companies belonging to Tatars, the rest (the other five firms) also did not belong to Russians but to Uzbeks: Emincan and Dursun Baba formed *desheng*, Mershali and Tahman Bay *dehe*, Mansurcan *jili*, Tajosman *renzhongxin*, and Abud established the *maosheng* firms.¹⁸⁶

It should be noted that the privileges enjoyed by Tatars were to crumble down after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 when the Bolsheviks denounced all the treaties signed by the Tsarist Russia as no longer applicable. The following civil war in Russia almost halted the trade relations with Xinjiang. The virtual halt in the economic relations was also an extension of the controlling policies of the Governor-general of

¹⁸³ Dezhu Li, *ibid.*, 17, and Zhou and Guo, *ibid.*, 17.

¹⁸⁴ Baoerhan, *ibid.*, 76, and Zhou and Guo, *ibid.* It is highly possible that the latter account is the right one basically for two reasons. The first reason is that I haven't come across the first account in any other source, and the second is the extreme amount of capital assumed to be accumulated by Ramazan, for the total trade volume between Xinjiang and Russia in 1907 was 30 million rubles (see: Sheng Li, *ibid.*, p. 139). Moreover, it is without a doubt the case that Husayin is the one who has become a philanthropic millionaire that has also established close connections with the Ottoman government, as will be shown later.

¹⁸⁵ Zhou and Guo, *ibid.*, 18.

¹⁸⁶ Baoerhan, *ibid.*

Xinjiang, Yang Zengxin. Moreover, with the internal strife in Xinjiang during 1931 to 1933 and even afterwards, the economic conditions did not really recover as to keep up the wealthy trade.

Although the Xinjiang-Russian trade did not continue after the first world war, the fact that many of the traders and businessmen were actually Tatars, or Uzbeks, is important to keep in mind, for the accumulation of capital by an Islamic population (predominantly Sunni) who shared common cultural practices in terms of language and daily life enabled the promotion of educative activities for the Muslim population in Xinjiang. As we will see in the following paragraphs, as in Russia, it was through the Muslim traders' (especially Tatars) initiatives that schools advocating modern education were founded and the local Muslim population was thus educated. Anticipating what I will stress in the following paragraphs, we may claim that the economic prosperity led by the Tatar Muslim population enabled the inauguration of modern education into Xinjiang, which have formed an organic link with the Ottoman activities in the region since the Ottoman-Xinjiang relations were primarily established through a bilateral educative activity of sending and receiving students and teachers – an activity that will be disclosed in the next chapter. I argue that it was this formation of a Turco-Islamic bourgeoisie comprised mostly by Tatars and partly by Uzbeks that have globalized the region through rendering it susceptible and sensitive to the changes in the Islamic world, and in this regard, the Russian world.¹⁸⁷

Tatars and Jadidism in Xinjiang

The Tatar influence in Xinjiang was not only confined to trade, they were also the agents of the new education system that called for a modern reform in the social system, a reform that could be carried through a fundamental alteration of schools and

¹⁸⁷ The formation of an Islamic bourgeoisie may also be regarded as the foundation for the later establishment of the East Turkestan Islamic Republic in 1933 and 1944.

education. Known as jadidism, it has significantly transformed the social structure of Xinjiang, just as it had transformed the Tatar lands in Russia. Nonetheless, it is imperative to examine the Islamic education that preceded jadidism, prior to explaining the jadidist impact in detail.

In the late nineteenth century, education was confined to boys between the ages of six to sixteen, and in some places to girls only under twelve, in institutions known as *maktap* (or *mekteb*). These maktaps were informal schools mostly founded in a mosque, at a teacher's house, or at the house of a wealthy community member; and the curriculum was mainly religious and oral. Basically, Quran was taught as well as some Turki and Persian, but the students studying in these schools did not really have reading skills, their knowledge only confined to several memorized verses. These schools were common in the Tarim Basin with around eighty in Kashgar prior to 1930.

Besides *maktab*, there were also *madrasas* (or *medreses*) which were administered as charitable foundations supported by *waqfs*. *Madrasas* were more common in the larger oases of southern Xinjiang, with dozens in Yarkand, several in Kashgar, and two in Aqsu. The mullahs who taught in these schools had most of the time studied in Bukhara, which was known as an important center of Islamic scholarship. Receiving education in a *madrasa* was important in holding government posts during late Qing either through enrolling into the bureaucracy or becoming judges. Otherwise, it also provided the chance to become a teacher in another *madrasa*. The curriculum included Islamic law, Arabic grammar, logic and dogma, and poetry. Education was basically oral. However, the education system in *madrasa* has also faced some necessary transformations during early twentieth century. With the influence of jadidist movement and the Chinese modern education movement, the curricula had extended to include Islamic history, astronomy, geography, literature and medicine.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁸ Millward, *ibid.*, 146-148.

Nevertheless, it was the influence of the Tatars and hence jadidists that have transformed the whole intellectual world of Xinjiang.

It seems possible to suggest that the Tatars in Kazan were also scrutinizing the conditions in Xinjiang during the same period. Imam Kurban Ali Halidi's voluminous work on the "Five Histories of the East" (*Tevarih-i Hamse-yi Sharqi*), published in 1910 in Kazan, examines the history of Ferghana, Altishahr, Mongols, Russians and Chinese; and devotes an important part of the study to the history of Kashgar and the surrounding regions, taking it from centuries before Christ and bringing it until the end of Yaqub Beg's rule.¹⁸⁹ The fact that the work pays equal attention to the history of China, Russia, Mongols, Central Asia, and Altishahr suggests that the Tatars were meticulously observing the conditions prevailing in Central and East Asia. Moreover, as this section seeks to reveal, this observation was not solely confined to a scholarly curiosity, but was indeed bolstered through political activism in Xinjiang.

From the end of the nineteenth century to approximately the 1930s, Tatar intellectuals' effect on education was immense. Mostly in Urumqi, Ili and Tarbaghatai, Tatars, Uyghurs, Uzbeks, Kazakhs and Kyrgyzs enjoyed the establishment of 'modern' schools as opposed to 'religious' ones. The reforms were sometimes carried out openly and sometimes in a sort of clandestine way so as not to attract the attention of the Chinese authorities. The first Tatars that promoted jadidism in Xinjiang were Husayin Musa Bay Hajji (Husayin Musabayev) and his brother Bawudong (Bahaeddin; Bawudun Musabayev).¹⁹⁰ Husayin was a well-travelled merchant who had a factory in Guldja. He had been to Paris, Berlin, Moscow and Istanbul. The exact time of the first primary school they have built remains to be disputed. Some Chinese sources regard the year 1870 as the year of establishment of the first jadidist school in Artush. Other

¹⁸⁹ Imam Kurban Ali Halidi, *Tevarih-i Hamse-yi Şarki* (Kazan: 1910). For the chapter on Altishahr, see., 69-139.

¹⁹⁰ It is possible that this Husayin is the same person that owned *jixiangyong*, for he also has another kin named Hasan.

sources take the year 1883 or 1885 as the first year. Given that jadidism did not exist during the 1870s, it is logical to take the latter date as the right one. It is known that the Artush school's curriculum was produced according to the jadidist school programs in Kazan and Istanbul. Husayin also sent his school's teachers to Kazan to let them receive the jadidist education. The content of the education was comprised of language, literature, arithmetic, geography, history, nature, art, physical education, Russian, Arabic and Chinese. As a matter of fact, the role of Husayin in the politics of Xinjiang is bigger than can be told in a paragraph, and it definitely illuminates the *terra incognita* of Xinjiang history. Briefly put, Husayin also helped the 1911 Revolutionists in Xinjiang through donating money and aiding them in the organization of an army. It was again the same Tatar Husayin's kin who visited Talat Pasha in Istanbul in 1913 and asked for teachers to educate the ignorant population in Xinjiang. Regarding this demand, Talat Pasha sent Ahmed Kemal who entered Kashgar in March 1914. The details of this journey and the achievements of Ahmed Kemal as well as Husayin himself will be elaborated in the further pages. Right now, suffice it to say that Musabayev Brothers' inauguration of the new education (*xinshi jiaoxue* 新式教學) encouraged a lot of Tatars to promote the reform movement in Xinjiang.¹⁹¹

The biggest influence of the Tatars and the new system was in Ili where due to the geographical proximity of the region to the Russian world, the influence of the new system was felt more deeply. As early as 1885, a Tatar progressive scholar used the Baitula Mosque in Yining as a school that seemed as a center of religious education

¹⁹¹ This paragraph is based on Dezhu Li, *ibid.*, 23, James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*, 171-172, and Sheng Li, *Dong Tujuesitan* (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2007), 10-11. James Millward states in his book that he has not been able to determine whether Hüsayin who opened up a school in Artush is the same Husayin who visited Talat Pasha. However, I believe it is logical to take them as the one and the same person for Li writes that “Husayin has helped support the Xinhai Revolution that also erupted in Xinjiang through donating money to the Revolutionary Army, and help organize the army. He also helped develop the industry as well as education...” (p. 10), and a paragraph before this, he claims that the same Hüsayin and his kin Abu'l Hasan were the ones who visited Talat Pasha in 1913. Indeed, according to the memoirs of Ahmed Kemal, it was only the latter who visited Istanbul, as will be discussed in the fourth chapter.

where indeed the new method of education was promoted through teaching scientific books that were published in Kazan.¹⁹² In later years, another influential school was again a clandestine one, the outset of which was a religious school administered by a Tatar mosque. It was actually a concealed jadid school by the name of “First Light” (*shuguang xuexiao* 曙光學校) that operated from 1910 to 1914, when it was officially announced as the first school for girls.¹⁹³ In this school, a married couple of Tatars from Kazan¹⁹⁴ was teaching the new sciences. This school even opened up a library named “Flash of Light” (*shanguang* 閃光) which housed thousands of books.¹⁹⁵ As a matter of fact, the name of the school and the place of establishment is given differently in other sources. Qianixifu writes in his book that the school was founded by the donations of Tatar merchants and it was built on the grounds of a former Islamic school (*jingwen xuetang* 經文學堂) beside a Tatar mosque. Moreover, the name of the school was “Brightness” (*guangming xuexiao* 光明學校), with the name of the library as

¹⁹² Dezhu Li, *ibid.*, 20 and Malike Qianixifu, *Zhongguo Tataerzu Jiaoyushi [History of Chinese Tatars' Education]* (Beijing: Minzu Chubanshe, 2005), 36.

¹⁹³ In Dezhu Li's work, there is a more detailed account of the foundation of the first school for girls and the information the two books provide contradict with each other. According to the account in *Tataerzu jianshi* there was another school in Yining that was actually founded in 1905 by Tatar intellectuals named as Aziz, Hatice, and Hainula where girls were educated. This school later on evolved into the school named “First Light” and in 1914, it was officially established as a school for girls. *Zhongguo Tataerzu Jiaoyushi* also supports this account. According to the latter, the girls' school founded in 1905, by the same Tatar teachers that have founded the school in 1914, was closed down in 1912. Then it was reopened by the name “Brightness” in 1914. However, according to the account in *Tataerzu*, the first official foundation of a school for girls was in Urumqi, “Nogay School”, founded in 1915. In *Tatarzu jianshi* and *Zhongguo Tataerzu Jiaoyushi*, there is also a mentioning of the Nogay School accepting girls starting in 1916. Since the *Tatarzu jianshi* and *Zhongguo Tataerzu Jiaoyushi* give a more detailed and a more convincing account, it is reasonable to take the First Light School (or Brightness School) in Yining as the first school established for the education of girls. There is yet another source (Millward, *ibid.*, 174) which states that “as early as 1908 the Tatar merchants in Gulja opened a school teaching Turkish to girls”. However, I could not find another source to support this claim.

¹⁹⁴ It is highly likely that the married couple from Kazan was Abdullah Bobi (Bûbî), and his wife Hatice. As an example of intellectual Tatars who were not solely limited to cities but were also active in the rural sides, Abdullah Bobi was a prominent contributor to studying Islamic sciences, Quran and Hadiths. For more information see: Azade-Ayşe Rorlich, *Transition into the Twentieth Century*, 139. It is also recorded that after he was released from prison in 1913, he went to Gulja to spread the new method; see, İbrahim Maraş, *Türk Dünyasında Dini Yenileşme (1850-1917)* (İstanbul: Ötüken, 2002), 94.

¹⁹⁵ Zhou and Guo, *ibid.*, 23

“Brightness Reading Room” (*guangming yuelanshi* 光明閱覽室).¹⁹⁶ Whatever mistake the sources may have, it is a recognized fact that the influence of this school was enormous, since it was the first school for girls that was established by a Turkic-speaking ethnicity in the boundaries of Xinjiang.¹⁹⁷ The unique character of the school was immediately praised by the Kazan Tatars:

Yining people, in the midst of the ocean of knowledge, have stirred up a movement full of hope. [This movement] shows us that women should receive more education than men. When this wonderful hope is rising, they are preparing for the establishment of a school for girls. From this day on, all the marriage gifts will be given to the orphans of this school as donation.¹⁹⁸

Indeed, the sum of donations given to the school reached 575.60 rubles in a few months.¹⁹⁹

Yet another school in Yining, founded in 1911 and, ironically, again concealed by the Baitula Mosque was a school that educated young Uyghur, Uzbek and Tatar girls. However, it was closed down in 1912 only to be reopened again under the name of “Girls' School of Handicraft” (*Nizi gongyi xuexiao* 女子工藝學校) where the arts and crafts of Uyghurs and Tatars were promoted and the girls were taught various handicrafts such as embroidery, needlework and spinning.

In Tarbaghatai, another Tatar businessman named Omar Hajji opened up a school in 1910 in which a hundred students were educated. This school was also a unique establishment for it was the first school that allowed boys and girls to receive education under the same roof.²⁰⁰ To solve the problem of teacher recruitment, Omar

¹⁹⁶ Malike Qianixifu, *ibid.*, 37-38.

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.* The same source also indicates that a school for girls was not even opened in Russian territories by then. Thus Xinjiang was the first place the Tatars had established the school for girls.

¹⁹⁸ *Xiwangbao*, quoted in Malike Qianixifu, *ibid.*, 38.

¹⁹⁹ *Xiwangbao*, April 1914, quoted in Malike Qianixifu, *ibid.*

²⁰⁰ Dezhu Li, *ibid.*, 21.

sent his son to Kazan to receive education and return back to teach. The graduates from Omar's school sometimes continued in "Turan Open Country School" (*tulan pingyuan xuexiao* 土藍平原學校), generally referred to as "Turan School" which was founded in 1920 by a different Tatar businessman in Tarbaghatai. The latter had Russian and Chinese language in the curriculum besides Tatar and Arabic.²⁰¹

In Urumqi, a Tatar intellectual who was prominent in reforming the education system transformed the "Nogay Mosque" into the "Nogay School" in 1912 and formed a new curriculum that taught mathematics, language, history, geography and social development history, which were supervised by another Tatar intellectual.²⁰² This school was turned into a girls' school in 1915 and it welcomed Uyghurs, Tatars, Kazakhs, Kyrgyzs, Xibos, Chinese Muslims, and even two Han students. The school, now supervised by a Tatar woman summoned from Kazan, also taught needlework besides the usual classes given to male students.²⁰³

In other parts of Xinjiang, there were also similar activities going on. In Turfan, again under the influence of Tatars, "Renovationist School" (*gexinpai xuexiao* 革新派學校) was founded where again Tatar intellectuals were invited to teach the new sciences. In the Altai region too "Awulu" school was founded by a Kazakh who invited a Tatar to supervise the new system. Apart from these regions, there were also other establishments in Kashgar, Aqsu, Yarkand, Ghulja, Khotan, Kucha, Shanshan, Hutubi, Qitai and Hami. Millward writes that one of the most influential schools was the one in Astana, outside of Turfan, founded by Maqsud Muhiti. Muhiti, after being educated in traditional *maktap* and *madrassa*, started making trips to Urumqi, Tarbaghatai,

²⁰¹ Malike Qianixifu, *ibid.*, 48.

²⁰² Zhou and Guo, *ibid.*, 23.

²⁰³ Malike Qianixifu, *ibid.*, 49.

Semipalatinsk, Kazan, Moscow and other Russian territories where he was influenced by Pan-Turkic nationalist ideals. He set up a school in 1913 in a “deluxe two-storey structure opposite his home”, and the equipment he purchased (such as blackboards and student desks) was all “unknown in the rote maktap pedagogy but essential to the new goal of producing fully literate students.”²⁰⁴ His school in the small village of Astana, outside of Turfan, continued educating males and females, several of them holding posts in the government or the newspaper-publishing business. In the 1930s, eighteen of them went on to study in the Soviet Union.²⁰⁵ A laudable achievement, indeed...

Be it a tiny village or a prosperous city, the impact of Tatar education is so substantial that an Uyghur scholar, Abdullah Talif, notes:

The first period [of the history of Uyghur nation’s education] starts in 1870 and ends in 1911 with the Xinhai Revolution; the second period starts in 1911 and end with the Hami Revolution in 1931. In this long historical process, Tatar teachers and intellectuals, and Uzbek educators have worked really hard and contributed immensely to the development of Uyghur education. ... Uyghurs are indebted to them and to everything they have done.²⁰⁶

Although a history written from a retrospective point of view may claim that Tatars were extremely potent in the educational development of Uyghurs, it should be noted that the modern notion of ‘Uyghurs’ as a nation was not yet created back then. These jadidist schools indeed stirred up nationalistic sentiments among the local population; however, we should keep in mind that the nationalism bestowed upon the young minds was a Turkic nationalism rather than a mere Uyghur one. Although the new schools have also included Uyghur language lessons and taught texts in vernacular language, the consciousness obtained was not a Uyghurian one. Indeed, the students in the Astana School even had songs praising the national language:

Mother tongue! Oh beautiful language

²⁰⁴ James Millward, *ibid.*, 175.

²⁰⁵ *ibid.*

²⁰⁶ A-bu-du-la Ta-li-fu, *Wei wuerzu jiaoyushi suibi* [A Note on the history of Uyghur education] (Xinjiang Renmin Chubanshe: 1986), quoted in Malike Qianxifu, *ibid.*, 70.

the wisdom of our ancestors is its source.
I understand much about affairs of the times
all by means of you-miraculous language.

However, Millward points out that “the lyrics of this paeon to the 'national' language were in Tatar, not Uyghur”²⁰⁷. Thus, the 'nation' that was vouched for and to which the students were sentimentally tied to remained a vague category until the beginning of the 1930s.²⁰⁸ As late as in the 1920s, Cable narrates when explaining "tribes and nations" in Xinjiang that there are "Turks who are also called *chantou* 纏頭 [who] are the agriculturalists of the fertile oases, and their caravans carry the produce of one part of the country to the other. They are known ethnologically as *Turanian Turks*. Their language is Turki and they are a Muslim people"²⁰⁹. As I have stressed, the category of 'nation' was a more general one that entwined Turkic Central Asian Muslims to which the Russian merchants and intelligentsia (i.e. Tatars, Uzbeks and other Turkic groups) envisioned themselves belonging.

It was precisely this obscurity of definition, but the enthusiasm and will to make one, that urged jadidism to become such a sturdy ideology in Xinjiang. The only apparent delineation, not definition, of jadidism was that it primarily had Islamic and Turkic roots, i.e. the intelligentsia that supported it was Turkic Muslims. Thus, any ethnically Turkic person was welcomed. Moreover, there was also an evident, and true,

²⁰⁷ James Millward, *ibid.*, 176.

²⁰⁸ Although there was not an exact definition of Uyghur nationality, the roots were planted in these schools. A Tatar educated in these schools, Burhan Shahidi, was to become the Xinjiang Provincial Chairman during the transition period between Guomindang and CCP. Also, as Millward points out, based on Shinmen Yasushi's analysis, a high percentage of the ETIR leaders were either educators or rich merchants who acted as the intellectual entrepreneurs. Prime Minister Sabit Damulla was engaged in publishing business in Artush, until it was closed down by Yang Zengxin. Shams al-Din (Shamsaddin) Damulla, the Minister of Waqf Affairs, was a teacher in the Artush schools. Yunus Beg, a peasant from Turfan who had been the secretary of Maqsud Muhiti's secret organization, became the Minister of Internal Affairs. Even more interestingly, the above mentioned Abuhasan, who was a close kin of Husayin Musa Bay and was the one who engaged in private talks with Talat Pasha for sending an Ottoman educator to Xinjiang who turned out to be Ahmed Kemal, became the Minister of Agriculture. (James Millward, *ibid.*, 203)

²⁰⁹ Mildred Cable et al., *The Challenge of Central Asia – A Brief Survey of Tibet and its Borderlands, Mongolia, Northwest Kansu, Chinese Turkistan, and Central Asia* (London: World Dominion Press, 1929), 46 (emphasis added).

belief that the Ottoman Empire was supporting jadidism up to the fringes of Central Asia, the place where it ceased to be Russian – Xinjiang.

*Çin 'de, Mançurya 'da din bir görenek, başka değil.
Müslüman unsuru gayet geri, gayet cahil.*

...
*İnmemiştir hele Kur 'an, bunu hakkıyla bilin,
Ne mezarlıkta okunmak, ne de fal bakmak için!
Bu havalidekiler pek yaya kalmış dince;
Öyle Kur 'an okuyorlar ki: Sanırsın Çince!*²¹⁰

*In China, religion's just a custom, nothing else,
The Muslims are so backward and so ignorant.*

...
*No Koran was given to them, know that for sure,
Neither for funeral nor for fortune!
These folks are so primitive; oh please,
When they read the Koran, you'd think it's Chinese!*

CHAPTER IV

OTTOMAN EMPIRE'S XINJIANG: *TURKISTAN-I CINI*

This chapter will analyze the Ottoman policies concerning China and Xinjiang from 1860s to approximately the beginning of the First World War. As opposed to the Chinese literature on Sino-Turkish relations that poses Turkey as the historical partner and ideological arbiter of Uyghur separatism, this chapter and the next one will argue that the Ottomans did not have any intention of assisting the indigenous Turkic population in Xinjiang against the Chinese to achieve political independence. I believe that at least until 1918, the Ottoman Turks' interest in the region was first an interest in educating the Muslims, and second in educating the Turks. I argue that if this education entailed the seeds of political independence, an idea that was realized in the 1930s, it was yet never the formal intention of the Ottomans but merely a consequence of the local social and political circumstances imbued with modern ideas. The sixth chapter, on the other hand, will elicit the role of Turkish actors in the independence movement during the 1930s, but in doing so it will argue that the political and ideological environment of the 1930s should not be taken as an extension of earlier decades, but should be understood within the global and the local contexts of that particular decade.

²¹⁰ Mehmet Akif Ersoy, *Safahat*, edited by Yakub Çelik (Ankara: Akçağ Yayınları, 2008), 195.

In order to make the above-mentioned original argument on Ottoman-Xinjiang relations, this chapter will examine the historical relations between the Ottoman Empire and China in general, and Xinjiang in particular.

Although the Yaqub Beg Emirate (1864-1877) that was founded in Kashgar occupies a significant place in writing the history of Sino-Ottoman or Ottoman-Xinjiang relations, I believe that it would be erroneous to start the history between the two countries precisely at this date.²¹¹

Such an arbitrary commencement of historical relations are false on two accounts: firstly, it may reduce the Sino-Ottoman relations to a mere Ottoman-Muslim relationship which is, as will be shown, not the case; and secondly, it is historically wrong, for in the light of archival materials, we today know that the Ottomans' relations with the Chinese [Muslims] start earlier than the beginning of the Ottoman-Kashgar political and military relations. Therefore, in order to understand the close link between the Ottomans and Xinjiang, it becomes imperative to disclose Sino-Ottoman relations, too.

Bearing this in mind, this chapter endeavors to shed new light on Ottoman perceptions of China, and its influence on the Ottoman policies concerning Xinjiang. Since the Ottomans named the region "Türkistan-ı Cini" (Chinese Turkestan) (CT) until the collapse of the Empire, I will stick to this labeling. Moreover, I find such a conscious usage of 'CT' critical, for it informs us that the Ottomans observed Xinjiang as partly belonging to the Turkic world, and partly to China. This labeling will have even more meaning as I will reveal the Ottoman perception of the region.

In this regard, I will first draw a scheme that more or less conforms to the conventional historiography that takes Pan-Islamism as the main catalyzer of Ottoman

²¹¹ Adibelli, although he does not have any nationalist or religious intention, also tacitly indicates that the Yaqub Beg Emirate may be regarded as the first time when Sino-Turkish relations start, see: Barış Adibelli, *Osmanlıdan Günümüze Türk-Çin İlişkileri* (Istanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık), 2007.

policies toward China. Elaborating on this vision, I will uncover new archival materials to understand the dynamics of Ottoman-CT relationship in a more concrete way. This part of the study will generally deal with the history of Sino-Ottoman relations, with the first section devoted to Ottoman-CT relations and the second one to Sino-Ottoman ones. Chronologically situating the progress of relations within the period from the 1860s to the 1910s, this part will describe the Ottoman perception of China from a Pan-Islamist world-view.

In the second part of this chapter, I will draw an Ottoman picture of China that was not depicted in the earlier literature. Deconstructing the Pan-Islamist gaze, I will point out some new materials, novels, and pictures from periodicals that suggest a different understanding of China, detached from the Islamic prism. This depiction will be again based on materials from the 1860s to the 1910s, i.e. including the rule of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) which has established constitutional monarchy in 1908 with the well-known Young Turk Revolution. I believe that such an understanding is crucial to find out the exact “location” of Xinjiang for the Ottomans.

After describing the Ottoman perception of China and the concomitant policies in this chapter, the next chapter will elicit the paradoxical situation Pan-Turkism has created in the 1910s, and point out the exact location of Xinjiang in the midst of Pan-Islamist and Pan-Turkist ideologies.

The Ottoman Gaze on China: A Pan-Islamic Prism

Ottomans and Chinese Turkestan

As indicated in the second chapter, Yaquub Beg Emirate was a milestone in the history of Xinjiang, for it paved the way for a momentous change of governance – Xinjiang became a province after Yaquub Beg's emirate was torn apart by the Qing army. Yaquub Beg's strategic move of consolidating power and giving a religious meaning to the

Muslim revolts in the region during 1860s was facilitated by the already existing power vacuum of the Qing Empire due to the Opium Wars defeats.²¹² It should be remembered that Taiping Heavenly Kingdom (1851-1864)²¹³ and the Panthay Sultanate (1856-1873)²¹⁴ were also products of the same period of turbulence.

When Yaqub Beg claimed independence and formed his own governance conquering the region until Turfan in the east, he was cunning enough to form alliances with the British and the Russians. However, the ideological legitimacy of the emirate as well as its military modernization came from the Ottoman Empire. It was through the ambassador Yaqub Khan, Yaqub Beg's nephew, that Yaqub Beg sought legitimation to his new post. However, the formulation of this bond was not the product of a brand new imagination; rather, it should be observed as an extension of the Central Asian policies of the Ottoman Empire. Therefore, I believe that Sultan Abdülaziz's support for the Yaqub Beg Emirate was not a policy concerning China but a policy concerning Central Asia; however, in the end, it served as the grounds on which an Ottoman-Kashgar connection would flourish.

The Ottomans always possessed a connection with the Central Asian Khanates of Bukhara, Khiva, and Khoqand, not only because of the pilgrimage route but also because they retained diplomatic relations with one another. In fact, the three Uzbek Dervish Lodges in Eyub, Sultanahmet, and Uskudar provided the Central Asian pilgrims shelter and temporary recruitment, therefore establishing a concrete and strong link

²¹² For information on the Opium War and its consequences, see, Peter Ward Fay, *The Opium War 1840-1842* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975); James M. Polachek, *The Inner Opium War* (Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press, 1992); for a more general account of the role of opium in nineteenth century capitalism and world politics, see, Timothy Brook and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi (eds.), *Opium Regimes – China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1852* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

²¹³ For information on the Taiping Rebellion, see, Jonathan D. Spence, *God's Chinese Son: The Chinese Heavenly Kingdom of Hong Xiuquan* (London: Flamingo, 1997).

²¹⁴ For information on the Panthay Rebellion and Sultanate, see: David G. Atwill, *The Chinese Sultanate: Islam, Ethnicity, and the Panthay Rebellion in Southwest China, 1856-1873* (California: Stanford University Press, 2005).

between Central Asia and Istanbul.²¹⁵ Moreover, the influence of the Uzbek Lodges was not confined to the social roles they had adopted, but it seems that for the Ottoman side, they also worked as an intermediary tool to have a greater say in Central Asia. For instance, in 1848, when the ambassador of Khoqand was returning back to his homeland, Mohammed Effendi, the Sheikh of the Uzbek Lodge who was originally from Bukhara, was also sent with him as an envoy “to stop the wars and the murders that took place between the two Islamic states [of Bukhara and Khoqand].”²¹⁶

In other words, in order to comprehend the Ottoman-Kashgar link from a different perspective, I believe that it is necessary to draw attention to one aspect of the Ottoman-Central Asia relations, i.e. the Ottoman-Khoqand diplomatic relations. After all, Yaqub Beg was a Khoqandi himself, and the establishment of the Yaqub Beg Emirate resulted in a huge inflow of Khoqandis from Khoqand to Kashgar.

It seems that the diplomatic relations between the Khoqand Khanate (1709-1876) and the Ottoman Empire were quite close in the nineteenth century, and the most significant of all for our purposes is the ambassador sent from Khoqand in 1865. Arriving at Istanbul in 1865, Yaqub Effendi seems to be different from earlier envoys.²¹⁷ He returned and came back again after four years, and returned back to Khoqand in March 1869.²¹⁸ What is so interesting about Yaqub Effendi is his request for arms and ammunition from Sultan Abdulaziz – a request that was actualized in January 1869, just two months before Yaqub Effendi returned back to Khoqand.²¹⁹ Archival sources do not indicate whether the arms were ever carried to Khoqand, but what deserves close

²¹⁵ Kemal H. Karpat, “Yakub Bey'in Osmanlı Padişahlarıyla İlişkilerinin Yeniden Yorumlanması”, in *Türkiye ve Orta Asya*, trans. Hakan Gür (Istanbul: Imge, 2003), 157-159.

²¹⁶ BOA, İ.HR. 327-21154, 1264.L.16 (15.09.1848)

²¹⁷ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 333-99, 1282.M.11 (05.06.1865).

²¹⁸ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 437-71, 1285.Za.23 (08.03.1869).

²¹⁹ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 431-82, 1285.N.29 (13.01.1869).

scrutiny is that a few years later, another ambassador, this time from the newly formed Yaqub Beg Emirate, was sent to Istanbul.

The arrival of an ambassador named “Yaqub Khan” in Istanbul as an envoy of the Yaqub Beg Emirate in 1873 raises a few questions as to whether the above-mentioned Yaqub Effendi was the same person with Yaqub Khan. Keeping in mind the fact that Yaqub Beg's Emirate is basically formed by Khoqandis, and that there was no ambassador sent to Istanbul prior to Yaqub Effendi's return after 1869, and that after the founding of the new Emirate there was a huge inflow of Khoqandi migrants passing the border into Kashgar, and that it is a quite small possibility to have two different Khoqandi ambassadors with the same name to come to Istanbul in a period of four years, we may suggest that Yaqub Effendi and Yaqub Khan were indeed the same person.²²⁰

Yaqub Khan arrived in Istanbul in 1873 after passing through Moscow, St. Petersburg and Odessa.²²¹ When Yaqub Khan arrived in Istanbul in May as the ambassador of Yaqub Beg, the main reason of his diplomatic mission was to inform Sultan Abdulaziz about the newly formed Muslim state in Kashgar. A house was rented for him as soon as he arrived,²²² and he immediately requested to have an audience with the Sultan.²²³ This request was quickly accepted by the Sultan and they had a private conversation, the details of which do not exist.

Although we are ignorant about the details, we know that in June 1873, the Sultan ordered a golden sword, jewellery that's worth two hundred thousand *gurush*,

²²⁰ Karpas also writes that Yaqub Khan came to Istanbul in 1865, but he does not indicate any sources, see, Kemal Karpas, *ibid.*, 157.

²²¹ Kemal Karpas, *ibid.*, 163.

²²² BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 454-34, 1290 Ra 16 (14.05.1873).

²²³ BOA, İ.DH. 667-46454, 1290.Ra.27 (25.05.1873).

and an ornamented *Osmani* Order of the first rank to be sent to Yaqub Beg.²²⁴ It was on the same day that the Sultan also honored Yaqub Khan, the ambassador, by giving him an *Osmani* Order of the second rank, and one hundred thousand *gurush* to cover his travel expenses.²²⁵ Nevertheless, in June, the *Osmani* Order of the second rank given to Yaqub Khan was replaced by a *Mecidi* Order of the first rank, and the members of the delegation that came to Istanbul with Yaqub Khan were also honored by *Mecidi* Orders of the third and fourth ranks.²²⁶ It was in July that the golden sword and the medal for Yaqub Beg were all manufactured and ready to go.²²⁷

However, orders, swords and jewellery were not the only objects of interest. Ottoman military officers, arms and ammunition were sent together with Yaqub Khan when he was returning back to Kashgar in August,²²⁸ and this suggests that Abdulaziz followed a strict policy of providing military aid to the new Muslim state in Chinese inner Asia. Taking into account Yaqub Khan's demand for arms in 1869 as the ambassador of Khoqand, and yet again in 1873 as an ambassador of Kashgar, I believe that Abdulaziz's policy of providing aid to the Emirate of Yaqub Beg was indeed an extension of his policies concerning Central Asia. Therefore, the Sultan's interest in the region was not a manifestation of an irrepressible desire to help the Kashgarians against the Chinese, but an expression of his will to continue to play the Great Game in Central Asia, and fight especially against the Russians.

Whatever the real intent of Abdulaziz was, it was a long way before Yaqub Khan and the arms arrived in Kashgar. The boat that carried them had to halt in the Suez

²²⁴ BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 456-91, 1290.R.19 (15.06.1873).

²²⁵ BOA, İ.HR. 259-15524, 1290.R.19 (15.06.1873).

²²⁶ BOA, İ.DH. 670-46685, 1290.C.2 (28.07.1873).

²²⁷ BOA, A.MKT.MHM. 459-61, 1290.Ca.28 (24.07.1873).

²²⁸ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 460-90, 1290.C.13 (08.08.1873), A.MKT.MHM. 461-52, 1290.C.18 (13.08.1873), and A.MKT.MHM. 461-62, 1290.C.19 (14.08.1873).

Canal,²²⁹ and they were all transported to another boat in the Red Sea that took them to Bombay, from where they headed to Lahore and had to stay there for a couple of months since the British refused to cover their expenses.²³⁰ At last, when they arrived in Yarkand, they were warmly welcomed by Yaqub Beg who minted coins with the seal of the Sultan, evoked His name during the prayers, and raised the Ottoman flag.²³¹

Ali Kazım, the head of the military education team sent to Kashgar, was especially crucial for Yaqub Beg, for he was regarded as the one to modernize the military organization of Yaqub Beg's army. He was at once put to work, as Ali Kazım himself notes:

His highness Yaqub Khan (Beg) assigned this humble servant to the service of His Eminence Mulla Yunus, governor of Yarkand. So, in Yarkand which became my post, I worked as an austere military instructor for the purpose of organizing those who had no knowledge whatsoever about the military organization into one artillery battalion and teaching them close-order drills and other skills necessary for artillery-men, so that they could learn the military organization perfectly.²³²

It is interesting to note that there was yet another group of soldiers sent to Kashgar in 1873 via Central Asia. However, these were not as idealist as Ali Kazım or his fellow officers,²³³ as we may understand from Hajji Mehmed Effendi's testimony. In a document dated October 19, 1878, it is written that Hajji Mehmed Effendi, who was sent to Kashgar 5 years earlier, had returned back to Istanbul. According to his narration, three soldiers fled in Tashkent and became captives in the hands of Russians, and two more soldiers "who could not find the time to flee" were captured by the

²²⁹ BOA, A.MKT.MHM 463-96, 1290.B.21 (14.09.1873).

²³⁰ Kemal Karpat, *ibid.*, 165.

²³¹ BOA, İrade Dahiliyye, 49343, in *Osmanlı Türkistan İlişkileri*, 86-88.

²³² Hodong Kim, *ibid.*, 118.

²³³ The other officers' names were Mehmet Yusuf, Yusuf İsmail the Circassian, İsmail Haqq Efendi, Zaman Bey from Daghestan, and one civilian Murad Efendi. (Hodong Kim, *ibid.*, 152)

Chinese in Kashgar.²³⁴ This suggests that Ali Kazım and his soldiers were not the only ones sent to Kashgar; however, as it is, we know that Ali Kazım and his fellow officers were the ones to work very scrupulously to improve the military organization of Yaqub Beg.

Yaqub Beg, having received the title of “*Emir-ül-müslimin*” from the Caliph,²³⁵ celebrated the arrival of military officers, arms, and orders, and sent a letter to the Sultan showing his gratitude, and informing him about Yaqub Khan, who was on his way back to Istanbul, again.²³⁶ This time, Yaqub Khan arrived in Istanbul in 1875, together with Yaqub Beg's two sons –Beg Quli Beg and Hak Quli Beg– and his brother –Adil Khan. These figures were also honored by *Mecidi* Orders –Beg Quli receiving a *Mecidi* Order of the second rank, Hak Quli of the third rank, and Adil Khan of the fourth.²³⁷ Besides, Mehmed Effendi, who was appointed as the officer responsible for the gifts that were sent to Kashgar, was also given a *Mecidi* Order of the third rank.²³⁸

Yaqub Khan's visit to Istanbul was short but lucrative since the Sultan again endowed him with two thousand rifles, six cannons, and a substantial amount of ammunition.²³⁹ Although he returned back to Kashgar afterwards, he was sent to Istanbul again when news of Abdulaziz's death reached Kashgar. In 1877, Yaqub Beg sent a letter to the Sublime Porte offering his condolences and writing that he has received information about the death of Sultan Abdülaziz, dethroning of Sultan Murad,

²³⁴ BOA, HR. SYS. 4-36, 1878.10.19.

²³⁵ Ahmet Rıza Bekin, “Yakub Beğ Zamanında Doğu Türkistan’ın Dış İlişkileri,” *Ankara Üniversitesi, Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Doğu Dilleri* II, No. 1 (1971), 35-36, 39-42.

²³⁶ BOA, HR.TO. 515-17, 1875.4.26, İ.DH. 701-49054, 1292.Ra.27 (03.05.1875).

²³⁷ BOA, İ.DH. 705-49338, 1292.C.24 (27.07.1875).

²³⁸ Mehmed Efendi was first given a *Mecidi* Order of the fourth rank, but it was upgraded due to the request of Yaqub Khan, see: BOA, İ. DH. 706-49426, 1292.B.20 (21.08.1875).

²³⁹ Hodong Kim, *ibid.*, 117.

and the ascension of Sultan Abdulhamid II to the throne,²⁴⁰ and stated his existing close bonds with the Ottoman state.²⁴¹ It was Yaqub Khan who carried Yaqub Beg's letter, and he arrived in Istanbul in April 1877, and immediately asked to see the Sultan.²⁴² However, Sultan Abdulhamid II kept Yaqub Khan waiting for a month before he accepted him to his presence.²⁴³ It was apparent from this long wait that Abdulhamid's policies were not going to be reminiscent of his predecessor. It may be the case that Abdulhamid, having learned about the situation in Kashgar via the British consulate reports prior to Yaqub Khan's arrival, thought it best to hold on for a while until the situation in Kashgar calmed down.²⁴⁴

It was only a month later that Yaqub Beg died, and the Emirate he had founded began to be torn down to pieces by the Qing powers. After all, Abdulhamid's patient waiting gave its fruits, and it occurred to him that military aid was not going to help Kashgar anymore. Indeed, Yaqub Khan and Beg Quli Khan, with the latter also escaping to Istanbul with the fall of the Emirate, have begged for more help from Abdulhamid, but the Sultan was very adamant.

Still, Yaqub Khan did not give up. In a report written in December 1879, he was informing the Sultan about how the Emirate fell apart. According to this report, due to the disagreements between the son of deceased Yaqub Beg, Beg Quli Khan, Niyaz Hakim (the governor of Khotan), and Hakim Han Töre (governor of Turpan), there was a political disintegration which led to Chinese military attack on Urumqi and Kashgar.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁰ BOA, HR.TO. 518.42, 1877.4.7.

²⁴¹ BOA, İ.DH. 742-60720, 1294.Ra.26 (10.04.1877).

²⁴² BOA, İ.DH. 742-60716, 1294.Ra.27 (08.04.1877).

²⁴³ Kemal Karpat, *ibid.*, 168.

²⁴⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.HR. 29.Z.1293 (15.01.1877).

²⁴⁵ BOA, Y.EE. 91-41, 1297.M.10.

It seems that Yaqub Khan tried every way to seduce the Sultan into extending his hand for help. Besides the reasons as to the downfall of the state, there is a quite detailed depiction of the natural resources in the region. According to the report, there existed big silver and gold mines in Kashgar besides many other mines, and therefore this region did not need any help from other cities. Khotan, just like Kashgar, also had a lot of mines besides very fertile lands. As such, it is told that from 33 different gold mines –some of which were already being managed– the region was exporting gold. In Yarkand, too, there were so many gold and copper mines that they were beyond definition (*ta'rifden birun*).²⁴⁶ It seems possible to speculate that such a narrative about resources was a naïve way to convince the Sultan that the perishing Islamic state of Yaqub Beg still had a lot to offer to the Sublime Porte; that the annihilated power of the Kashgarians could still recuperate (provided that they were supported by the Sultan). However, it seems that the Porte was not impressed at all.

It was two years later in 1881 that the Porte received yet another letter, this time more to-the-point. The writer was the beloved son of Yaqub Beg, Beg Quli Khan, who was residing in Göksu Pavilion in Istanbul.²⁴⁷ Describing in length the degrading experiences he has been through, he faithfully asserted that although the Russians wanted to make use of him in retrieving Kashgar back, he was never fooled and that he was still a loyal servant of the Caliph. “Burning with vengeance,” Beg Quli Khan noted that he already established a strong alliance with the Kyrgyz leader Abdurrahman Dadhah, who was earlier summoned to Kashgar by Yaqub Beg himself and was given a post. Dadhah had a small army of 15,000 cavalry men, and now possessed more than a thousand rifles which were formerly sent by Sultan Abdulaziz. Writing in November, Beg Quli stated that due to the difficult winter conditions, he was preparing to go to

²⁴⁶ *ibid.*

²⁴⁷ BOA, Y.PRK.MYD. 2-14, 1298.Z.08 (31.10.1881). Beg Quli Khan stayed in Göksu Pavillion for three months and twenty four days, see: BOA, İ.DH. 865-69239, 1299.Z.15 (28.10.1882).

India and then to Afghanistan where he was to make contact with Dadhah and attack Kashgar –that, after he received the generous help of the Ottomans.²⁴⁸ We do not know how the Sultan responded to this letter, but as Kim comments, it is unlikely that the Sultan responded favorably since we do not observe any activity afterwards.

Nevertheless, although the Emirate was completely annihilated by the Chinese, the Ottoman-Yaqub Beg bond still persisted. Al-Sayyid Abdulkadir Beg, Yaqub Beg's nephew born in Kashgar, was admitted into the Chief Secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1887 and he rose up in rank in the following years.²⁴⁹ Al-Sayyid Abdurrahman Beg, another nephew of Yaqub Beg born in Kashgar, also became an officer in the Chief Secretary of Internal Affairs in 1887.²⁵⁰ Muzaffer Beg, a close kin of the ambassador Yaqub Khan, again born in Kashgar, was admitted into the Chief Secretary of the Ministry of Education in 1892, and in 1898 he was transferred to Aydın where he was recruited again.²⁵¹ Moreover, in 1895, a certain Mohammed who claimed to be the son of Yaqub Beg wrote a petition seeking an opportunity to be educated in the schools of Istanbul:

I'm the son of Yaqub Beg, Emir of Kashgar, subject (*kul*) of your Holiness. I became an orphan at the age of three when my father died. After our country was invaded, I took refuge in the land of the puissant Caliph ... and I reside in the Uzbek Lodge in Eyub. I request to be enrolled into one of the great schools of the Empire to receive education in sciences.²⁵²

We do not know whether he was admitted or not.

As to Yaqub Khan himself, although no specific information exists, we know from his son's letter to the British Queen in 1933, seeking the assistance of the British

²⁴⁸ BOA, Y. EE. 9-4.

²⁴⁹ BOA, DH.SAİD. 32-39.

²⁵⁰ BOA, DH.SAİD. 32-73.

²⁵¹ BOA, DH.SAİD. 52-173, and İ.DH. 1355-1316.M/42, 1316.M.23 (12.06.1898).

²⁵² BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ. 30-50, 1312.B.8 (04.01.1895).

for the East Turkestan rebellion, that Yaqub Khan died in 1900.²⁵³ Moreover, we know from the memoirs of Adil Hikmet Bey, the Ottoman officer sent to Chinese Turkestan in 1914, that Yaqub Khan's wife and son were still living in Istanbul during the 1920s.²⁵⁴

Moreover, according to a letter written by the governor of Ankara in 21 August 1887, after the defeat at Kashgar, Yaqub Beg's general (*emir-ül-ceyşi*) arrived at the Ottoman Empire. Although the name is not specified, it is probable that he is the above mentioned Hakim Han Töre. At first a captive in Chinese hands, he succeeded in escaping and came to Erzincan where he stayed for 3-4 months, whereon he went to Konya and stayed for another month. On the 13th of August, he arrived at Ankara. The interesting point is that he received a recommendation letter (*bir kit'a tavsiyename*) from the governor addressing the Khedive, and set out to Istanbul.²⁵⁵ However, there is no information as to his connection with Egypt. Nevertheless, in the face of such details, we may certainly assume that the connections between Kashgar and the Ottoman Empire continued during the reign of Abdülhamid II.

Indeed, the only existing link was not via Yaqub Beg or Yaqub Khan. In April 1895, Habibullah, the *qadı* of Kashgar, asked for the Prophet's beard (*lihye-yi saadet*) to be sent over to Kashgar.²⁵⁶ After a period of contemplation, it was prepared and decreed that Habibullah may receive it when he is summoned to Istanbul.²⁵⁷ We do not know whether he was ever summoned.

Furthermore, besides the Kashgarian bond, Chinese Turkestan maintained a link

²⁵³ Ahat Andican, *Cedidizm'den Bağımsızlığa Hariçte Türkistan Mücadelesi* (Istanbul: Emre Yayınları, 2003), 863-865.

²⁵⁴ Adil Hikmet Bey, *Asyada Beş Türk* (Istanbul: Ötüken Yayınları, 1998), 12. According to Adil Hikmet Bey's accounts, Yaqub Khan was the nephew of Yaqub Beg, and it may be the case that the above mentioned Abdulkadir and Abdurrahman are the sons of Yaqub Khan, not Yaqub Beg. Since the names are the same, it becomes harder to distinguish between the two.

²⁵⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.UM. 13-108, 1306.Ca.12.

²⁵⁶ BOA, Y.A.HUS. 1313.4.26 (1895).

²⁵⁷ BOA, İ.HUS. 43/1313CA030, 1313.ca.3 (21.10.1895).

with the Sublime Porte via other cities. The fact that the Islamic pilgrimage route passed from the lands of the Ottoman state, and that the Sultan supported those on the Holy Path when they encountered financial hardships was determining in formulating the bond between Chinese Turkestan and the Ottoman Empire. During the Hamidian era, Hajji Polad b. Hussain and his wife, Hajji Abdulfettah and Hajji Mohammed were only some of the pilgrims from Chinese Turkestan who were assisted by the Sultan when they faced financial problems and could not find the necessary amount either to go to the Hajj or to return back to their homeland.²⁵⁸

Even after Abdulhamid II was overthrown, the subsidies for pilgrims still remained an important task for the Sublime Porte. In 1910, nineteen pilgrims from Kashgar who were “debilitated by the crushing circumstances of a three month journey”²⁵⁹ were granted money for their holy voyage to Jiddah. Forty pilgrims from Chinese Turkestan were given passports and visas for their passage from Russia, and their travel expenses were covered by the Ottoman government in 1911.²⁶⁰ Again in 1914, pilgrims from Khotan were supported for their sacred path to the Hajj.²⁶¹ Besides the pilgrims that encountered hardships, there were also some wealthy ones who presented gifts to the Caliph as they passed from Istanbul on their way to the Hajj, such as Alizade Sayyid Effendi who brought gifts from Chinese Turkestan in 1910.²⁶² As far as we can tell from the 31 Chinese bronze coins dating back to the reign of Qing Emperor Guangxu (r. 1875-1908) found in Tarsus-Gözlükule excavation site, there were a lot of other travelers and merchants coming to the Ottoman lands from Chinese

²⁵⁸ BOA, BEO 1560-116943, 1318.C.12 (07.10.1900), DH. MKT 2414-31, 1318 C 18 (13.10.1900), DH.MUI. 43-44, 1327.Za.14.

²⁵⁹ BOA, DH.İD 77-9 1330.R.13 (02.04.1912).

²⁶⁰ BOA, DH. MTV 40-1 1329. B. 6 (03.07.1911).

²⁶¹ BOA, DH.MB.HPS.M. 9-73 1332.S.5 (02.01.1914).

²⁶² BOA, İ. MBH. 1328.B.23 (30.07.1910).

Turkestan, for Tarsus was also an important center for the Turkestanis who had established two waqfs during the fifteenth century.²⁶³ Moreover, important figures, such as the *müftis* of big cities, also visited the land of the Caliph during this era –a visit that strengthened the link between Istanbul and Chinese Turkestan, as will be displayed in the following paragraphs.

It is also convenient to assume that Ottoman officers were also dispatched to Chinese Turkestan in order to collect money in the name of the Sublime State. There is information both about the amount of money collected and how it *was not* collected. As to the amount collected, two events attract attention. The first is the War of Tripoli in 1911, when the Kashgarians have sent at least 4000 rubles to support the Ottoman navy.²⁶⁴ As for the Balkan Wars in 1912-13, the Kashgarians were reported to send close to 400 liras.²⁶⁵ However, there were also instances of pretension when the officers working on behalf of the Caliph were merely swindlers. In 1905, a letter was sent from a resident of Gulja writing that someone who claimed to be the envoy of the Caliph was collecting tremendous amount of money by coercion:

Two years ago, a man arrived in Gulja. [He told us] that his name was Sayyid Mohammed Osman Meyan and that he was sent by the Great Caliph to collect money for the Hijaz Railway. He has a sword in hand, and if [we] give the money, he takes it, if not, he beats [us]. What kind of a man is this? We decided to write a letter to ask whether he is sent by the Caliphate or he collects money in his own account. If we assume that he is really sent by the Caliph, well, he does not have any official documents, except for more than twenty seals which, he claims, were made by the Caliph himself. He took one thousand rubles from us, and one thousand from the peasants. This guy is around forty years old, short and dark-skinned.²⁶⁶

It is noted below the translation that such an act was unacceptable and that it had to be

²⁶³ Selçuk Esenbel, “Comment on the Chinese Coins from Tarsus-Gözlükule,” in *Field Seasons 2001-2003 of the Tarsus-Gözlükule Interdisciplinary Research Project*, ed. Aslı Özyar (Istanbul: Ege Yayınları, 2005), pp. 173-175.

²⁶⁴ “Makam-i Muallay-yi Hilafet ve Kasgar Müslümanları”, *Sebilürreşad* 1-8, no 11-193, 3 May 1328.

²⁶⁵ *Sebilürreşad* 2-9, no. 38-229, 15 Teşrini sani 1328 (1912).

²⁶⁶ BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ. 51-18, 1323.Ş.17 (16.10.1905).

stopped at once. However, this was not the only time such a farce took place in Chinese Turkestan. In 1911, three officers were sent to Kashgar and the surrounding cities to collect some money in the name of the Ottoman Navy, the Balkan War, national defence, planes, the Hijaz Railway, and the Red Crescent (*hilal-i ahmer*); however, it is reported that no money had been received until 1913.²⁶⁷ We may deduce from these reports that Ottoman officers were sent to Chinese Turkestan for various purposes – although some of them decided to act on their behalves– and it is without a doubt an extension of the religious link mentioned above that led to the Ottoman activities in Xinjiang.

It seems possible to suggest that this religious route had established an invincible link that cherished a flow of communication from the Western Ottoman lands to the Chinese Turkestan and vice versa. This communicative network also produced an informative channel that provided the Turkestani lands an opportunity to utilize the knowledge that emanated from the Ottoman soil. This knowledge was apparently more Islamic-based during the time of Abdulhamid, but this also altered in time as will be shown. This plain network of mutual communication and information may be discerned from the letters presented to the Sublime Porte by the above mentioned *müftis*.

An example of the Turkestanis informing the Porte about the conditions of their homeland is a letter signed by the *qadı* of Turfan in 1904 in which he states the social, economic, religious and political situation of the city.²⁶⁸ A second letter, signed in 1905 by the *qadı* of Qumul (Hami), *qadı* of Turfan, and *müfti* of Qumul is yet another example of the Turkestani endeavor to explain their social environment. The letter is actually written to obtain permission to pay a visit to the Caliph on their way to Holy pilgrimage. However, the content of the letter is quite interesting for it sheds light on the

²⁶⁷ BOA, DH. KMS 2/1-19 1331.Z.1 (01.11.1913).

²⁶⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.MŞ. 8-30, 1323.

mutual relationship between Chinese Turkestan and the Ottoman State. The letter was more like a report that described the conditions of Qumul, Turfan and Seyram (the Ili region). It was indeed a detailed report that informed the Sublime Porte about the conditions of religion, education, agricultural production, governance, commerce, natural resources, craftsmanship, and whether there resided any foreigners (there were none).²⁶⁹

There is yet another letter, written in 1904 by the *müfti* of Qumul, Abdullah b. Mesud Effendi. Overall, it shared the same content as the other letters, but with one slight difference. The letter first described the occupations of Muslims in that region. After the *müfti* wrote about the number of mosques and schools, he went on to state that it was obligatory to pray to the Caliph after every ritual worship (*namaz*), and that all the Chinese Muslims knew the name of Abdülhamid the Caliph and that no one without ablution could utter his name.²⁷⁰ Then, the *müfti* wrote about how they were governed, and how they paid the taxes. Thus far, the letter may be categorized as just another informative piece for the Porte; however, the noteworthy part of the letter is that it also stressed the need for books. The *müfti* noted that due to the fights with the Chinese twenty years earlier, their books were lost; so they asked for books from the ones who went to Hijaz. Therefore, here we conceive an alternate meaning of the religious route taken by the Turkestani pilgrims. It is without a doubt a path where educative knowledge flows together with the devout pilgrims. And it is this path that leads to the establishment of connections in terms of education, such as the establishment of the “Hamidian School” in Ili, and the summoning of teachers from Istanbul to educate the Chinese Turkestanis –facts that will be revealed in the following pages.

For now, suffice it to say that starting with the Yaqub Beg rebellion, we certainly

²⁶⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ. 51-70, 1323.

²⁷⁰ BOA, Y.PRK.MŞ. 8-11, 1322.

realize a close connection established between the land of the Caliph and Chinese Turkestan. Nevertheless, as I have pointed out in the beginning of the chapter, it is erroneous to reduce the Sino-Ottoman relations merely to Chinese Turkestan. The religious, as well as the non-religious, link between the Sublime Porte and mainland China was also quite intimate; and, I believe that it is impossible to thoroughly understand the Ottoman perception of Chinese Turkestan unless appropriate attention is given to Sino-Ottoman relations, and the Ottoman perception of China, at large.

Moreover, it seems possible to suggest that the Muslims on the mainland and the Muslims in Chinese Turkestan were regarded as belonging to the one and the same geography. As a matter of fact, the Chinese Turkestanis did not share an upper status in the eye of the Ottomans. They were all Muslims, and the Caliph was the protector of all of them, regardless of their ethnic background. It is interesting to note that when Hasan Tahsin was writing his book named “Islam in China” (*Cinde İslamiyet*) in 1905, he did not separate Chinese Turkestan from mainland China while giving an account on the Muslim population. He even used the term 'Xinjiang' while referring to Chinese Turkestan.²⁷¹ That's why, in other words, it would be erroneous to analyze merely the bond Chinese Turkestan had with the Ottoman Empire. In understanding how Chinese Turkestan was perceived by the Ottomans, it is equally significant to comprehend how China at large was understood through the same Pan-Islamic gaze.

Ottomans and Mainland China

The first official affinity between the Chinese muslims and the Sublime Porte had in fact started *before* Yaqub Khan's arrival at Istanbul. The Ottoman court was already aware of the political turmoil China was in during 1860s since a book published as the “Contemporary Chinese Situation” (*Ahval-i Hazıra-yı Cin*), written by a French

²⁷¹ Hasan Tahsin, *Çinde İslamiyet* (Istanbul: Tercüman-ı Hakikat Matbaası, 1322 [1905]), 7.

interpreter who was living in China during the rebellions, was presented to the Sultan in 1866.²⁷² Six years later, the Court was going to have the chance to know some of the figures involved in these rebellions.

When Du Wenxiu 杜文秀 (Arabic name, Suleiman), who was the leader of the Panthay Rebellion,²⁷³ and his Sultanate were on the verge of fall, he sent his son Prince Hassan to England to have an audience with the Queen in 1872. When Prince Hassan was returning back to Yunnan, southwest China, where the Sultanate was located, Suleiman ordered him to visit the Caliph, and therefore, he arrived in Istanbul together with his General named Yusuf in October 1872, and requested an audience with the Sultan. The Sultan was informed that Prince Hassan was the son of Suleiman who had established an Islamic State in Yunnan “between China, Tibet and Burma”²⁷⁴ with a population of more than eight million Muslims.²⁷⁵ No information exists whether he had an audience with the Caliph or not, however, the archival documents show that he stayed in Istanbul until October 24, was entertained dearly in François Logothetti in Pera, and all of the expenses were covered by the Sublime Porte.²⁷⁶

Besides this official visit managed by the Panthay Sultanate, it seems that the Porte had close links with the Chinese Muslims, just as the ones they had with Chinese Turkestan. Just like the pilgrims of Chinese Turkestan, it was the Chinese Muslims who pivoted the establishment of a cultural bond with the Ottoman Empire. The same financial support was given to the Chinese pilgrims who passed through Istanbul, as understood from archival documents. For example, when two Chinese women were

²⁷² BOA, İ. HR. 1283.Ca.16(26.09.1866). The writer of the book was awarded with a *Mecidi* Order of the fifth rank.

²⁷³ David G. Atwill, *ibid.*

²⁷⁴ BOA, İ.HR. 1289.Ş.23 (26.10.1872).

²⁷⁵ BOA, İ.HR. 1289.Ş.6 (09.10.1872).

²⁷⁶ BOA, İ.HR 1289.L.30 (31.12.1872).

robbed on their way to Hajj, Abdulhamid II granted them the necessary amount of money to send them to Hijaz.²⁷⁷ In 1909, other pilgrims from China were assisted on their way to Hijaz, and on their way back, they were assisted again to return back home.²⁷⁸ Again in 1910, the condition of five Chinese pilgrims who had recently returned from Hajj was given in detail, asking for assistance to issue the necessary visas and passports to save them from poverty.²⁷⁹ In other words, the Caliph's responsibility to look after all the Muslims in need of assistance was not limited to the Turco-Islamic world, but extended virtually to anywhere Muslim.

Moreover, the Chinese subjects were also financially supporting the naval and military strength of the Ottoman Empire, and they were awarded with orders and medallions. In this regard, in 1903, Shifazade Hajji Ramazan Effendi was one such figure who was awarded with a *Mecidi* Order of the fifth rank, for his financial support for military equipments.²⁸⁰ Moreover, a few months later, Bahaddin Effendi received an *Osmani* Order of the third rank, Nizam b. Alaaddin Efendi a *Mecidi* Order of the fifth rank, and Abdulkadir Effendi and Mohammed Masum Effendi silver qualification medallions (*liyakat madalyonu*),²⁸¹ an award given to “foreigners who show courage and loyalty for the good of the Sublime Porte.”²⁸² Furthermore, during the War of Tripoli fought between Italy and the Ottoman Empire, the Muslims of China were

²⁷⁷ Cezmi Eraslan, *II. Abdülhamid ve İslam Birliği* (İstanbul, Ötüken Yayınevi, 1992), 384.

²⁷⁸ BOA, DH.İD 77-9, 1330.R.13 (02.04.1912).

²⁷⁹ BOA, DH. SN. THR 33-66 1330.C.7 (24.05.1912).

²⁸⁰ BOA, İ. TAL. 1321.M.5 (03.04.1903).

²⁸¹ BOA, İ. TAL. 1321.Ş.19 (09.11.1903). Although these figures are described as belonging to the Chinese Muslims, they may also be Chinese Turkestanis; but because the documents do not specify their exact origin, I found it convenient to claim that they are Chinese Muslims of the mainland.

²⁸² Metin Erüreten, *Osmanlı Madalyaları ve Nişanlar: Belgelerle Tarihi = Ottoman Medals and Orders Documented History*, trans. Erhan Uzsay (İstanbul: The Destination Management Company, 2001), 264.

reported to boycott the Italian goods, and send money to subsidize the Turkish cause.²⁸³

This bond between China and the Ottoman Empire that probably started at earlier times slowly gained strength at the end of the nineteenth century, as Abdulhamid's Pan-Islamist policies proved to be more than just an inert discourse for the Chinese Muslims. In 1899, the *müfti* of Beijing sent a letter to the Istanbul Government (*yisitangbolu guo* 一思堂卜祿國) with someone who travelled in China, Japan, and India for a couple of years.²⁸⁴ The letter was a sort of petition that asked for more attention to be rendered to the Muslims residing in China. He requested religious books to be sent for the *Hanefi* Muslims who were ignorant about the obligations of Islam; and furthermore, he asked for the appointment of an ambassador and a Consul to look after the legal issues of the subjects. It is interesting to note that the *müfti* of Beijing also demanded that the Caliph takes responsibility in establishing a mosque and a cemetery in Yokohama, Japan—a demand that was made by the Japanese Muslims to the Japanese State, but was not realized.²⁸⁵ This demand displays how the Caliph was perceived by the Chinese—and in this case, also the Japanese—Muslims: He was both a religious figure that had trans-imperial influence, and a political one that could ensure the education and rights of Muslim subjects in Far East Asia.

This perception about the Caliph was not limited to the Chinese, for when the Boxer Uprising (1899-1901) erupted in China, the German Kaiser Wilhelm II asked Abdulhamid II to send a delegation to China to demand obeisance from the Muslim subjects and tell them not to be involved in the uprising. Therefore, in 1901, the

²⁸³ *Sebilürreşad* 1-8, No. 3-186, 15 March 1328 (1912). It was also written in a letter that the Kashgarians were also sending money to the Ottoman Empire, see, “Kasgar Ahvali”, *Sebilürreşad* 1-8, no. 17-199, 14 June 1328 (1912), 330. It is hard to decide whether the reported Chinese Muslims were indeed the Kashgarians.

²⁸⁴ The name of the person and his title is undisclosed. It may be one of Abdulhamid's agents, collecting intelligence about the Islamic world.

²⁸⁵ BOA, Y. MTV. 195 51/4 1317.C.10 (16.10.1899).

delegation led by Mirliya Enver Bey and Kolagasi Nazim Bey set out for its journey to China. As bodyguards, Mahmud and Hasan Effendis were recruited, and in order to address the Muslims through a formal fashion, Mustafa Şükrü Efendi from Bayezid Mosque and Naib Tahir Efendi from *Fetvahane* were sent with the envoy. The translators were two Chinese Muslims from the Ottoman court together with Hirvat, Vincinco Kinyali and his daughter – all from the Austrian Embassy. The delegation set out on their journey on the 28th of April, and reached China while stopping in other Muslim cities on the way. However, the suppression of the rebellion by German General Waldersee prior to the arrival of the Ottoman envoy removed the German need for the Caliph's message, and they did not receive any attention upon their arrival. In Enver Bey's words, they were "despicably abandoned." The delegates stayed for 21 days in China and returned.²⁸⁶

However, this effort should not be regarded as futile, even though the delegation did not have any influence in suppressing the uprising. I find the Boxer Rebellion to be a turning point for the Ottoman interest in China, for in 1900, the Ottoman Empire was included into an international agreement on the establishment of a telegraph office that connected China with the Western states whose main aim was to make contact with their military powers in China;²⁸⁷ a demand necessitated by the Boxer Uprising. The significance of this agreement was that, after this date, the Ottomans had immediate knowledge about the political circumstances in the Far East; and, it was after the return of Enver Bey and the delegation that the Ottomans started to become relatively more active in the region.

The decisive date in Sino-Ottoman relations was November 28, 1906, when the *müfti* of Beijing came to Istanbul, on his way to the Hajj. Because he could not speak

²⁸⁶ İhsan Süreyya Sırma, *II. Abdülhamid'in İslam Birliği Siyaseti* (İstanbul, Beyan Yayınları, 4th edition, 1990), 72.

²⁸⁷ BOA, İ. PT. 1318.R.11 (07.08.1900).

any language but Chinese, and because he had some affinity with Arabic only through written words, the Sultan and the *müfti* only had a conversation through written Arabic. It was reported that the *müfti* presented the Sultan many gifts and asked him to send some people over to Beijing, for the Muslims there were getting converted to Christianity due to the missionary activities and their own ignorance about Islam.²⁸⁸ The *müfti* stayed in Istanbul for almost a month when he was given three hundred liras for his sacred voyage to Hijaz.²⁸⁹

Once the *müfti* left Istanbul, Abdulhamid II started to contemplate on the issue of sending some men of religion to Beijing. It was decided in February 1907 that two religious teachers (*dersiam*) from Fatih Mosque –Ahmed Ramiz Effendi and Tayyip Effendi– were to be sent over to Beijing together with Hafız Ali Rıza Effendi (an inspector in primary schools) and Hafız Hasan Effendi.²⁹⁰ This order was confirmed again in April 11,²⁹¹ however due to the physical conditions of Ahmed Ramiz and the obligatory state service of Tayyip Effendi, it was at last decided that Hafız Ali Rıza and Hafız Hasan were to be dispatched.²⁹² Only a couple of days after the decision was made, the *müfti* of Beijing returned back from his pilgrimage and he was rendered two hundred *gurush* for his journey back to Beijing,²⁹³ and he was also rewarded with an *Osmani* Order of the second rank just before he left.²⁹⁴ Most probably, Hafız Ali Rıza and Hafız Hasan accompanied the *müfti* on his way.²⁹⁵

²⁸⁸ BOA, Y.PRK.MK. 22-15, 1324-L.11 (28.11.1906).

²⁸⁹ BOA, İ.HUS 1324.Za.9 (25.12.1906).

²⁹⁰ BOA, İ. HUS. 1325.M.7 (20.02.1907).

²⁹¹ BOA, İ. İLM. 1325.S.27 (11.04.1907).

²⁹² BOA, İ. İLM. 1325.Ra.9 (22.04.1907).

²⁹³ BOA, İ.HUS. 1325.Ra.17 (30.04.1907).

²⁹⁴ BOA, İ. TAL. 1325.Ra.20 (03.05.1907).

²⁹⁵ Rahul writes that the Sheikh-ul-Islam sent emissaries to China in 1907 to establish the Caliph's

This story conforms to the Pan-Islamist *par excellence* Abdürreşid İbrahim's (1853-1944) narrative. Since İbrahim's activities will be elaborated in the later paragraphs, for the time being I will confine myself to his writings on Beijing. Abdürreşid İbrahim passed through Central Asian and Siberian lands on his way to Japan, and arrived at Beijing in 1908. According to his notes, in the Hamidian Era, the Sheikh-ul-Islam sent Ali Rıza Beg and Hafız Hasan Effendi to Beijing. Ali Rıza opened a school in Beijing, and educated more than a hundred students. However, after a year of education, İbrahim writes that they have abandoned this school with Hafız Hasan, the latter returning back to Istanbul and Ali Rıza going to Hankou.²⁹⁶ Yet, as a footnote in his book *Alem-i İslam*, İbrahim writes that Ali Rıza Efendi had returned to Beijing later on and continued his duty.²⁹⁷

Therefore, according to this narrative we may certainly argue that Hafız Ali Rıza and Hafız Hasan have established a school in Beijing, and this school is surely the one Sırma also mentions: the Hamidian School (*Darü'l-Ulûmi'l-Hamidiyye*).²⁹⁸ These two figures were also rewarded with orders for their lofty activities of educating the Muslim community in China. Hafız Ali Rıza Effendi was given an *Osmani* Order of the third rank, and Hafız Hasan Effendi, a *Mecidi* Order of the third rank, in December 1907.²⁹⁹

This tempting need to ameliorate the conditions of the Muslims in China is once

spiritual connection; and Landau also claims that in 1908 “an envoy from Abdülhamid, Ali Rıza, arrived in China to request official recognition for Ottoman consuls in China to look after Muslim interests, a demand which in this case was ... rejected”. What Rahul and Landau referred to was indeed Hafız Ali Rıza and Hafız Hasan's dispatch to Beijing. See: Ram Rahul, *Politics of Central Asia* (London: Curzon Press, 1974), 115, and Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Turkism: From Irredentism to Cooperation* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 44.

²⁹⁶ Abdürreşid İbrahim, *Alem-i İslam ve Japonya'da İslamiyet'in Yayılması 2* (İstanbul: İşaret Yayınları, 2003), 114.

²⁹⁷ Abdürreşid İbrahim, *ibid.*, 115. It seems possible to suggest that Ali Rıza was in Beijing in 1912, for the periodical *Sebilürresad* was informing his readers that the Islamic School in Beijing (*Pekinde Medrese-yi İslamiye*) was an abonnement to the periodical, too; see: *Sebilürresad* 2-9, no. 27-209, 23 August, 1328.

²⁹⁸ İhsan Süreyya Sırma, *ibid.*

²⁹⁹ BOA, İ. TAL. 1325.L.27 (03.12.1907).

again elaborated in a letter sent from Beijing, written by an Ottoman subject who conceals his real name and instead uses the pseudonym of “Islam”. The letter, sent in 1910, informs us that Hafız Ali and Hasan's activities did not give the intended outcome, for the anonymous writer states that he is sick of the “beggars” who blasphemously degrade the prestige of Islam in Beijing:

Since I have arrived here, what grieved me most has been those beggars who, wearing the robe of religion under the name of “Turk,” cheat virtually everyone. There are so many of them that they have truly seized the whole of China, Siberia and the surroundings like a raven pack, ... [and] they all claim that they have been sent by the Great Caliph with an important mission. ... These beggars! Who knows when Islam will be rescued from their ignorance and turpitude. Wherever you go, you would find these beggars who use religion and Turkishness as a means. People here are truly fed up.³⁰⁰

After expressing his utmost loath, he tells an anecdote:

Someone who introduced himself as a Meccan by the name of Sayyid told me in an upright manner that he has married thirty honest women in one year, and the oldest of them was fourteen years old. And again, there is a rumor that an honorable sheikh we have sent there as an officer has married and divorced fifty innocent [women]. This disgraceful devil has apparently made these murders in the name of religion and *sharia*; and thus he has deceived the people while he destroyed the happiness of those innocent women.³⁰¹

His letter is full of such anecdotes and stories which subtly suggest that something has to be done to ‘rescue’ Islam. It seems that the next anecdote might be from the Hamidiyye School in Beijing, or as he puts it “*Pekin Medresesi*”:

Recently, a certain Hafız Hüsni from the students of Fatih has arrived in Beijing. Claiming that he is an officer from Istanbul, he asked for thirty rial from Chinese Nur Mohammed Effendi of the Beijing School (*Pekin Medresesi*). Nur Mohammed, realizing that he is a beggar, refused his request. Consequently, a dispute started between them and that alleged student abused him very much. After he made a scene everyday for the following month, he at last went away.³⁰²

He further narrates another story concerning an ex-soldier from Izmir and a Kurd from Erzurum. Arriving in Beijing during the month of Ramadan, they start

³⁰⁰ Islam, “Pekinden Mektup”, *Taarif-i Müslimin*, No. 24, 18 Teşrinievvel 1326, 392.

³⁰¹ *ibid.*

³⁰² *ibid.*

abusing the people: “We are coming from the lands of the Caliph. It is your duty to take good care of us and respect us. However, you’re giving nothing! You’re all infidels!”³⁰³ In the face of such swearwords, the people of the mosque beat them and threw them out.

The writer then claims that he is looking forward to the day when he will leave the city, and go to his next destination –Chinese Turkestan.³⁰⁴

With regard to such opinions and anecdotes, it may rightly be suggested that Muslims were at the center of Ottoman policies in China. The close bond between the Muslims of China, including Chinese Turkestan, seems to have developed to such an extent that after the turn of the century, we witness attempts to, or at least ideas on, establishing an embassy in Beijing, and even a consulate in Kashgar.

In 1904-5, it was written that regarding the number of Muslims in China, which allegedly amount to fifty million, it is necessary to build an embassy to look after the interests of them.³⁰⁵ A few years later, in 1908, there is another document that emphasizes the need to appoint an ambassador in Beijing. This need, it is told, has become evident once again when an Ottoman subject was arrested in Kashgar, and because there was not an official ambassador from the Ottoman Empire, it was the European states that took care of the situation. Therefore, to ensure the legal rights of the Ottoman subjects, there ensued the need to build an embassy in Beijing.³⁰⁶ This need to sign a treaty with the Chinese State to permanently accommodate an ambassador in China in order to retain more information on Chinese and the Ottomans residing there, and to protect the legal rights of the Ottoman subjects, was reiterated

³⁰³ *ibid.*

³⁰⁴ *ibid.*, 393.

³⁰⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.MK. 19-28, 1322.R.7.

³⁰⁶ BOA, İ. HR. 1326.R.19 (20.05.1908).

once again in 1909.³⁰⁷ Yet again, in 1910, the vexing question of who was going to protect the rights of the Ottomans in China seems to have been discussed, and it was again suggested that there should be an embassy in China. Moreover, it is noted that Germany should look after the interests of the Ottoman subjects “until a consul is sent to Kashgar.”³⁰⁸ These documents tell us that there was at least an attempt on the Ottoman side to establish an embassy in Beijing and a consulate in Kashgar. Moreover, this desire to open up an embassy was also reflected in the public opinion. In 1912, *Sebilürresad* demanded the need to sign a treaty of friendship and commerce with China. Given that fifty million Chinese Muslims, protected by Sultan Mehmed, were supporting the Republic of China, “why don’t the Republic and our government sign a treaty of friendship and commerce?”³⁰⁹ In another article, Münir Abdürresid³¹⁰ was writing from Tokyo, arguing that the Ottomans were not taking the necessary steps to have a greater influence in China. He stated that the Chinese Republic was enthusiastic about establishing close relations with the Muslims, and as such “if [the Ottomans] can have more contacts with the Republic, in the future, there may even be chances to have direct influence.”³¹¹

As a matter of fact, the Ottomans may not be the only side who were willing to appoint a permanent ambassador, for in 1904-5 a Chinese sheikh was sent to Istanbul to look after the interests of the Chinese Muslims who were cheated by the Russians in the Ottoman Empire. This sheikh, known as Sheikh Musa Celaledin from the “Chinese city of Kashgar,” had stayed in Mecca for seven years and in Istanbul for another seven

³⁰⁷ BOA, MV. 133-25, 1327.N.7 (22.09.1909).

³⁰⁸ BOA, HR. HMŞ.İŞO 202.20, 1328.N.19 (23.09.1910).

³⁰⁹ *Sebilürreşad* 1-8, no. 12-194,10 May 1328 (1912), 232.

³¹⁰ Münir Abdürresid was the son of Abdürresid İbrahim, a famous Pan-Islamist whose activities will be explained below.

³¹¹ Münir Abdürresid, “Cin Müslümanlarının Hataları ve Hükümet-i *Osmaniye*nin Çindeki Vezaifi,” *Sebilürreşad* 1-8, no. 12-194, 7 May 1328, 198.

years before he went back to his homeland. Then, he was sent back again with the authority of the Chinese State to look after the Chinese Muslims who passed through the Ottoman lands on their way to Hijaz. The archival document relating to this particular individual claims that he was sent to Istanbul since there was no Chinese embassy, and that he was approved by the ulama of Kashgar and the Chinese “governor,” the name or the actual position of whom is undisclosed.³¹² The fact that a Muslim from Kashgar was sent to Istanbul as an unofficial ambassador may partially tell us how China perceived the Ottoman Empire, but since the National Archives in Beijing is still out of reach, it is not possible to speculate deeply on this issue. Nonetheless, it appears that there was yet another demand on the Turkestani side to establish a consulate in Kashgar. In a letter written to Kolcali Abdulaziz, a writer whose work will be analyzed in the following paragraphs, an undisclosed correspondent states that there is a constant need for the Ottoman Empire to establish a consulate (*seh benderlik*) in Kashgar, now that the situation is unstable due to the formation of the Republic.³¹³ It is certainly possible to reckon that due to the increasing connection between the Ottoman Empire and the Qing Dynasty, there was an unfulfilled desire to open up embassies on both sides.

However, besides this religious bond between the two states and the Pan-Islamic gaze through which we observe that bond, there also existed an alternative perception regarding China. Published materials and archival documents also inform us that China was itself a topic of interest, detached from the Islamic connotation. In order to understand the Ottoman perception of Xinjiang in a thorough manner, it is equally important to see how China was perceived once it was stripped out of its Muslim clothes.

³¹² BOA, ZB 19-106 1322.A.9 (1904-1905) and ZB 318-10 1322.A.17 (1904-1905).

³¹³ “Kasgar Ahvali,” *ibid.*, 329-330.

A Secular Glance: China, the Wonder of the World
and the Prey of the Eagle

How did the Ottomans perceive China *per se*? I have already stressed the thick Islamic flavor in the Ottomans' imagination of China. Not unexpectedly, since mid-nineteenth century, China was always observed as an empire that contained a substantial number of Muslims who more or less had a formal contact with the Sublime Porte during their pilgrimages. Nevertheless, it would be reductionism on our side to claim that China was merely perceived as an empire having Muslims. As a matter of fact, Ottoman intellectuals as well as the Sublime Porte endeavored to recognize the Chinese geography, history, and administration as well as social and cultural life.

As far as the nineteenth century is concerned, the published and unpublished materials note that China itself became a topic of interest for the Ottoman intellectuals, regardless of its Muslim population. Starting in 1850s, the Chinese Empire was to obtain more attention from the Ottoman intellectuals, and slowly, its integration into the world system began to be closely scrutinized. The inflow of western ideas about the Far East as observed through the images published in Ottoman periodicals, and the translation of western novels and materials on China have undoubtedly created an alternative way to make sense of China as a part of world politics. In this section, I intend to elaborate on this alternative gaze, and to reveal how the Ottomans thought of China as a fellow sufferer in the face of Western imperialism.

The first published work I have found on China was a work of translation by an unknown writer, from an unknown source, titled as "The Curious History of China" (*Tarih-i Nevadir-i Çin-i Macin*).³¹⁴ Published in 1854, it is a work that deals with various topics such as religions, cities and courts, law, treasury, prisons and prisoners, the throne, tribes, sciences, and the penmen and teachers. It may be regarded as the first

³¹⁴ *Tarih-i Nevadir-i Çin-i Maçin* (İstanbul: 1270).

work that informs the reader about the general aspects of China. Indeed, it is after this date that we start to see a proliferation of such works and documents.

However, before continuing with writings on China that examine the structure of the state and society, I would like to draw attention to a rather different and yet interesting envisioning of China. It is indeed exciting to see that, in the light of western works, China was observed as a sort of 'wonderous land of the East' – an idea that lasted until the Xinhai Revolution of 1911.

China: A Land of Wonders

As western works and ideas concerning China flowed into the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman intellectuals began to have a propensity to regard China as a country that aroused curiosity. This idea of China as a mysterious land that awaited discovery was captured through works of fiction and travel. The first work that seized the imagination of Ottoman writers was Jules Verne's "The Tribulations of a Chinaman in China," originally published in 1880. It was translated into Ottoman Turkish in 1891 by Ahmed Ihsan under the title "A Journey in China: The Tribulations of a Chinese in China" (*Çinde Seyahat: Bir Çinlinin Çindeki Musibeti*).³¹⁵

After that, Ahmed Ihsan was quick enough to translate the young American diplomat William Rockhill's voyage into the Chinese interior. In writing the introduction to Rockhill's piece, Ihsan renders a detailed account of the famous Russian explorer Przhevalsky's voyages to Chinese Turkestan and Tibet, noting the dates as well as the names of the places visited. Thus, Ihsan arouses the excitement of the reader writing that there exists a lake in the "Heart of China," known as the "blue lake" – a place that very few travelers have been to, and the ones who have did so as a result of tremendous

³¹⁵ Jules Vernes, *Çinde Seyahat: Bir Çinlinin Çindeki Musibeti*, trans. Ahmed İhsan [Tokgöz] (İstanbul: 1308 [1891]).

efforts.³¹⁶ İhsan, again, gives a very vivid translation of Rockhill's adventurous journey into the heart of China, and the hardships he'd faced in harsh weather, and how he was saved by devout lamas, etc.

This wonderful imagination of China is best seen in a short story named “Murder in Chinese Tataristan” (*Tataristan-ı Cinide Bir Cinayet*). The author, Tekezade M. Said, narrates the fictitious story of Hazar İlyas Khan who was the ruler of a city named Karakalpas, near Mukden (today's Shenyang) in Manchuria. In his narration of the story, Tekezade simply invents the whole city and the culture that is associated with the region. What deserves attention is that the region is romantically imagined as some place where the local people perfectly conform to the rules of Islam. The story starts with İlyas Khan who, returning back from hunting, gets thirsty and enters a village to quench his thirst. It is in a small house in this village that İlyas Khan sees Perizad, a young and beautiful girl. When Perizad's mother sees that Perizad's hair has not been covered, she softly says, “Perizad, dear daughter, cover your hair!”³¹⁷ A few minutes later, Perizad enters in “covered as conforming to the Islamic manner”³¹⁸ İlyas and Perizad marry in the end, although İlyas' mother opposes the marriage and tries to kill the bride. The story ends when İlyas realizes the plot and executes the collaborators of his mother who, somehow, also dies.

It is really interesting to note that, let alone the cultural traits, Tekezade does not know anything about Mukden since he writes that the Yellow River passes from the city –which is no less than a few hundred miles away. Nevertheless, it is all the more enthralling to read a detective story about a fictitious Muslim land in China; and this, I suggest, is a product of the way in which China was 'imagined' during these periods.

³¹⁶ William Rockhill, *Çine Seyahat*, trans. Ahmed İhsan [Tokgöz] (Istanbul: Matbaa-yı Ahmed İhsan, 1320 [1903])

³¹⁷ Tekezade M. Said, *Tataristan-ı Çini'de bir Cinayet* (Kostantiniye: 1310 [1893]), 11.

³¹⁸ *ibid.*

Indeed, as the bells of the revolution started ringing, this curious gaze into the Chinese lands was bolstered even more. The curiosity and excitement fused into the political upheaval, and in the end, China became the land where the strange and “monstrous” customs co-existed with a revolution that sought new paths.

Right before the revolution, in 1909, the Chinese customs were still regarded with awe. A picture published in the periodical *Şehbal* was depicting a woman about to commit suicide in front of a huge crowd. The caption below it reads “A Monstrous Custom in China.” It was allegedly stated that “in some parts of China, for a woman to commit suicide as an act of love after her deceased husband is considered to be a great virtue,” and that the “picture was taken when a desperate and ignorant Chinese woman dressed in white –which the Chinese believe to be the color of mourning– was getting ready to commit suicide.”³¹⁹

Right after the 1911 Revolution, China was still reckoned to be the land of strange customs, such as foot-binding. Beside a picture that shows the “shrunk feet of a Chinese woman”, there is a small excerpt that informs the reader about Chinese customs vis-a-vis the revolutionary upheaval:

Accepting at last that there is no welfare in old civilizations, and entering a new path through constitutionalism, it seems that the Chinese social and individual reforms will not be as sudden as the political ones. ... Their customs such as the fact that their writing system is not from left to right or right to left but from top to bottom, that they do not pay any wage to their doctors during sickness but during health, that it is seen as a wonderful thing when the women commit suicide following their deceased husbands, are totally alien to us. It is especially famous that starting with their childhood, the women's feet are bounded in iron shoes so as to limit the growth of them.³²⁰

As such, China was perceived as a land that aroused a certain degree of suspicion along with curiosity, for it is a country where “a great revolution” was taking place, and yet it still was not free from its feudal customs.

³¹⁹ *Şehbal*, no. 2 (1325), 49. See: Appendix A.

³²⁰ *Şehbal*, no. 44 (1327), 391. See: Appendix B.

Despite the great awe with which China was observed, it would not be completely accurate to claim that this was the only existing discourse about China. As a matter of fact, China was also scrutinized in a scholarly manner trying to figure out the intricate local politics and its actual stance vis-a-vis the world powers.

China in a Shared Global Space: Suffering and the Revolution

It is in 1883 that the Sublime Porte is presented with a very detailed account about the Chinese state. The document states that the Chinese called their state *Zhongguo*, meaning the Central State (*devlet-i merkezi*), or *Zhonghua*, meaning the Central Flower (*Merkezin Çiçeği*), or *Tianxia*, meaning the Heavenly State (*Devlet-i Semavi*); and after a meticulous description of geography, administrative style, agricultural style and products, coastal and inner provinces and famous cities, financial power, military power of China and the influence of foreign states are rendered, the unknown author of the pamphlet states that “China may capture whole Asia if it changes its superstitions and adopts the way of progress, leaving aside its customs and valued ethics. If not, it will surely be destroyed by Russia, France and Britain.”³²¹ This is, in fact, the first time that we see China observed as a potential prey of the western powers. This idea was reiterated when the Boxer Uprising broke out in China, but this time with more empathy.

When the Boxer Uprising broke out, the Ottoman Empire was already aware of the political and economic situation in China. It was reported in June, 1900, that the foreign states were extracting as much land as possible from China; and that the leading powers were Britain and Russia, whose agreement seemed impossible.³²² It was during the same year that a letter was sent to the Sublime Porte from Beijing, which is very

³²¹ BOA, Y.PRK.HR. 7-28, 1300.

³²² BOA, Y.PRK.HR. 28-94, 1318.S.20 (18.06.1900).

informative to understand how China was reckoned by the Ottomans.

It is interesting to note that the letter was written by a certain *sefir* (ambassador) that resided in Beijing; and it is unfortunate that his name is unreadable, and there is not any further information regarding him. I think we may make an educated guess claiming that he is an unofficial representative of the Ottoman government in Beijing, informing the Porte about the situation in the Far East. Anyways, the “ambassador”’s letter is of value for it deciphers the way in which China was perceived by the Ottomans. Attached to the letter is a map of Beijing, the document that we will start our analysis with.³²³

The city map drawn by this viceroy divides the city into two, the southern and the middle part as the “Chinese City” (*şehr-i Çini*), and the northern part as the “Tatar City” (*şehr-i Tatari*). The map is quite detailed indeed for it points out the Forbidden City (*saray-ı imparatori*), the Temple of Heaven (*ma'bed-i sema*), two of them occupying the same amount of space on the map, the Confucius Temple (*kong fiçus ma'bedi*), the Big Buddha Temple (*buyuk budda ma'bedi*, today known as the *Yonghegong*), the Imperial College (*dar-ül-fünun-u imparatori*), the School of Examination (*imtihan mektebi*), various churches and temples, the Clock Tower, the Castle, foreign embassies etc. It is ironic that the city is divided into two with the northern part apparently denoted as the Tatarian part. It is not possible to suggest whether the Tatar City was somehow similar to that of Tekezade's imagined Chinese Tataristan, for during those times Manchuria, Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan all fell under the category of “Chinese Tataristan.”³²⁴ Whatever the author's intention was in dividing the city into two, it clearly tells us that the author lived in Beijing for a while, since he draws a very accurate map of the city. What deserves closer scrutiny is the

³²³ BOA, Y.PRK.EŞA. 36-41, 1318. For a fac simile copy of the map, see: Appendix C.

³²⁴ BOA, Y.PRK.HR. 7-28, 1300.

content of the letter.

It seems evident that the ambassador writes through a discourse of mutual suffering obvious in the Chinese and the Ottoman Empire. The letter is about the Boxer Rebellion and the murdering of the German ambassador. After summarizing the events, the writer states:

Leaving aside the proximity of the Chinese to us in terms their Asian identity, aren't they in the same condition as we are? How much our Honored Government has suffered from these disrespectful foreign governments, and how much it continues to suffer. I am not crazy enough to suggest that we should go ahead and kill all the missionaries [in the Ottoman Empire], however, I wanted to defend the Chinese. They do not want missionaries, aren't they right? They have lost their land because of them, so they want to expel them. When even the Americans do not believe the words of bishops such as *Konfer* and *Ancel*, how are we supposed to believe them?³²⁵

In other words, the ambassador underlines the common 'Asian identity' and the 'suffering conditions' of the two Empires, claiming a shared common space in the global world order dominated by the West.

The moment that ended all the suffering for the Chinese was the Xinhai Revolution in 1911. For the Ottomans, this was discerned as an exceptional revolution that stirred up the whole country and was supported by a huge majority –especially by the Muslims. Besides the up-to-date information published in the daily newspapers,³²⁶ a debate on the role of Muslims was also at hand. Kolcali Abdulaziz was one of the figures who introduced the role of the Muslims in the revolution. Underscoring it as a Chinese revolution, he devoted an article to a letter he had received from an inhabitant of Ili (Gulja) where, as will be recalled, the Ili Uprising occurred right after the Wuchang Uprising that ignited the revolution in 1911.

The writer of the letter states that the Ili Rebellion (*inkılab*) was a product of the endless Chinese activities; however, “although the local non-Muslims are pro-

³²⁵ BOA, Y.PRK.EŞA. 36-41, 1318.

³²⁶ Based on telegraphs from London, the periodicals *İkdam* and *Tanin* give up-to-date information about the revolutionary process, starting from October 1911 to February 1912.

despotism, the Muslims are pro-revolution; and it was with the support of the Muslims who constitute the majority that the revolution took place.”³²⁷ Kolcali, moreover, regards all the Muslims of China as belonging to the same race. Thus, his emphasis on the Muslims should be considered as a stress on the Chinese Muslims in general. In this respect, he underlines “Islam” in general as a component (*unsur*) of the great revolution in China – the other components being the Manchus, Chinese, Mongols, Tibetans.³²⁸ In other words, it was believed that the Muslims as a whole had played a significant role in rescuing the nation.

Another article published not long after Kolcali’s gives a meticulous account of the petition written by Muslims to the Republican government, demanding more rights from the Republic. In this article, too, we observe that although the Chinese Muslims and the Muslims of Chinese Turkestan were regarded as racially different, with the former being Chinese and the latter Turkic, they were nonetheless labeled as the Muslims of China. Due emphasis is paid to the new flag of the Republic which had five stripes, all connoting a different component, with white denoting the Muslims –an indicator of the role they play in the Republic.³²⁹ Indeed, a certain Uskudarli Ali Enver was writing from San Francisco that Islam was going to have an even greater voice in the world, if the Ottomans and the Chinese Muslims were to unite. “The heart of the Chinese Muslims is with the Ottomans,” wrote Ali Enver, “and the glamor of Islam that shines in the future of the Far East will change the flow of the wind for the whole world.”³³⁰

However, in spite of all the emphasis on China as a ‘saved’ nation as well as on

³²⁷ Kolcali Abdulaziz, “Cin İnkılabı ve Kolca Vilayeti Müslümanları,” *Sebilürreşad* 1-8, no. 8-190, 12 April 1328 (1912), 144.

³²⁸ *ibid*, 143.

³²⁹ *Sebilürresad* 1-8, no. 18-199, 14 June 1328, 332.

³³⁰ Uskudarli Ali Enver, “Aksa-yı Sarkda İslamiyet,” *Sebilürresad* 1-8, no. 20-202, 5 July 1328, 390.

the greatness of the revolution and the promising role the Muslims had played in it, the “sufferer” image of China still continued, and in 1912 it was re-emphasized again – this time by Ahmet Agayev (Ağaoğlu).

Agayev’s article is representative of the Ottoman perception of China during the 1910s. China was reckoned as a fellow combattant that clashed with the Western powers. Ahmet Agayev (1869-1939), one of the leading figures of Turkish nationalist thought, wrote in 1912 that China was sharing the same fate with the Ottomans and the Persians, for all of them were at the mercy of the West: “The West is attacking the East like a marvellous Eagle stretching its feather and clenching its claws to coerce the East from both sides. ... The Eagle’s gaze is now on the Ottomans, Iran, and China.”³³¹ Agayev states that China, after the Islamic world, has also undertaken the task of liberty, constitutionalism, and new life (*teceddüd-i hayat*) in order to save itself; “however, the merciless Eagle was lying in an ambush: It leaped at once and showed that in China, it has the same task of doing what it had done to Iran and what it wants to do with us.”³³² Agayev believed that the West was afraid of China becoming the second Japan:

The formation of a new Japan that was greater than Europe in terms of its population surely must not succeed [according to the West]. Undoubtedly one day, the West was going to obey China which is equipped with science and technology, destructive weaponry, and administrative skills. ... [So] the ferocious animal attacked China once the latter got out of the revolutionary turmoil with success!³³³

Agayev ends his article suggesting that what has happened to the Islamic world (*Alem-i Islam*) is now happening to the Yellow Race (*ırk-ı asfer*): “The West is telling the East with a victorious cruelty: ‘I’m not going to have mercy on you!’ Well, how does the East answer?”³³⁴

³³¹ Ahmet Agayev, “Sark ve Garb,” *Sebilürresad* 1-8, no. 13-195, 17 May 1328 (1912), 241.

³³² *ibid.*, 242.

³³³ *ibid.*

³³⁴ *ibid.*, 243.

In the face of such rhetorical questions, it becomes imperative to re-think the place of Chinese Turkestan for the Ottomans. With regard to the Ottoman perception of China *per se*, how shall we rate the Ottoman interest in CT? Was it considered to be a land that hopelessly awaited liberation from the Chinese authority? Or was it in fact a land that suffered together with China?

The answers to such questions become clear as the ideology of Pan-Turkism/Turanism is discovered in the Ottoman Empire. The next chapter will reveal the answers after a discussion about Turanism and its political impact.

CHAPTER V:

THE PARADOX OF TURANISM: WHERE DOES XINJIANG BELONG?

This chapter will explore the rise of Pan-Turkism (or Turanism) and its impact on the Ottoman intellectual minds, during the 1910s and especially during the Great War. Eliciting the intertwined characters and world-views of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism (and from time to time Pan-Asianism), this part will expose the paradoxical situation created by Turanism and the concomitant policies concerning Chinese Turkestan.

In order to understand the complicacies of the Ottoman policies, this chapter starts with a general outline of the ideology of Turanism. It is crucial to keep in mind that Turanism was not only an extension of Pan-Islamism, but also a new approach to define globally imagined borders; and most of the time, in defining them it overlapped with Pan-Islamism. In explaining this complicated relationship between Pan-Turkism and Pan-Islamism, the ideological maneuvers of the famous Pan-Islamist/Asianist Abdürreşid İbrahim will be explained in detail in the second section of this chapter.

I argued in the fourth chapter that Pan-Islamism did not have any militaristic intention in imagining a global union of the Muslims. However, the militaristic background of Pan-Turkist activities, especially in the Basmaci Uprising in Central Asia as will be narrated, are very well known. Therefore, the question arises: Where does Chinese Turkestan stand as a region that falls under the definitions of both a militaristic Pan-Turkism and a non-militaristic Pan-Islamism? In this section, I will point out the clear delineation between Russian and Chinese Turkestans, and argue that the latter's position was indeed different than the former according to the Ottomans. This era surely inherited the Hamidian Pan-Islamist legacy which stressed the need to ameliorate the level of education in Chinese Turkestan; however, the CUP activities reveal that the Ottoman presence in the region was not that innocent. Due to the scarcity of archival

sources on the CUP, historians still cannot determine the exact role the Ottomans played during this period, but I believe that the “real enemy” for the Ottomans was the Russians (not the Chinese), and therefore the Ottomans tried to use Chinese Turkestan as a military base from which it could be possible to attack Russia. In this regard, the activities concerning education (at least some of them) were ways of portraying a good image in the Chinese eyes. These points will become clearer as I disclose the activities of Ottoman officers sent over to Xinjiang during the Great War, such as Ahmed Kemal and Adil Hikmet Beg.

I believe that it is very crucial to realize that the Ottoman policies concerning Xinjiang were indeed officially recognized, and be it the CUP or the Secret Organization (*Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*), these activities were funded by the Ottoman state. This is important to underline because after the Ottoman Empire collapsed, and the Turkish Republic was formed, the policies concerning Xinjiang have altered fundamentally. As will be described in the next chapter, neither the Pan-Turkism of the 1910s nor the Ottoman policies concerning Xinjiang continued during the Republic, and the idea that Xinjiang was as a hotbed of Turkish activities during the 1930s should be re-evaluated under a different approach in the light of new documents.

The Geographical and Philosophical Extent of Turan

In order to comprehend where Chinese Turkestan stood in the minds of Pan-Turkists, we need to grasp the imagined meaning of *Turan* and the scope of the Turanian geography, and therefore the extent of Pan-Turkist thought.

The word “Turan” comes from the Persian myth “Avesta” in which the “Tura” was used to name the enemy of Persians –hostile nomadic people. Firdawsi, the famous Persian poet of the eleventh century, has altered the formation of the word from “Tura” to “Turan”, and also changed the meaning to a geography that comprised the lands from

Amu Darya to China and Khotan.³³⁵ This seems to be the first time to delineate the borders of Turan.

Coming to the nineteenth century, “Turan” started to get tinted with Turkic nuances; and first, it was the Hungarians that used the word to mean “The Great Turkish Land,” in 1839.³³⁶ During the next decades, Turan started to acquire a more concrete connotation and in 1910, *Turani Tarsasag* (Turan Committee) was founded and it maintained existence until 1944.³³⁷ According to Alois von Paikert, a founding member of the committee, Turan consisted of “Finnish, Bulgarians and Turks and along with them, a large proportion of Caucasian people, Tibetans, Himalayan people, Tamus, Manchus, Chinese, Koreans and Japanese which in total equal to a population of 610 million people.”³³⁸ In other words, the Hungarians were very inclusive in defining Turan, although the central meaning of the term signified the “Turkic people”.

I find it convenient to point out that these theories about Turan were actually overlapping with that of Pan-Turkism. Hermann Vambery, the famous Hungarian orientalist who is considered to be one of the masterminds of Turkism, wrote in 1873 that “the Ottoman Empire could have built a strong empire from the Adrian shores to inner China by drawing together the Turkish people who are bonded together with religion, language, and history.”³³⁹ Taking these definitions together, it is plausible to suggest that Pan-Turanism and Pan-Turkism meant almost the same thing, and thus were re-evaluated by the Ottomans.

These debates and nascent ideas about Turan were reiterated by Ottoman intellectuals during early twentieth century, and the definition of Turan –and along with

³³⁵ Mustafa Çolak, *Enver Paşa/Osmanlı-Alman İttifakı* (Istanbul: IQ Kültür Sanat Yayıncılık, 2007), 63-64.

³³⁶ Nizam Önen, *İki Turan: Macaristan ve Türkiye’de Turancılık* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2005), 40.

³³⁷ *ibid.*, 58.

³³⁸ Çolak, *ibid.*, 64.

³³⁹ Hermann Vambery, *Reise in Mittelasien* (Leipzig, 1873), 378, quoted in Çolak, *ibid.*, 66.

it, the policies concerning the region– changed. Quite late, in 1923, Ziya Gökalp stated that “Turan is the far ideal of Turkism. As opposed to some assumptions, it is not a mixture of races that include Turks, Mongols, Tunguses, Finuvans and Hungarians.”³⁴⁰ Arguing that the similarity of Turkish, Tungus and Mongolian languages has not yet been proved, it was only possible to include the Great Turkestan into what is called “Turan.”³⁴¹ He further added that “Turanians are only the Turkic-speaking nations.”³⁴² Nevertheless, Gökalp’s definition given in the 1920s can be regarded as a contracted and shrunken version of Turan, for the ideas that pertained to earlier dates were quite different from that proposed by Gökalp. Earlier, under the late Ottoman imperial mindset, Turan was imagined as multi-national and inter-national whereas during the early 1920s, when Turkish nationalism was on the rise, Turan was presumed to be a homogeneous transnational Turkic entity. This difference is very important to grasp, and it should be pointed out that the Turan of the 1910s were utterly different from those of the 1920s. In this regard, it is very revealing to examine how the idea of Turan as related to China rose in earlier works that emphasized an amount of “Turkicness” embedded in Chinese Islam.

One such work is “Believers of Islam in China and Chinese Muslims” (*Cin’de Din-i Mübin-i İslam ve Cin Müslümanları*). It was written by Kolcali (or Gulcali, i.e. “from Yining”) Abdülaziz, who was born in Gulja in 1863 and became a teacher of Arabic in the Sublime Porte.³⁴³ The book is in fact the collection of his essays that were

³⁴⁰ Ziya Gökalp, *Türkçülüğün Esasları*, ed. Mehmet Kaplan (Istanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1976), 21.

³⁴¹ *ibid.*

³⁴² *ibid.*, 24.

³⁴³ BOA, HH.SAİD.d.. 10/331, 1280. He was also the author of some articles written in *Sebilürreşad* during the Chinese Revolution in 1911, as given in the earlier pages. He was a curious figure, a jadidist who helped in forming a secret society in Bukhara, and *Terbiye-i Etfal* (Children’s Education) in 1908 to educate students. Later, the same people who formed *Terbiye-i Etfal*, including Kolcali, formed *Buhara Ta’imim-i Maarif Cemiyet-i Hayriyesi* (The Buharan Auspicious Society for Public Education) in Istanbul, in 1909 (see, Ahat Andican, *Cedidizmden Bağımsızlığa Hariçte Türkistan Mücadelesi*, İstanbul: Emre Yayınları, 2003, 28-28). However, despite his origins, he never participated in the East Turkestan cause,

published in the periodical *İkdam*. He collected his writings on Chinese Muslims and Turks and added further opinions on the topic, preparing it for its publication in 1902. It is interesting to note how the writer underlines the Islamic as well as the Turkic identity in explaining Islam in China. Another significance of the work is that I haven't come across any scholar referring to it although, as the name suggests, it deals with quite a central theme.

I believe that the reason Kolcali's work has not received due attention is that it does not explain the condition of Chinese Turkestan through a condemnation of Chinese activities, which is a common theme that dominates all the main works on “East Turkestan” as argued in the “Introduction” chapter of this study. As such, the book starts with the sentence, “ the Chinese State is respectful to the religion of Islam,”³⁴⁴ and goes on to explain the history of Islam in China. After describing the arrival of Islam to China and its evolution thereafter, the writer starts giving an account of the Turks in China. He starts with Tungans (or as he prefers to call them “Dongans”). He argues that although the Tungans themselves claim that they are Arabs, they have no similarity with the Arabs in terms of their physical expressions nor their clothes and customs.³⁴⁵ Contrarily, he stresses that they are actually Turks; and their name in fact comes from “*dönme*” (conversion) in Turkish. After describing Tungans’ successes in commerce and arts, Kolcali writes that the schools of this tribe should be ameliorated.³⁴⁶

After describing the Tungans, Kolcali starts a new chapter named “Chinese

even in 1930s. His book *Şarkın Yeni Güneşi Gazi Mustafa Kemal Hazretleri* (Mustafa Kemal, The New Sun of the East), published in 1933, still pointed out the “good” side of China claiming that the Chinese intellectuals were in favor of the Kemalist Revolution. Therefore, even in 1933 when the East Turkestan Islamic Republic was founded, Kolcali was not in favor of a separation between East Turkestan and the Chinese Republic. See, Kolcali Abdulaziz, *Şarkın Yeni Güneşi Gazi Mustafa Kemal Hazretleri* (İstanbul: Hamit Bey Matbaası, 1933).

³⁴⁴ Kolcali Abdülaziz, *Çin’de Din-i Mübin-i İslam ve Çin Müslümanları* (İstanbul: Mahmud Bey Matbaası, 1321), 4.

³⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 9.

³⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 14.

Turks” (*Cin Türkleri*). It is quite interesting that he pays special attention to Salars in this chapter. Again praising their fame of commercial and artistic abilities, he describes their religious piety; and states that they are hard-working and indefatigable Turks.³⁴⁷ After his description of Salars, he passes to his new chapter on “Beijing Turks” (*Pekin Türkleri*).

His accounts on Beijing Turks are highly interesting because he writes that these Turks are not from Chinese Turks (i.e. Salars). Instead they are the leaders of the Muslims in Xinjiang, who were brought to Beijing by the Chinese State to cope with the upheavals in that region. He points out that it is hard to demand anything from them, for they have suffered in the hands of the Chinese government. Thus, they do not want to help the Chinese Turks in their industrial and educational problems. He demands that these Beijing Turks should listen to the Chinese Turks’ problems; that those who know Turkish (about 10 %) should teach Turkish and encourage the young people to speak Turkish.³⁴⁸

From then on, he describes the Chinese Turkestan Muslims (*Türkistan-ı Cini Müslümanları*). In writing about them, he merely asserts that this region did not receive any help from the government, and that their personal and public conditions as well as their industrial and educational conditions are very primitive (*ibtidai*); and he again stresses the need for amelioration.

Lastly, he writes about the Muslims of Gulja, his origin. After an historical account, he speaks about the farmers and natural sources (especially gold), and he narrates an anecdote to argue for the need to make educational reforms. He mentions a certain Abdürrahim who was a very knowledgeable person speaking Persian, Arabic, and Chagatai language. Abdürrahim brought with him the yearly lecture curricula he

³⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 16.

³⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 19-20.

had obtained from the schools in Istanbul together with books, and he told them that they should study those books and leave the old, unnecessary patterns of education. Very much influenced by Abdürrahim, Kolcali proposes three articles to be followed for Salar and the people residing in Gulja and Kashgar: (1) that the schools should receive teachers (*muallim*) from Istanbul or India, and that the religious teachers (*müderrisat*) are enough, (2) that the books they need should be delivered to them from India, (3) that local newspapers should be published to encourage the local people to attend these schools.³⁴⁹ Kolcali's book ends with an overall history of the Chinese dynasties.

The reason I have taken the effort to summarize the whole book is that, as I have mentioned earlier, I did not come across any mention of the book in any of the bibliographies of the works I have examined, probably because it handles the problem of Xinjiang via a distinctly different narrative. Nevertheless, I think the book tells us a lot about how the Chinese Turkestanis as well as the Ottomans perceived themselves vis-a-vis the Chinese. First of all, there is an explicit emphasis on Turkic identity prevalent in China, to the extent that 'Muslim' and 'Turk' are almost used as synonyms. Moreover, as quite evident, there is a constant request for reform and amelioration in education (*islah*) –just as it was the case with the Muslims in China– which is expected to come from the Ottoman Empire,³⁵⁰ and from India.

With regard to Turanism, this work may be observed as the first attempt to include China into a world that is perceived through the lens of Turkic identity. Furthermore, it also reveals the fluid boundaries between the Islamic and the Turkic world-views. They were indeed ideologies that merged into one another during the

³⁴⁹ *ibid.*, 29.

³⁵⁰ It would be interesting to note that Abdürreşid İbrahim also tells in his memoirs that he met a Sala Turc (which is probably 'Salar') in Beijing who complained about the inadequate schooling facilities and stated that they were hoping that the Turkish government would send the Chinese Muslims an *ulama* to teach them the truths of Islam. He further adds that there indeed arrived two teachers (Ali Rıza and Hafız Hasan) but they could not stay due to Chinese discontent. He asserts that they anticipated a lot from Ali Rıza Efendi but, unfortunately it did not happen. See: Abdürreşid İbrahim, *ibid.*, 158-160.

beginning of the twentieth century. This intertwined character of the two ideologies become even more evident when we analyse the enigmatic character of Abdürreşid İbrahim.

Abdürreşid İbrahim and His Precocious Turanic Archetype

As Esenbel argues, at the beginning of twentieth century, “Japanese Pan-Asianists and Muslim activists could engage in a dialogue, for they shared an intellectual debate about modernity.”³⁵¹ Although there was not an explicit agreement between the Ottoman and Japanese governments, “Japan’s relations with the world of Islam began as transnational contacts and clandestine activities through the informal meetings of individual diplomats, visitors, intellectuals, military men, and agents,”³⁵² such as Abdürreşid İbrahim (1853-1944) of Russian and Ottoman Empires, Ahmad Fadzli Beg (1874- ?) of Egypt, and Mouvli Barakatullah (1856-1927) of India. What the Ottoman Muslims and the Japanese Pan-Asianists shared in common was their animosity against Britain and Russia; thus, although the governments never signed an agreement, there were clandestine contacts established to act in cooperation against common enemies. It is interesting to note that a delegation composed of an Ottoman Turk, a German and an Indian headed by the above mentioned Barakatullah reached Tashkend during the First World War to realize revolutionary intentions in India through passing the Pamirs.³⁵³ As Dündar suggests, Barakatullah had close links with the Japanese nationalists (he was teaching Urdu at Tokyo University),³⁵⁴ and thus it is significant that he has led a

³⁵¹ Selçuk Esenbel, “Japan’s Global Claim to Asia and the World of Islam: Transnational Nationalism and World Power, 1900-1945,” *The American Historical Review* 109, No. 4, (Oct. 2004), 1144.

³⁵² *ibid.*, 1147-48.

³⁵³ Ali Merthan Dündar, *Panislamizden Büyük Asyacılığa: Osmanlı İmparatorluğu, Japonya ve Orta Asya* (Istanbul: Ötüken, 2006), 113-114.

³⁵⁴ Selçuk Esenbel, *ibid.*, 1148.

commission comprised of a Turk and a German.

The most interesting and potent figure in this regard is, no doubt, Abdürreşid İbrahim. Born in Tara, a city near Siberia,³⁵⁵ he is one of the strongest links between Pan-Islamism and Pan-Asianism, and as we shall see, Pan-Turkism. İbrahim's contact with Japan starts during a visit there in 1908. This "fated marriage" is sealed with the founding of *Ajia Gikai* (Asian Reawakening Society) in 1909, "which was to be the propaganda arm of Japan in the Islamic world."³⁵⁶ Thus, this Society supported Islamic activities in Asia for liberating the latter. For understanding how these have contributed to the image of China, İbrahim's activities in Beijing regain significance.

İbrahim's activities in Beijing are narrated in his *Alem-i İslam*, and they do show us the fluid boundaries between the *shuangfan* movements and their immediate connection with Pan-Asianism. His Asianist thoughts are prevalent in the article he published in a certain Beijing periodical (İbrahim calls this periodical Ay-Bu-Kav, but it is apparent that the real Chinese name is different). Under the title "East is for the Easterners" (*Şark Şarklılar İçindir*), he utilizes a general category for all the nations of Asia, "the East". Under this general headline, he designates certain localities such as Turkestan, India, China, Tibet, Iran, and Mongolia; and he demands that unless the 'Easterners' realize that they are exploited under Western yoke, they will be completely absorbed by the latter.³⁵⁷ This more Asianist discourse is smoothly replaced with that of Islamism when he writes, speaking about China, "if our Muslims realize their own identities, conceive and praise the meaning of Islamic philosophy and act as a guide to the East, then no doubt the West's aims will completely perish, and the real civilization will enlighten the world."³⁵⁸ İbrahim's extensive travels around the Islamic world were

³⁵⁵ İbrahim Maraş, *Türk Dünyasında Dini Yenileşme (1850-1917)* (Istanbul: Ötüken, 2002), 105.

³⁵⁶ Selçuk Esenbel, *ibid.*, 1152.

³⁵⁷ Abdürreşid İbrahim, *ibid.*, 121-124.

³⁵⁸ *ibid.*, 147.

indeed an active policy he pursued for the sake of an Islamic revival-cum-enlightenment. Nevertheless, Abdürreşid İbrahim's ideological boundaries were never clear-cut, as may be anticipated. Whereas the above-quoted passage that embodied Pan-Islamist and Pan-Asianist discourses was written around the year 1909, approximately a year later we find İbrahim writing with a fiery Pan-Turkist flavor. How can we explain this?

First of all, as mentioned above, the Pan-Islamist and Pan-Asianist links were clandestine, hence not officially accepted by the Ottoman State. However, İbrahim's association with the modernist ulama and CUP, who were paying close attention to İbrahim after the inauguration of the Young Turk Revolution in 1908, made it possible for İbrahim "to participate in direct political activity in the Ottoman Empire."³⁵⁹ Moreover, as his letter to his daughter Fevziye Hanım reveals, "as a result of Talat Pasha and Cavid's pro-British policies, he was unable to fully pursue pan-Islamist and Asianist policies."³⁶⁰ Therefore, CUP's objection to Asianism caused İbrahim to rethink his political agenda, and "this search [led] İbrahim to subscribe to the pan-Turkist policies of Enver Pasha,"³⁶¹ which would at the end of the First World War again be replaced with Asianist policies, a period that does not directly concern us here.

It was during such an ideological swing that İbrahim condemned the inefficiency of Pan-Islamism claiming that the governments of Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, Serbia and Romania have been formed due to the movements of Pan-Germanism and Pan-Slavism, however, "born of these names, our Muslims have also named 'Pan-Islamism' even though in reality we may be right to say that there exists almost nothing [in

³⁵⁹ Nadir Özbek, "From Pan-Asianism to Pan-Turkism" in *The Rising Sun and the Turkish Crescent: New Perspectives on the History of Japanese Turkish Relations*, eds. Selçuk Esenbel and Inaba Chiharu (Istanbul: Boğaziçi University Press, 2003), 90.

³⁶⁰ *ibid.*, 93.

³⁶¹ *ibid.*

relation to it].”³⁶² He still asserted that the power of three hundred millions of Muslims all around the world was inexorable, that the ultimate aim of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turanism was the same, and that “Pan-Islamism [was] a direct introduction to Pan-Turanism.”³⁶³ Thus, İbrahim reckons that it is the Islamic foundation of Pan-Turanism that will bring glory to the latter. Whatever the case, “let us quietly pass on to our own product of Pan-Turanism:”³⁶⁴

It is such a Turanic chain (*silsile-i müteselsile-i Turaniye*) that incorporates Ottoman Turks, Russian Tatars, Azerbaijan, Kuban Tatars, Uzbeks and Turkmens of Central Asia, Siberian Tatars, and Chinese Western Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan, and six cities of Tatars in central China, Salaria Turks, up until the border of *Tatunkin* (?). If today there rises the need to draw a map, it would occupy a horrifying geographical site and give a new color to the political world.³⁶⁵

The only hardship, according to İbrahim, in uniting these diverse geographies was that the dialects used were not the same with the dialect used by the Ottoman Turks in Istanbul who were “undoubtedly the guide (*rehber*) to lead such a sturdy power.”³⁶⁶ In this regard, the Ottoman Turkish language was simplified and introduced in a new way (*tarz-ı cedid*) so as to be comprehended by the “children of all Turks” (*umum-u evlad-ı Türk*). Without a shade of doubt, this “new way” was the progressive and modernist jadidist movement as discussed earlier. It was via this new method, we are told, that the Turkic people were to share a common understanding of the world, and once this common perception was established, the Pan-Turanist movement was to instigate the ideas of nationalism (*fikr-i milliyet*) that will pave the way to independence, just as happened with the Italians, Germans, Finns and the 'little' Japanese (*mini mini*

³⁶² Abdürreşid İbrahim, “Panturanizm,” *Tearif-i Müslimin* 1, no. 2, 18 Rebiülahir 1328 (1910), 17.

³⁶³ *ibid.*

³⁶⁴ *ibid.*

³⁶⁵ *ibid.*, 18.

³⁶⁶ *ibid.*

Japonlar).³⁶⁷ Thus, İbrahim suggests the need to establish organizations that will serve the purpose of Turanism, to look for men that would serve all the peoples of Turan (*umum-u akvam-ı Turaniyye*), to establish schools and choose people to send for the 'True Way' (*sırat-ı müstakim*).³⁶⁸

İbrahim's description was actually a precocious archetype that was going to be realized by Ahmed Kemal, the famous *muallim* that arrived in Kashgar in 1914 on the demand of a kin of Husayin Bay from Talat Pasha; but before we pass on to that story, let us analyze how Chinese Turkestan was situated in this new global Turanic vision.

The Paradox Uncovered

Having pointed out the geographical extent of Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turanism, it is clearly possible to claim that Chinese Turkestan was considered to be an indispensable part of the Islamic world-view, as experienced with Pan-Islamism, and the Turkic world-view, as seen in Pan-Turanism. It is evident that even though the latter's level of inclusiveness has altered from time to time, Chinese Turkestan was always reckoned to be a part of it.

On the other hand, however, Chinese Turkestan was also perceived to belong to a world that was about to be torn apart by the ferocious “eagles” of the West. It was a part of China, and China was indeed imagined as a fellow sufferer. Furthermore, as I have pointed out, China was never conceived as a threat to Islam. On the contrary, it was claimed to be benevolent towards Islam, as noted by Kolcali Abdülaziz. The same idea was stressed again by another writer, Nusret Ali Han Dehlevi, who wrote in 1900 that “the Chinese State acts in an extremely compassionate and generous way towards

³⁶⁷ *ibid.*, 19.

³⁶⁸ *ibid.*, 20.

Islam, and it conforms to the written Islamic law.”³⁶⁹

In other words, taking into account all that has been stressed, China was a country that, despite the unidentifiable customs, struggled to secure its own place in the global arena, and shared the same fate with the Ottoman Empire. Chinese Turkestan, concomitantly, was merely a part of this suffering country that succumbed together with it. Therefore, they were both in need of help... Here, we may remind ourselves Agayev's question: “The West is telling the East with a victorious cruelty: ‘I’m not going to have mercy on you!’ Well, how does the East answer?”

The Ottoman answer to this would be a combination of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Turkism, and Pan-Asianism, the best example being the writings of Celal Nuri (İleri) who has followed the line of the above mentioned Uskudarlı Ali Enver in positing the Muslims as the catalyzer of change in the Far East, and hence the whole world.

Celal Nuri (1877-1939), who was like Ziya Gökalp, “of two minds regarding the relative merits of Pan-Islam and Pan-Turkism,”³⁷⁰ asserted in 1913 that Pan-Islam was “a clear exposé of the need for an Islamic union to oppose European aggression;”³⁷¹ and with regard to the Chinese condition, the same idea would hold true.

Celal Nuri's “The Union of Islam” (*İttihad-ı İslam*) gives essential insights to how the Chinese Muslims were regarded as the race that carried the torch of freedom for the whole China. The book reveals a lot about how Muslims of different Asian origins were perceived by the Ottoman intelligentsia, but for our concern in this study, I will confine myself to that of Chinese Muslims.

Celal Nuri starts his account with a simple question asking the population of China in total. He, then, writes that “only God would know the actual population of this

³⁶⁹ Nusret Ali Han Dehlevi, *Çin Maçın* (Kostantiniye: 1318 1900], 41.

³⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 80.

³⁷¹ *ibid.*, 83.

nation(!)”³⁷² However, as a result of his own studies, he assumes that the Muslim population of the Republic of China amounts to 60 million, which he claims is completely devoid of any exaggeration, and probably even an underestimation.³⁷³

Then he starts commenting on the writings of Abdürreşid İbrahim. His notes deserve a lengthy quotation:

Abdürreşid İbrahim, who travelled over there recently, has published a travel book in which he separates the Muslims of Chinese Turkestan from Muslims residing in other parts of China in terms of the procedures of Islam, education, etc. We are told by him that those over there who believe in the oneness of God read Quran wrongly, and their pronunciations are awful; and, just like other Chinese, they also grow their hair long. ... We assume that Khoja Effendi is wrong in this issue. It would be foolish to disapprove the pronunciations of the Chinese in reading Quran. You do not become a Muslim with the right pronunciation. Turks, northern Turks to which İbrahim Effendi also belongs to, and many other Islamic societies cannot read Arabic like the Qurayshis.³⁷⁴ ... As to the issue of hair: we find this point rather important. This means that the Muslims see themselves as one with the Chinese. This union is extremely important for the future of Asia. We are indeed glad to see that 60 million Muslim residents of China still preserve their potential strength, social feeling (*hissiyat-ı içtimaiyye*), and Islamic policies (*siyasiyye-yi İslamiyye*); and they reckon themselves as belonging to the great family of Mohammad, opposing affinity and the influence of the missionaries. After all, no religion has the same customs and traditions in different parts of the world.³⁷⁵

He goes on to suggest that Islam grows bigger day by day, and the progress of Muslims is of extreme value for the Republic of China as well: “First of all, the Muslims constitute a substantial amount of people for the central government, and the progress of 60 million means the progress of China; and secondly, the Chinese Muslims have no demands but to improve their own Islamic way, so there is no reason why the Republican interests should be altered.”³⁷⁶

In later pages, he describes how the West has been torturing all of Asia,

³⁷² Celal Nuri, *İttihad-ı İslam ve Almanya* (Istanbul: Yeni Osmanlı Matbaa ve Kütüphanesi, 1333 [1915]), 126.

³⁷³ *ibid.*, 127.

³⁷⁴ The tribe of Mohammad the Prophet.

³⁷⁵ Celal Nuri, *İttihad-ı İslam: İslamın Mazisi, Hali, İstikbali* (Istanbul: 1331 [1913]), 136-137.

³⁷⁶ *ibid.*, 138-139.

including China which has recently started to awaken. He claims, using a very Pan-Asianist discourse, that the Asian people may unite easier than the Europeans –a unity that comes through Islam and the Muslims.³⁷⁷

In other words, standing in a soft spot between the global ideologies of Pan-Islamism, Pan-Turanism, and Pan-Asianism –the boundaries of which are very fluid and intertwined– China was observed as a fellow country in need of help from its brothers. It suffered from the Western yoke, and thus it should be liberated through the union of Asia –a utopia that is going to be realized via Islam.

Within this greater picture, it becomes easier to understand how Chinese Turkestan was perceived by the Ottomans. As opposed to Russian Turkestan which was oppressed by a common enemy, the status of Chinese Turkestan was different. Even though defined as a Turkic land that has to be included into the Turan, it was not yet regarded as a land that needed to be liberated from China. It was not conceived as a land that belonged to a greater Turkestan which has to be free from both the Russian and the Chinese rule. Instead, despite its Turkic identity, it still belonged to a fellow nation that was trying to rescue itself from the same nations that vexed the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, as displayed, the Muslim inhabitants of China were regarded as belonging to the same “component” (*unsur*). Despite the recognition that the Muslims of Chinese Turkestan and those of China proper were racially (*ırken*) different, they nonetheless constituted the elements of the same Islamic component for China. It was this idea that embraced the need to adopt a common policy regarding China and Chinese Turkestan.

Therefore, the Ottoman policies on Xinjiang were not necessarily involved belligerent character. The officers who were sent there during the CUP era never carried a gun and never fought the Chinese. Instead, as far as one can see from the available material, they had established schools and educated local students. However, the fact

³⁷⁷ *ibid.*, 143.

that some of the officers sent there were also involved in military clashes in today's Kyrgyzstan against the Russians blurs the image of "the innocent CUP" that merely wanted to ameliorate the local conditions in Chinese Turkestan. The real picture was darker, and the following section will reveal some parts of the gloomy policies of the CUP.

Missions to Chinese Turkestan

There were at least two Ottoman missions to Xinjiang during the CUP rule. The first person who was dispatched to Xinjiang was Habibzade Ahmed Kemal, later on known as Ahmed Kemal İlkul (1889-1966). Ahmed Kemal writes in his memoirs the day that he met Ebulhasan Hajji who was from the family of Husayin Musabay, the philanthropic Tatar businessman who had opened the first jadidist school in Xinjiang.³⁷⁸ This was in 1913, when Husayin Musabay's eldest son Sabit was studying in what is today known as the Galatasaray School (*Galata Mekteb-i Sultani*). After a secret conversation between Ebulhasan and Talat Pasha, the latter assured him that they were going to send Ahmed Kemal to Chinese Turkestan in order to establish close contacts with the far Turkic lands.³⁷⁹ Indeed, two weeks before Ahmed Kemal set foot on to his journey, Husayin Musa Bay and his brothers were awarded with golden medallions and were given 61.646,10 *gurush* to congratulate them for assisting the progress of the people in Gulja.³⁸⁰

Ahmed Kemal commenced his journey in 16 February 1914 (to return back in 18 June 1920). As he writes in his memoirs, Talat Beg (Pasha) and Ziya Gökalp talked to

³⁷⁸ It is important to indicate that Abuhasan was not the first jadidist Tatar to arrive in Istanbul. According to Bugra's accounts, Abdulkadir Damolla had also been to Istanbul in 1907 and collected books that were translated in Kashgar to be studied in the jadidist schools. See, Mehmed Emin Bugra, *ibid.*, 500.

³⁷⁹ Ahmed Kemal İlkul, *Türkistan ve Çin Yollarında Unutulmayan Hatıralar* (Istanbul: Zarif İş Matbaası, 1955), 18-20.

³⁸⁰ BOA, İ. TAL 1332.Ra.14 (10.02.1914).

him and encouraged him on his mission, “at the end of which lay Heaven.”³⁸¹ As we witness in the accounts of his journey, he opened up a school in Kashgar (*Darülmualimin-i İttihad*) which gave jadidist education. During his conversations with the deputy named Omar Bay, he fervently demanded the need to abandon the old, useless (*bi-fayda*) methods of education. He believed that there should be founded Teachers’ School for boys (*Darülmualimin*) and also for girls (*Darülmualimat*). In fact, he ardently argued for the education of girls. Besides, he also stressed the need for printing, which would enable them to publish national, religious, scientific, and literary works. Furthermore, he asked for doctors, hospitals, and pharmacies.³⁸² Li Sheng argues that Ahmed Kemal was successful in bringing in printing machines from Istanbul, and he even published a magazine named “Great Religion” (*weida zongjiao*).³⁸³ However, no such account exists in his memoirs.³⁸⁴

Countless times he was imprisoned by the Chinese authorities who saw him as a threat to the stability of Xinjiang. However, Ahmed Kemal underlines the true nature of his activities, stating that “the foreign consuls that resided in Kashgar informed the Chinese government that I was indeed not a teacher but a propagator sent from Turkey to provoke Chinese Turkestan into rebellion.”³⁸⁵ The Chinese perception of the Ottomans in Xinjiang will be elaborated in the following paragraphs, but for now suffice it say that Ahmed Kemal was there not to provoke anyone but to enlighten

³⁸¹ Ahmed Kemal İlkul, *Çin-Türkistan Hatıraları, Şanghai Hatıraları*, ed. Yusuf Gedikli (Istanbul: Ötüken, 1999), 66.

³⁸² *ibid.*, p. 211-213.

³⁸³ Li Sheng, “*Dong Tujuesitan*” *fenliezhuyide youlai yu fazhan* (Urumqi: Xinjiang renmin chubanshe, 2007), 11. Although Li Sheng writes that it was Husayin Bay who arrived at Istanbul, Ahmed Kemal's memoirs makes it evident that he was a kin of Husayin Bay. The printing machines, however, may have been brought over by Adil Hikmet Beg and his friends, for although Adil Hikmet does not give the details, he speaks about certain machines that they had assembled in Kashgar: see, Adil Hikmet Bey, *Asya'da Beş Türk*, (Istanbul: Ötüken Yayınları, 1999), 126.

³⁸⁴ There is yet another educator with the name of İsmail Hakkı Bey, but no information regarding his activities is available, see, Mehmed Emin Bugra, *ibid.*, 500.

³⁸⁵ Ahmed Kemal İlkul, *Türkistan ve Çin Yollarında Unutulmayan Hatıralar*, 46.

(*tenvir*) the local population, as he puts it.

An account of another delegation that came from Istanbul is again given by Ahmed Kemal. He mentions the arrival of five officers from the Special Organization (*Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*), namely Adil Hikmet Beg, Hüseyin Emrullah, Selim Sami, İbrahim Effendi, and Hüseyin Effendi who were all courageous and heroic people (*pare-yi hamaset, timsal-i şecaat*).³⁸⁶ In fact, we read more about the details of their missions in Adil Hikmet Beg's memoirs.

The nature of the activities of Adil Hikmet Beg and his friends is mistier than Ahmed Kemal's. Adil Hikmet Beg does not give a detailed account of how they managed to receive funding. However, it is quite evident that they had received it from the CUP's Special Organization (*Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*). Indeed, Selim Sami, who was a member of the committee that went to Chinese Turkestan, was the one who established contacts with Enver Pasha, the General Staff. Quite interestingly, Selim Sami was the brother of Eşref Kuşçubaşı –a very curious figure who is regarded as the founder of the Special Organization– and it is probably through this close kin relation that they received funding to go to Chinese Turkestan. It was in July 22, 1914, that they sailed out to reach the far lands.³⁸⁷ They first went to Beirut, then Port Said, Jiddah, Hudaida, and lastly Bombay where they were captured by the British. After their release, they passed Central Asia and arrived at Kashgar where Hüseyin Emrullah prepared a curriculum for the students, and trained young teachers for five months. It was here that they got in touch both with the earlier mentioned Tatars and with Ahmed Kemal.³⁸⁸ According to Adil Hikmet's memoirs, Ahmed Kemal was a rather immature officer who carelessly hung the portraits of Enver Pasha and Mahmut Shevket Pasha on the walls of a mosque,

³⁸⁶ Ahmed Kemal İlkul, *Çin-Türkistan Hatıraları, Şanghai Hatıraları*, 116.

³⁸⁷ Adil Hikmet Bey, *Asya'da Beş Türk*, 36-41.

³⁸⁸ According to Adil Hikmet's accounts, they also had close contacts with Abdullah Bobi, the famous Tatar jadidist mentioned in the third chapter.

together with the Turkish flag.³⁸⁹ Furthermore, as Adil Hikmet narrates, Ahmed Kemal was insulting the local ulama, drawing pictures of donkeys with turbans that stand on the minarets, and duplicating such pictures to distribute among the people. Adil Hikmet writes that they warned him and told him to stop such childish acts, and not to arouse the suspicion of the local government.³⁹⁰

Adil Hikmet's activities are very revealing to comprehend the conceptual difference between Russian Turkestan and Chinese Turkestan, for he tells us that while they were engaged in educational activities in Chinese Turkestan, they were fighting with the Kyrgyzes against the Russians, as armed combatants.

Once the committee of five left Kashgar, they got captured by the Russians, and were released as a result of the efforts of the Turks in Xinjiang – possibly supported by the Germans. While they stayed in Gulja for some period to escape from the Russians, they were proposed to lead the Kyrgyz uprising in 1916, which was suppressed by General Kuropatkin. As a matter of fact, Adil Hikmet writes in his memoirs that while they were fighting besides the Kyrgyzes against Russians, they were receiving ammunition and bombs from Vladivostok, and he claims that they did not know who was sending. However, Dündar believes that it was the Japanese who were sending ammunition, and that Adil Hikmet Bey actually knew the identity of the sender but preferred it to remain confidential.³⁹¹ As a matter of fact, Japanese interest in Xinjiang was already prevalent during this decade, and taking a brief look at the past Japanese expeditions in Xinjiang, it would not be surprising to find out that the Pan-Asianist Japanese were also supporting the Pan-Turkic activists in Central Asia.

Dündar points out several Japanese societies that were involved in gathering information about Muslims in Chinese and other parts of Turkestan, and points out that

³⁸⁹ *ibid.*, 118-9.

³⁹⁰ *ibid.*

³⁹¹ *ibid.*, 216.

one of the most influential organizations was, as mentioned above, *Dai Ajia Gikai*, the foundation of which was led by Abdürreşid İbrahim himself. It was probably this organization that supplied Adil Hikmet Beg and his friends guns and ammunition because the society moved to Manchuria after 1911.³⁹² Thus, their center was very close to Vladivostok, the city from which military aid was sent to Adil Hikmet. I will not get into detail concerning the Japanese activities in Xinjiang, for they will be analyzed deeply in the next chapter, but suffice it to say that the Japanese may be the ones that supported the Ottoman activities during this period. Wherever the support actually came from, what deserves attention here is that the same people who acted as teachers in Chinese Turkestan were ferociously fighting the Russians once they left the borders of China.

Nevertheless, the Chinese also felt threatened about the Turkish activities as may be deduced from the Chinese records. To put it bluntly, governor general Yang Zengxin was terrified by the Turkish activities, and he was paranoid about the plausible detrimental consequences of them. In August 1915, right after the beginning of the Great War, Yang banned Turkish teachers from private tutoring of religion, and claimed the necessity to go through a formal approval process.³⁹³ Then in 1917, when he received the word that Zongli Yamen, the government unit in charge of foreign affairs, has broken off all its ties with Germany because of the war, he became extremely cautious in handling the Turkish people, claiming that they will be “forced to take special measures to deal with Xinjiang’s Turkish people and Muslim situation.”³⁹⁴ A few months later in 1917, Yang was sending samples of Turkish inflammatory writings to governors in other provinces and warning them to watch out for Turkish-language

³⁹² *ibid.*

³⁹³ Yang Zengxin, *Buguozhai wendu [Records from the Studio of Rectification]* (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1965 [1921]), 3687-90.

³⁹⁴ *ibid.*, 3693.

propaganda.³⁹⁵

Yang's concern over the Turkish activities was bolstered by Russian and British reports which informed Yang about the situation in Central Asia, where the Turkish agitators were stirring up trouble in Khoqand, Tashkend and Ferghana, and how the extremists could infiltrate to Xinjiang as well.³⁹⁶ As a result of such reports coming in from foreign embassies, Yang was taking every measure to curb the Turkish activities in the region, and this explains the chase after Adil Hikmet Beg and others.

Clear as the picture might seem from the Chinese side, I do not think that it would be just to simply count on the Chinese documents. First of all, since the Xinjiang Munciple Archives are inaccessible to foreign as well as some Chinese researchers, it is very hard to determine the actual content of the 'Turkish inflammatory propaganda' writings –assuming that they could be found in the archives. We are told by Yang Zengxin that they existed, but since we do not know the real content, it would be mere speculation to claim that the Turkish people in Xinjiang were indeed engaged in separatist activities.

On the other hand, it would be equally ungrounded to claim that Yang Zengxin was making up the whole story about the Turkish threat. Nevertheless, as the foreign embassy reports reveal, there was a grave danger in Central Asia that was spearheaded by the Turkish agitators, but there was not really much activity going on inside Xinjiang. Therefore, I believe that Yang's caution was more against a future threat permeating from Central Asia rather than an actual menace that would harm the social and political conditions in Xinjiang.

Be it paranoia or sound judgement, we know for sure that Yang Zengxin's fear led to an endless chase after the Turkish people in Xinjiang. Ahmed Kemal was

³⁹⁵ Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo, ed., *Zhong E guanxi shiliao: Xinjiang bianfang (Zhonghua minguo liu nian zhi ba nian)* [Historical materials on Sino-Russian relations: Xinjiang borderdefense (1917–19)] (Taipei: 1960; repr. ed., 1983), 6

³⁹⁶ *ibid.*, 9.

imprisoned by the Chinese until the Germans' negotiations to transfer him to Shanghai was accepted. Adil Hikmet Beg and his friends, on the other hand, endlessly escaped from the Chinese who never gave up catching them. At last, the German ambassador in Beijing convinced the Chinese authorities to let them go to Shanghai, and they reached the city in June, 1918, where they established close contacts with the Japanese.

The above mentioned names, however, were not the only Turks in Shanghai. There were some others who had escaped Russian captivity and made their way to Shanghai. Indeed, around the same dates, there were 35 Ottoman soldiers also in Beijing, who awaited repatriation after escaping from the Russians in Siberia and entering the Chinese soil through Manchuria.³⁹⁷

According to the letter signed by Adil Hikmet himself in 1920, there were five to ten people in Shanghai who escaped from the Russians, and they were all waiting for financial assistance to arrive from the Ottoman Empire.³⁹⁸ In the end, it was with the Japanese ship “Skotland Maro” that they, including Ahmed Kemal, sailed to Germany in April, 1920.³⁹⁹ Ahmed Kemal hopped on another boat and went back to Istanbul after six long years.⁴⁰⁰ Adil Hikmet, on the other hand, having received the news that the British were going to arrest him, did not get on the same boat and instead returned back to Turkey through Italy.

However, not all the members of the committee of five ended up the same way as Adil Hikmet. Selim Sami and İbrahim left Shanghai in April, 1920, and went to Russia via Manchuria. It is reported that İbrahim returned back to Turkey, but Selim Sami met Enver Pasha in Moscow and together they arrived at Central Asia to take arms and fight the Russians in the Basmaci Rebellion which was a Turkic-Muslim uprising

³⁹⁷ BOA, HR. SYS. 1918.6.28, HR. SYS. 1918.9.27.

³⁹⁸ BOA, HR. SYS 2211/41 1920.2.13.

³⁹⁹ Adil Hikmet Bey, *ibid.*, 476.

⁴⁰⁰ Ahmed Kemal, *Şanghay Hatıraları* (Istanbul: Kader Basımevi, 1939).

against the Russians during the civil war years after the Bolshevik Revolution.⁴⁰¹ The Basmacis lost power in 1923, with Enver Pasha himself dying on the battlefield, but the rebels continued to fight as guerillas until the 1930s when they were completely crushed. Since the details of this rebellion and the roles of Ottoman Turks in Central Asia are other subjects of studies, I will leave it here.

Conclusion

Throughout the fourth and the fifth chapters, I have stressed the intimate connection between the perception of China and Chinese Turkestan by the Ottoman Empire, and the consequent policies that defined this relationship. As argued, at least since the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz, there was a political link between Chinese Turkestan and the Sublime Porte. Although Abdülaziz's military back-up for Yaqub Beg was probably an extension of his anti-Russian policies in Central Asia, it nevertheless acted to establish an indivisible link between CT and the Ottoman lands which ensued during the Hamidian era.

On the other hand, Chinese Muslims and China at large were also subjects of interest for the Ottomans. Indeed, I have argued that, to the Ottoman eye, there was not a significant difference between a Chinese Muslim from the mainland and one from Chinese Turkestan. They all belonged to the same world, the subjects of which should be protected and supported by the Sultan. Therefore, in establishing an educative link with the Far East, Chinese Turkestan and China proper were both observed as similar regions, the Muslim inhabitants of which were ignorant.

Moreover, China was also viewed as a land oppressed by Western powers, hence a natural friend of the Ottoman Empire. This view, bolstered with the belief that the Chinese state was benevolent and generous towards the Muslims, never clashed either

⁴⁰¹ Adil Hikmet Bey, *ibid.*, 540.

with the Pan-Islamist policies nor the Turanist ideas that took hold in the Ottoman Empire during the turn of the century. Chinese Turkestan was not perceived as a land that suffered from the Chinese; but under the light of available data, I think that it is possible to suggest that the region acted as a military base to control the Pan-Turkic activities in Central Asia.

Nonetheless, there are still two missing elements in this picture. The first is the change of perception during the 1930s when Chinese Turkestan became “East Turkestan”, and hence the altered condition of the ex-Ottoman Turks in Xinjiang. The second is the perception of the other side: How did the Chinese observe the Ottomans, during and after these periods? The next chapter will be an attempt to decipher the complicated period after 1923, the founding of the Turkish Republic, and seek answers to these missing elements.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAST WAR OF THE NEW PAN-TURKISM, 1930-1934

This chapter takes the story of Pan-Turkism from where it was left in the last chapter. As argued, with regard to Xinjiang, Pan-Turkism of the Ottomans did not have the same objective it had with Russian Turkestan, the latter apparently viewed as an exploited element of the Turkic world. Xinjiang, or Chinese Turkestan, was perceived by the Ottomans as a land in need of enlightenment. If this is so, then how do we explain the ex-Ottoman Turks who clearly had a Pan-Turkist vision of liberating “East Turkestan” from China during the 1930s? In order to give a satisfactory answer, I will disclose some periodicals from the 1920s and ‘30s that point out the plausible reasons for this cognitive alteration.

Therefore, this chapter is divided into two sections. The first section will be an attempt to understand the Pan-Turkism of the 1930s, and in doing so I will argue that there is an analytical need to differentiate the Pan-Turkism of the Ottoman Empire from the Pan-Turkism of the 1930s. In order to grasp this cognitive differentiation, due attention will also be given to the Japanese interest in Xinjiang as well as the Turkish figures who played a prominent part during the 1930s in Xinjiang.

Having narrated the actual content of the Ottoman interest in the region and how it had transformed during the 1930s, the second section will be about how this whole Pan-Turkist scheme was observed and comprehended by the Chinese intellectuals. For this purpose, an analysis of the articles and books published in China during the 1920s and 1930s is significant, for it reveals the paradoxical recognition of Turkey by the Chinese. Turkey was observed both as a role-model that had truly succeeded in rescuing the nation and attaining military and national glory, and as a potential threat that could be detrimental to the territorial unity of the Chinese Republic – a paradox that was at

last resolved in 1934 Sino-Turkish Treaty of Friendship, the date where I finish my study.

From “Turkistan-i Cini” to “Sharqi Turkistan”

A Skim through the Turkestani Periodicals

In respect to a letter from Beijing to the *Yeni Türkistan* magazine published in Istanbul during the late 1920s, it is possible to deduce some clues as to how the Uyghurs (assuming that the author of the letter was an Uyghur) referred to the region during these dates, and thus how the region was perceived by the Turkic world. Hacı Şemseddin, the author, shows his gratitude to *Yeni Türkistan* for expressing the Turkestanis’ opinions and feelings in the face of oppression, and he does so “on behalf of [his] sacred and venerable nation and the people of ‘East Turkestan’ ‘Xinjiang Province’ (‘*Türkistan-ı Sharqi*’ ‘*Shincan sing*’).”⁴⁰² Although throughout his letter Hacı Şemseddin condemns the Chinese governance of Xinjiang since the Qing Empire, he nevertheless uses the phrases “East Turkestan” and “Xinjiang” together. This is indeed interesting, for it displays the joint usage of Xinjiang and East Turkestan (two terms that can *never* be seen together), which means that “East Turkestan” had still not obtained its ultimate political connotation during the end of 1920s. It was with the Hami Uprising which led to the formation of East Turkestan Islamic Republic that the concept of East Turkestan became an inseparable object of not only Uyghur nationalism but also Pan-Turkism in general, for only after East Turkestan emerged as a concrete subject that the concept of Chinese Turkestan was shattered, and it was no longer possible to draw a clear line of demarcation between the Turkestans of Russia and China.

In this regard, the periodical *Yaş Türkistan*, a periodical published in Paris by dissident Russian Turkestanis, is very revealing. Starting with its first publication in

⁴⁰² Hacı Şemseddin, “Yengi Türkistanga Sharqi Turkistanın Tebriknamesidur,” *Yengi Turkistan* 6 (1927), 21.

1929, there is not a single article on East Turkestan per se until 1933. This is not to say that Russian Turkestanis did not care about Chinese Turkestan, but that the idea of East Turkestan was yet immature. The maturation of this idea only becomes concrete in 1933, and as the East Turkestanis proved that they also perceived themselves as belonging to a greater Turkestan, detached from China, East Turkestan became a land that fought against both the Chinese and the Russians, the latter being the common enemy.

In May 1933, in an article named “East Turkestan” (*Sharqi Turkistan*), the double-oppression by the Russian and the Chinese was emphasized. According to the author, the Soviets merely maintained “the imperialist Russian [Tsarist] policies on the region which had never given up the desire to incorporate the lands behind the great Chinese wall into their own country;”⁴⁰³ on the other hand, since 1864 the Muslims in the region were in an endless battle to rescue themselves from the Chinese authorities.⁴⁰⁴ Starting with May, it is possible to observe a proliferation in the amount of articles written on East Turkestan that still continue even after the Republic was overthrown by the Chinese powers supported by the Soviets, in 1934.

The government of East Turkestan was also seeking the support of Turkey, and sent a New Year greeting card to Anadolu Agency: “The sky-blue flag of the rescued East Turkestan, whose government has been established, respectfully salutes the mighty red flag of Turkey, and wishes happiness to the world.”⁴⁰⁵

Indeed, the establishment of a republic in East Turkestan, now affirmed as a part of the Turkic world, was welcomed by some Turkish intellectuals who believed in the unity of the Turks as a necessary condition for upholding the “Turkic civilization”; however, between the Turks, there were not only obstacles that could have been easily

⁴⁰³ Tengribirdi, “Sharqi Türkistan”, *Yaş Türkistan* 42 (1933), 9.

⁴⁰⁴ *ibid.*

⁴⁰⁵ *Cumhuriyet*, 31 December 1933, quoted in “Sharqi Turkistan – Turkiye”, *Yaş Türkistan* 50 (1934), 58.

overcome by the desire of unity, but also “on one side, the Great Wall [of China] that was built on new fiendish innovations, and on the other side, under China’s suffocating shadow, ‘Internationalism’ which destroys Turkicness.”⁴⁰⁶

These novel ideas also signaled a novel interpretation of Pan-Turkism, one that included East Turkestan as a land that ought to be saved from the Chinese yoke. I argue that the Pan-Turkism that fixed its gaze on East Turkestan was indeed an idea that fundamentally differed from the Ottoman *shuangfan*, be it Hamidian Pan-Islamism or Pan-Turkism of the CUP. Pan-Turkism of the 1930s was a new way to imagine and define the region. Thus, although it had the remnants of Ottoman Pan-Turkism, it cannot be regarded as an immediate extension of the same ideology. Moreover, I also argue that Pan-Turkism of the 1930s cannot be identified as an ideology that emanated from Turkey. Quite the opposite, Turkey was merely observed as a good ally, but the war was to be fought by the Turkestanis themselves. According to a letter written by Cokayoglu, the editor of *Yaş Türkistan*, to Mecdeddin Delil, the general secretary of Turkestan National Union (*Türkistan Milli Birliği*) that was formed in the 1920s in Istanbul by Turkestanis who were supported by ex-CUP members, it was written: “Our national liberation movement will be a product of our own national efforts, not one under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal.”⁴⁰⁷

As a matter of fact, the Kemalist regime was already distancing itself from the Pan-Turkist endeavors of the Turkestanis. It was in 1934 that due to Soviet pressure, the government banned the import of all Pan-Turkist publications into Turkey, such as *Yaş Türkistan*.⁴⁰⁸ Quite interestingly, as will be elaborated in the following pages, the Sino-

⁴⁰⁶ Mustafa Vekili Beg, “Sedd-i Çin”, *Azerbaycan Yurt Bilgisi*, unspecified date and volume, quoted in *Yaş Türkistan* 50 (1934), 60-61.

⁴⁰⁷ Ahat Andican, *Cedidizm'den Bağımsızlığa Hariçte Türkistan Mücadelesi*, İstanbul: Emre Yayınları, 2003, 338.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 896. During the first half of the 1930s, Russian and Turkish governments started to resolve their mutual problems, and in 1934, they signed what is known as the Litvinov Formula which stated that

Turkish Treaty of Friendship was also signed in the same year. It is plausible to speculate that the Kemalist regime was endeavoring to dissociate itself with any Turkic movement outside of the Republican borders of Turkey.

Thus what ensued was a movement that was not supported by the Turkish government at all. The East Turkestan fight impinged on the ex-Ottoman Turks who still breathed the CUP atmosphere, and imbued them with a novel Pan-Turkist sentiment of saving the East Turkestanis from the Chinese rule. Xinjiang was now truly a part of an undividable Great Turkic world that should be saved both from Russian and Chinese imperialisms, thus the militarist side of Pan-Turkism that Chinese Turkestan lacked was now set free in East Turkestan, and the ex-Ottoman Turks in the region became the inalienable soldiers of a national war against China. However, in order to understand the motivations of the figures who joined the fight in the 1930s and see that their motivations were not ungrounded, we need to comprehend the Japanese activities concerning the region, for it was Japan that perceived Xinjiang as an important strategic locale to realize its Pan-Asianist aspirations.

Japan: The New Caliph?

The Japanese policies concerning Xinjiang cannot be separated from Japan's Pan-Asianist policies which have their root in the second half of the nineteenth century, when the concept of Asia started to acquire a political meaning. As Mitani stresses, Japanese intellectuals started to perceive "Asia as a geographical region in its entirety" only after the Meiji era that started in 1868, and it was primarily perceived as "a region in shared distress that held an inferior status compared to the West."⁴⁰⁹

Turkey was to refrain from any action that threatened the Soviet Union; see, Erel Tellal, "SSCB'yle İlişkiler," in *Türk Dış Politikası: Kurtuluş Savaşı'ndan Bugüne Olgular, Belgeler, Yorumlar* edited by Baskın Oran (İstanbul: İletişim, 2005 [2001]), 320.

⁴⁰⁹ Hiroshi Mitani, "The Concept of Asia: From Geography to Ideology", *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 35 (2006), 31- 32.

As Japan acquired strength through heavy industrialization, the idea of Asia as an inferior region started to evolve into the idea of distressed and inferior Asia that was going to be rescued under the leadership of Japan. When the Amur Society (*Kokuryukai*), founded in 1901, stated in its anniversary statement in 1931 that “developing the great plan of the founders of the country, we will widen the great way of Eastern Culture, work out a harmony of Eastern and Western cultures, and take the lead among Asian peoples,”⁴¹⁰ it was a reflection of this assumed leadership.

The Russo-Japanese War in 1904-5 was the moment when Japan surfaced as the only Asian country that succeeded in challenging the West, and obtaining the same status enjoyed by the great powers. This was also the moment when the assumed leadership of Japan was acclaimed by intellectuals from different countries and backgrounds, and Japan served as the grounds on which the idea of Asianism would flourish in various ways. One society established on this principle was the Asian Solidarity Society, founded in 1907 in Tokyo by Chinese intellectuals, Japanese socialists, and Indian, Vietnamese and Filipino activists.⁴¹¹ Yet another society, which is significant for our purposes, was the *Ajia Gikai*, the society that Abdürreşid İbrahim helped form in Japan in 1909, as narrated in the earlier chapters.

Ajia Gikai was a manifestation of how the Japanese regarded Pan-Islamism as a unifying ideology that would be indispensable for their purpose of rescuing Asia. Indeed, as argued by Esenbel, the critical perspective provided by Japanese Asianism was appealing to “Pan-Islamist Muslim intellectuals and political activists from Egypt, Ottoman Turkey, Russia, India, and South East Asia [who] sought an alternative vision

⁴¹⁰ Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. Theodore de Bary, and Donald Keene (eds.), *Sources of Japanese Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971 [1958]), 745.

⁴¹¹ Rebecca Karl, “Creating Asia: China in the World in the beginning of the Twentieth Century,” *The American Historical Review* 103, no. 4 (Oct. 1998), 1097.

of modernity for solving the ‘Crisis of Islam’ in the wake of the Western challenge.”⁴¹²

As Pan-Islamism was fused into Pan-Turkism, the same fusion was also contemplated by the Japanese, and during the 1930s it was possible to observe the “maturation of the politically engaged character of the Japanese intellectual interaction with Pan-Islamist and Pan-Turkist views, which had begun with İbrahim’s generation.”⁴¹³ Indeed, the combination of *shuangfan* and Asianism is best seen in the Japanese policies on Xinjiang during the early 1930s – an interest that started in the nineteenth century.

As a reflection of the Japanese interest in Asia, Xinjiang had also acquired a crucial place in Japanese policies, starting in the late nineteenth century. Taking a look into the Japanese interest in the region, it is startling to see an intensive activity of research that was carried on for decades. Nishi Tokujiro was one of the first Japanese who had been to Ili during the 1880s to conduct research. Takehiko Fujishima was an agent in Xinjiang who had mastered Chinese language and lived in Kashgar until 1889 when the Russians realized his true identity and captured him. Otani Kozui, a peer of major names as Aurel Stein and Sven Hedin, was engaged in archaeological excavations in Xinjiang in 1902, 1908 and 1910 when he became a major figure in taking important relics back to Japan. Hatano Yosaku and Hayashide Kenjiro stayed in Urumqi and Ili, respectively, between 1905 and 1907 to observe the Russian activities in the region. In 1906 Hino Tsutomu was deployed by the state to conduct research in Xinjiang, from Urumqi to Ili to Yaqand.⁴¹⁴ Without a shade of doubt, these figures are the known ones among many that were engaged in scholarly-cum-clandestine activities.

⁴¹² Selçuk Esenbel, “A Transnational History of Revolution and Nationalism: Encounters between Japanese Asianists, the Turkish Revolution, and the World of Islam,” *New Perspectives on Turkey* 35 (2006), 38-39.

⁴¹³ *ibid.*, 52

⁴¹⁴ Dündar, *ibid.*, 174-176. Also, Erdal Küçükyağın is conducting a detailed research on Japanese activities in Central Asia for his PhD dissertation.

Decades of interest in Xinjiang added up to a substantial amount of information on the region which was utilized during the 1930s when the region was in turmoil.

1933: The Pinnacle of Pan-Turkism

It was in October, 2, 1933, that a Japanese boat, which had set sail with the purpose of reaching South Africa, arrived in Shanghai that carried three figures according to the French reports. One was a Turkish journalist called Ayaz İshaki, 55 years old, who embarked on his journey from Warsaw in July 1933, went to Berlin and Venice from where he came to Shanghai. The second figure was a young Indian Muslim of 29 named Vali Mohammed, who was on his way to Bombay. And the third figure, most curious of them all, was a certain Mohammed who acted as a French citizen. They all stayed at Hotel Crystal, where yet another Turkish journalist, Muhsin, who arrived at Shanghai on September 3, also resided. The latter Mohammed, the French report said, was no doubt Prince Abdulkерim, the grandson of the dethroned Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II.⁴¹⁵

This was indeed the beginning stages of a failed Japanese plan to enthrone Prince Abdulkерim to Xinjiang as the new Sultan of Inner Asia, once the armies of Ma Zhongying were to have victory. The whole design started in the early months of 1933, when the above mentioned Muhsin (Çapanoğlu), an anti-Kemalist dissident from Turkey, met Prince Abdulkерim in Singapore, who was drawn into this plan by a certain Kazım Vecdi –a Russian Tatar living in Japan– when the latter contacted him in Damascus. Receiving a French passport, Abdulkерim set sail to Japan where everything got arranged by Muhsin Çapanoğlu and Kurban Ali, another important Tatar figure who

⁴¹⁵ Shanghai Municipal Archives (SMA), U-38-2-500. It is hard to determine what happened to these figures. After he formed the Idil-Ural Society of Japan, Ayaz İshaki, originally a Tatar from Kazan, has probably travelled in China for a while establishing contacts with other Tatars until he arrived in Manchuria (then the Japanese Manchukuo) where he engaged in Pan-Asianist activities, supported by the Japanese. See: Selçuk Esenbel, “Japan and Islam Policy During the 1930s”, *Turning Points in Japanese History*, ed. Bert Edström (Richmond: Japan Library, 2002), 200. According to the same French document, Muhsin Çapanoğlu went to Nanjing in November 1933. As to the Indian, no account exists.

played a significant role in Japanese Pan-Asianist policies.⁴¹⁶

As the rebellion in Xinjiang intensified, the Japanese acted quickly to send Abdülkerim to Shanghai from where he was presumably going to fly to Urumqi. However, it seems that the Chinese authorities as well as the foreign embassies were aware of the actual reason of Abdülkerim's arrival. When Abdülkerim met Wu Tiecheng, the Mayor of Shanghai, on October 29 and November 2, he insistently told the Mayor that he did not have any political intention. Wu, in return, asked him to move to the Chinese Quarter of the city, and the Prince accepted this request.⁴¹⁷ After he moved to Jiangwan, northeast Shanghai, the Prince seems to have stayed there until March when the rebellion in Xinjiang was crushed by Sheng Shicai's forces assisted by the Soviets. What happened to Abdülkerim afterwards is quite tragic. Approximately a year after, in September 1934, while he was staying in a hotel in New York, he was found dead in his room with a gun in his hand. What really happened remains a mystery, but it is assumed that he was indeed murdered by a secret agent.⁴¹⁸

Nevertheless, the shrewd Japanese plan that was designed to reconcile *shuangfan* with militarist Asianism was not solely confined to Prince Abdülkerim. There were also other Turkish, and Japanese, figures that could still assist the Japanese in realizing their aims.

Among the figures who assisted the East Turkestanian rebellion in 1933, some were dissidents of Turkey who had escaped after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, helped Enver Pasha and joined the anti-Bolshevik Basmacı Uprising in Central Asia in the early 1920s, were captured by the Russians, escaped again and finally made their way into Xinjiang where they joined the anti-Chinese uprising. Among the figures that

⁴¹⁶ Selçuk Esenbel, "Osmanlı Hanedan Ailesinden Şehzade Abdülkerim Efendi'nin Gizemli Ölümü," *Toplumsal Tarih* 195 (March 2010), 43.

⁴¹⁷ SMA, U-38-2-500.

⁴¹⁸ Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan and Islam Policy during 1930s", 204-205, and Selçuk Esenbel, "Osmanlı Hanedan Ailesinden Şehzade Abdülkerim Efendi'nin Gizemli Ölümü," 45-46.

joined the fight were Ahmed Tevfik Pasha, the former minister of King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia, an anti-Kemalist Dr. Mustafa Ali⁴¹⁹ from Izmir, Colonel Nedim Kaytmaz (Mustafa Nedim), the General Secretary of the Turkestan National Union (TNU) Meceddin Delil, the Great War veteran Kemal Kaya, and an unidentified Turkish doctor.⁴²⁰ The latter three figures deserve closer scrutiny.

Kemal Kaya was a war veteran who had fought during the Great War and was captured by the Russians. He managed to escape and ended up in Gansu where he became the military commander of Ma Zhongying, the Chinese Muslim warlord who was obsessed with conquering Inner Asia. Having graduated from Paris, Kaya could speak French fluently, according to the accounts of Sven Hedin who had talked to him in Turfan.⁴²¹ Moreover, according to Yang Boqing's accounts, an officer in Ma Zhongying's army, Kaya used to converse in Russian with Wu Yingqi, another officer who had received his diploma in the Soviets.⁴²² Yang Boqing candidly admits that he did not know what Kaya and his other Turkish companion were doing in Ma's army:

... These two Turks are not engaged in trade, and yet they definitely are not total strangers. They come from a different country, they speak a different language, they made a long journey, and they have become a part of the complicated relationship between Xinjiang and Ma Zhongying which is indeed a non-political secret dealing. That is really incomprehensible.⁴²³

According to Yang, the other Turkish officer had introduced himself as a doctor but he did not know anything about medicine, and his level of education could not even

⁴¹⁹ İsa Yusuf Alptekin gives the name of this figure as Dr. Mustafa Kentli. See, İsa Yusuf Alptekin, *Esir Doğu Türkistan İçin: İsa Yusuf Alptekin'in Mücadele Hatıraları* (Istanbul: Doğu Türkistan Neşriyat Merkezi, 1985), 264.

⁴²⁰ Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan and Islam Policy during 1930s," 196; Ahat Andican, *ibid.*, 384-386; Shengli Guo, "Ma Zhongyin fusu yuanyin zhi fenxi [An Analysis of the Reasons of Ma Zhongying's Trip to the Soviets]," *Guyuan shifan zhuanxuebao – shehui kexuebao* 27, no. 1 (2006), 57.

⁴²¹ Shengli Guo, *ibid.*, 58.

⁴²² *ibid.*, 57.

⁴²³ Boqing Yang, "Ma Zhongying ru xin sui jun jian wen [A] [Information about Ma Zhongying and His Army's entry into Xinjiang]," *Gansu wenshi ziliao xuanji (Ma Zhongying shiliao zhuanji): di ershi ji [C]* (Lanzhou, Gansu renmin chubanshe, 1986), unspecified page number, quoted in Shengli Guo, *ibid.* 57.

compete with that of Kaya.⁴²⁴

Cable and French, British Protestant missionaries who travelled extensively in northwest China, reveal a bit more in their accounts. According to them, these two Turks were both experienced in warfare and one of them (Kemal Kaya) could speak several languages, and had a substantial amount of knowledge about European affairs. Two years earlier, they had arrived in Urumqi to engage in trade, but Jin Shuren, governor general of Xinjiang, ordered them to be arrested and put in prison. When they finally made their way out, they heard about Ma Zhongying and approached him to demand employment, which was quickly granted.⁴²⁵ Cable and French claim that the two Turkish officers of Ma played “an important part in the Turkestan rebellion by persistently directing the young General’s ambition toward becoming Governor of that province.”⁴²⁶ Their account reveals that they were speaking with one of them (most probably Kaya) in French, and with the other in Chinese, which is an indication that the unknown Turk has spent quite some time in China before he joined Ma’s army.⁴²⁷ However, there is no detail as to who he was and what happened to him at the end.

As to the fate of Kemal Kaya, there are several narratives. Some sources indicate that after Ma left Xinjiang and entered the Soviet territory, Kaya stayed behind in Urumqi where he was granted a job by Sheng Shicai⁴²⁸; other sources claim that he stayed in Turfan, married an Uyghur woman, and was killed by Sheng⁴²⁹; and there is

⁴²⁴ *ibid.*

⁴²⁵ Mildred Cable and Francesca French, *The Gobi Desert* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1943), 224-225.

⁴²⁶ *ibid.*, 237.

⁴²⁷ *ibid.*

⁴²⁸ Shengli Guo, *ibid.*, 57.

⁴²⁹ İsa Yusuf Alptekin, *ibid.*, 134.

yet another account stating that he left with Ma Zhongying and entered the Soviets.⁴³⁰

With respect to the Japanese connection, it is hard to determine whether Kemal Kaya was supported by the Japanese, however, Onishi Tadashi who shared the same status with Kemal Kaya in Ma's army was a Japanese agent in Ma's circle. He, quite coincidentally, ended up becoming the military advisor of Ma when the latter met him in Gansu where he was collecting intelligence.⁴³¹ Taking into consideration the Japanese will to enthrone Prince Abdulkerim once Ma Zhongying succeeded, Onishi's place is hardly unexpected. Moreover, it is also claimed that the above mentioned Colonel Nedim Kaytmaz was also bringing arms from Japan and was training the rebel armies of Khoja Niyaz.⁴³²

During the same period, Japan was also viewed by the Turkestan National Union (TNU) as a nation that could save East Turkestan. TNU, formed in the second half of the 1920s with the object of rescuing Turkestan from Bolshevism, turned its attention toward East Turkestan and realized that Japan could indeed be identified as a strong ally. Osman Kocaoglu, the president of TNU, wrote in a letter to Cokayoglu that the Manchurian annexation was an incident full of hope that could ignite a Russo-Japanese war which would in turn facilitate the revolutionary activities in Xinjiang.⁴³³ Thus, the members of TNU prepared a memorandum for the Japanese, the contents of which are revealing:

With regard to East Turkestan, the Center for Turkestan National Union has hitherto pursued a policy of enlightenment (*tenevvür*) and development of national education. As to the fight with the Chinese, it had a theoretical and passive stance. However, the Sino-Japanese War that has begun in September 1931 in Manchuria and the following formation of an independent Manchuko has altered the TNU's standpoint vis-a-vis East Turkestan. The Center for TNU believes that today, the ensuing chaos and anarchy in China may lead to the

⁴³⁰ Interview with Selçuk Esenbel, February 2010.

⁴³¹ Selçuk Esenbel, "Japan and Islam Policy During the 1930s," 197; and Shengli Guo, *ibid.*, 58.

⁴³² Selçuk Esenbel, *ibid.*

⁴³³ Ahat Andican, *ibid.*, 378-379.

formation of an independent state in East Turkestan while the latter searches for the possibilities of liberation. Yet, we know from earlier experiences that we need allies to maintain the future existence of the nascent state. Therefore, the Center for TNU hopes that the noble Japanese nation, our racial brothers, and the puissant Japanese state would not refrain from extending their hand for help.⁴³⁴

It seems that the Japanese did not pay much heed to this memorandum, and did not provide much help to the TNU, which urged its members to search for another alternative – Britain. The strategy they pursued in getting into contact with the British Crown is quite interesting.

TNU found the son of deceased Yaqub Khan, the ambassador of Yaqub Beg who had come to the Ottoman Empire during 1870s, and convinced him in writing a letter to the Queen. Thus, Yaqub Khanzade Mustafa wrote a letter to the Queen in August 1933 and introduced himself as the son of Yaqub Khan, the ambassador of Yaqub Beg who was the governor of “East Turkestan.” After stating that his father, who passed away in 1900, had established close ties with the British during his life time, he went ahead and demanded that East Turkestan was in need of British assistance that may come from India.⁴³⁵ However, in the end, TNU was disappointed once again.

It was this disappointment that assumedly encouraged Meceddin Delil, an active member and the General Secretary of the TNU, to go to East Turkestan to join the national war. Forging a fake identity as a journalist of the newspaper *Akşam*, he set sail to India in September 1933. In the early weeks of 1934, he entered Xinjiang but got captured by the Chinese Muslims outside of Kashgar, and was saved by General Mahmud Muhiti. Afterwards, he stayed in Kashgar and worked with General Muhiti for three years, meanwhile developing the system of education in some schools of Kashgar.

⁴³⁴ From the memorandum presented to the Japanese government by the TNU, Ahat Andican Private Archives, quoted in Ahat Andican, *ibid*, 380.

⁴³⁵ Yaqub Khan’s son Mustafa’s letter which dates 28.8.1933, Ahat Andican Private Archives, facsimile given in Ahat Andican, *ibid.*, 863-865.

He returned back to Turkey in 1937.⁴³⁶

In sum, during the 1930s, there was an elaboration of Pan-Turkist policies concerning Xinjiang, and the end-result was a global scheme played in this certain geography. This scheme was drawn by the Japanese who, having seized Manchuria in 1931, were expanding their imperial vision onto Xinjiang to manipulate the local religious-cum-national uprising as to serve their own intentions of creating a bulwark between East Asia and Russia. In doing so, there was an auspicious match between their desires and the newly formed consciousness of the ex-Ottoman Pan-Turkists; and in the end, Xinjiang became the area where different interests clashed, and those of the Japanese ultimately collapsed. It was during the same decades that Chinese intellectuals were also closely inspecting Turkey and Turkish politics. Just as the Pan-Turkist activities of the Turks in Xinjiang contradicted with the government policies of the Republic of Turkey, the Chinese perception was also contradictory. This contradiction was resolved at last with the 1934 Sino-Turkish Treaty of Friendship, as will be revealed in the following pages.

Chinese Gaze on Turkey: Contradictory Narratives

Although the Qing and the Ottoman Empires never shared any formal contacts, there existed a mutual activity of sighting one another at least since the end of the nineteenth century. In her MA thesis, Selda Altan presents original documents in describing how the Chinese perceived the Ottoman Empire during the turn of the century when the global transformations urged the Chinese intellectuals to produce a global world space, and seek new ways to interpret their own place in it. According to her argumentation, the Ottomans have also played a remarkable role in the formation of a global space in the Chinese intellectuals' minds through observing the social and political

⁴³⁶ Ahat Andican, *ibid.*, 385-386.

transformations the Ottoman Empire went through. In this regard, the Young Turk Revolution attracted a considerable amount of attention in China, in 1908, and the constitutional reforms in the Ottoman Empire constituted a model for the Chinese.⁴³⁷

More than a decade after, the Chinese intellectuals were once again increasingly interested in the Turkish policies, but this time not to produce their own global space but to define the Republic's future policies through a Turkey-related contradictory paradigm of inspiring reforms vs. alarming territorial unity. The Chinese intellectual evaluation about Turkey may be discerned through a reading of the published articles throughout the 1920s and 30s. During this period, Turkey's novel position in the post-War system was closely scrutinized by the Chinese intellectuals, and Turkey's transformation from an "Islamic" society to a "modern" one was praised to the extent that Turkey was envisioned as the model for Chinese social transformation. On the other hand, the Turkish stance with regard to Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism was critically questioned, for such a support would definitely not be innocuous for the territorial unity of China. Therefore, there were indeed two 'Turkey's for the Chinese: one that constituted a model for China, and the other that tried to build up a global Islamic Empire which threatened the dream of political unity for the Chinese Republic. The distinction between the two was never clearly demarcated and thus the establishment of Sino-Turkish political relations had the ups and downs until the signing of the Friendship Pact in April 1934.

Turkey: The Haunting Ghost or the Pivot of Asia?

In the early months of 1923, before the declaration of the Turkish Republic, the issue of Turkish influence on the Islamic world was still questioned by the Chinese intellectuals. The core of the problem, unsurprisingly, lied in the question of Xinjiang. In an article

⁴³⁷ Selda Altan, *Sighting the Ottomans from the East: Chinese Intellectual Transition from Imperial to National Imagination Through the Ottomans at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (MA Thesis: Bogazici University, 2009).

that dates back to January 1923, Wu Fohang wrote elaborating on the issue of Pan-Islamism that with the help of Kaiser, “Pan-Islamist movement became the rising sun of the East ... Not a day passed without a Muslim uprising in India, Egypt or Turkey, and the Muslim races' awakening climbed up to the top.”⁴³⁸ After explaining the pivotal position of Turkey in this movement, he rhetorically asks: “What kind of a status will Mustafa Kemal, 'The Spirit of Islam', give the Muslims in the new political stage?”⁴³⁹ The question was actually cynical in its desire to learn the future relations of Turkey and the Muslims in China, specifically the ones in Xinjiang which were by then summoned as *chanhui* 纏回, i.e. turban-head.

This question was reiterated by an unknown writer in another article which claimed that “Turkey's agitation towards the Muslims' independence in Xinjiang can be considered as the greatest problem that needs to be dealt with.”⁴⁴⁰ After analyzing the religious preferences of the *chanhui*, the writer commented that “the Turkish people that arrive in Xinjiang are seen as holy descendants (*shengyi* 聖裔), and [the *chanhui*] worship them as gods.”⁴⁴¹ The article ends with the writer equalizing Turkey with the age-old enemies: “The Russians, the Turks and the British can be considered equally as having no good intentions.”⁴⁴²

Nevertheless, although cynical in Turkey's nascent foreign policy, there were also articles published about the achievements of Mustafa Kemal,⁴⁴³ the number of

⁴³⁸ Wu Fohang, “Quanhuijiao yundong zhi jianglai [The future of the Pan-Islamist Movement],” *Dongfang Zazhi* 20, no. 2 (1923), 31.

⁴³⁹ *ibid.*, 37.

⁴⁴⁰ “Huijiao liguo yu wo guozhi guanxi [the Muslim countries and Our Country's relations],” *Dongfang Zazhi* 20, no. 3 (1923), 132.

⁴⁴¹ *ibid.*

⁴⁴² *ibid.*, p. 133.

⁴⁴³ You Xiong, “Kaimoerde shengping [Kemal's Life],” *Dongfang Zazhi* 20, no. 6 (1923), 55-61. Among

which increased immensely after the foundation of the Turkish Republic. The praise on Kemal was actually parallel to the vision the Chinese had about Turkey, which transformed and ameliorated day by day. Indeed, by 1924, Turkey had already begun to be observed as a brand new country. I believe that there was one more motivation that led to this novel envisioning – Sun Yatsen's idea of Pan-Asianism (*Da yazhouzhuyi*). Thus, before we pursue our discursive analysis of how Turkey was perceived by the Chinese, we should first inquire into Sun Yatsen's monumental article.

Sun Yatsen's Pan-Asianism and Turkey

Sun notes in the beginning of his article that “other famous Asian countries are all similar - China, India, Persia, Afghanistan, Arabia, Turkey. None of them is independent, all being haphazardly oppressed by Europe which turns them into colonies.”⁴⁴⁴ First praising Japan for its determination and courage with which they have annulled the unequal treaties thirty years earlier, Sun claims that this independent character of Japan has influenced other Asian countries of similar situation and established a model for them to follow in attaining independence from European exploitation. Sun writes that it has only been twenty years since the Japanese victory that the Asian nations started to think about defeating Europe, and the Asian countries such as Egypt and Turkey have attained independence. According to him, “[i]t is only after these national thoughts reach a level of culmination that all the Asian nations may liaise (*lianluoqilai* 联络起来), and only after that may the independence movement of

other publications, the one published in 1928 is also important to understand how the Chinese envisioned Mustafa Kemal: “Zhengjiu tuerqi yu weiwang zhongde Kai-mo-er – shang [Kemal who Saved Turkey in Peril – 1],” *Shenghuo* 4, no. 1 (1928); “Zhengjiu tuerqi yu weiwang zhongde Kai-mo-er – zhong [Kemal who Saved Turkey in Peril – 2],” *Shenghuo* 4, no. 2 (1928); “Zhengjiu tuerqi yu weiwang zhongde Kai-mo-er – xia [Kemal who Saved Turkey in Peril – 1],” *Shenghuo* 4, no. 3 (1928). In 1928, there is even a published book on the Turkish Revolution: Liu Keshu, *Tuerqi geming shi* [The history of Turkish Revolution] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1928).

⁴⁴⁴ Sun Zhongshan, “Da yazhouzhuyi [Pan-Asianism],” *Da yazhouzhuyi lunji* [Pan-Asianist Theses] (Zhongyang xuanchuanbu, 1940), 2.

all Asian nations may attain victory.”⁴⁴⁵

In this path towards independence, he believes that there is an essential difference between the Western countries and the Asian ones that will enable the idea of pan-Asianism to triumph. Distinguishing the West and the East through material vs. ethical world paradigm, Sun condemns the West of its dependence on the use of arms, and its insistence on the importance of the material world. When it comes to talking about the essence of “Pan-Asianism,” Sun says it is a matter of culture (*wenhua* 文化). He draws a distinction between hegemonic governance (*badao* 霸道) and benevolent governance (*wangdao* 王道), the former belonging to the West, and the latter to the East;⁴⁴⁶ and it is this cultural essence and benevolent governance that should constitute the fundamental basis for pan-Asianism.⁴⁴⁷

Moreover, this cultural consciousness should be united with knowledge of military instruments, according to Sun. In this regard, there are two countries that Sun pays homage to. One, undoubtedly Japan, and the other one Turkey which “recently has perfect military power”: “On the East is Japan, on the West is Turkey. Japan and Turkey are two barriers on Asia's East and West.”⁴⁴⁸ Therefore, Sun Yatsen believes that it is through the protection provided by Turkey and Japan that Asia will recover on the basis of righteousness which will unite every nation.

Despite Sun's trust in Turkey, and hence his praise, the place of Turkey in the minds of Chinese intellectuals was obscure and janus-faced, as will be shown in the following paragraph. One side admired it and basically followed the lines proposed by Sun, whereas the other side was completely intimidated by it. No need to say, the real

⁴⁴⁵ *ibid.*, 5.

⁴⁴⁶ *ibid.*, 7-9.

⁴⁴⁷ *ibid.*, 12.

⁴⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 10.

life situation was not as what Sun had pointed out; and the admiration for Turkey as well as its *locus panasianicus* often collided with the territorial desires of the Republic.

Hua states in 1924 that “within a year, Turkey has changed dramatically from the sick man that was about to be destroyed to a republic that adopted democracy and abolished the caliphate.”⁴⁴⁹ He further argues that “the situation in Turkey right now is totally different from what it was and the people's belief in religion also slowly diminishes ... From this day onwards, Turkish politics have clear hopes and we cannot but admire the bold reforms Turkish national government has undergone.”⁴⁵⁰ This 'admired nation' becomes the alter-ego of the Chinese Republic, the other self which has accomplished everything China needed and strived to achieve.

Deng Feihuang, concluding his long article on the history of Turkey writes that the current situation of China and that of Turkey's before recovery was very similar, one being a Near Eastern problem and the other a Far Eastern one; “after all, they all share the same status of oppression and exploitation.”⁴⁵¹ Then he exclaims: “[They] have rebuilt the houses that were shattered, and re-erected the mountains and rivers that crumbled down, and they succeeded! ... But now just look at us. The crumbling mountains and rivers are still crumbling and continue to crumble day by day!”⁴⁵²

This idea of Turkey as the model for China was repeated in further publications. In 1926, Fan Zhongyun again uses the discourse of Near East-Far East brothers who “are deserved to be named as fellow sufferers (*nanxiong nandi* 难兄难弟).”⁴⁵³ Now, he comments, in this fight to win China back from the 'sick hands' and to gain

⁴⁴⁹ Hua, “Tuerqi feichu huijiao jiaozhu [Turkey Abolishes the Caliphate],” *Dongfang Zazhi* 21, no. 5 (1924), 12.

⁴⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 14-15.

⁴⁵¹ Deng Feihuang, “Tuerqi geming chenggong [Turkish Revolution Succeeds],” *Xin Minguo*, 1, no. 4 (1924), 21.

⁴⁵² *ibid.*

⁴⁵³ Fan Zhongyun, “Xin tuerqi [New Turkey],” *Dongfang Zazhi* 23, no. 3 (1926), 31.

independence in order to liberate it, “Turkey is our very model ... for it is only Turkey that has defeated the Great Powers and won its independence merely through the use of its own force.”⁴⁵⁴

The interest in Turkey though, was not confined to the sphere of national revolution. Chinese intellectuals also closely observed the economic, political, social and legal transformation of Turkey.⁴⁵⁵ There was even the translated version of Ismet Pasha's writing on the new policies of Turkish political economy.⁴⁵⁶ It was in the midst of these concrete analyses that China and Turkey started to build up official political relations. However, the problem of Turkey's relationship with Xinjiang still constituted a problem despite the admiration and the belief that Turkey should be a role-model.

Due to the complicated psychological dynamics that produced the image of Turkey in China, we witness a drop in the number of Turkey-related Xinjiang articles; however, the question of Pan-Islamism does not fade away, and although there is no direct reference to Xinjiang, the reader immediately assumes the cynical content. One such article is by You Xiong who writes that “the rebirth of Turkey, the independence movements in Egypt and India, the perishing of extraterritorial rights in Persia, Afghan King's efforts to build a strong state, the turbulences of Morocco and Tunisia, and the Arabian King's fight against the British etc. are all enough to prove that the Muslim countries are awakening.”⁴⁵⁷ You argues that this movement is partly due to the idea of

⁴⁵⁴ *ibid.*, 31-32.

⁴⁵⁵ Bao Sixin, “Tuerqi Falü he falütüingde xin zhidu [Turkey's New System of Law and Legal Courts],” *Dongfang Zazhi* 24, no. 10 (1927); Yu Gan, “Tuerqide zuijin jingji zhuangkuang [Turkey's Recent Economic Situation],” *Dongfang Zazhi* 25, no. 17 (1928); You Xiong, “Tuerqi gexin shiyede zhongzhong [All sorts of Turkish Innovative Enterprises],” *Dongfang Zazhi* 26, no. 6 (1929); Zhe Sheng, “Tuerqi heyi yao jueyi caiyong xin zimu [How did Turkey come to decide on using New Alphabet],” *Dongfang Zazhi* 26, no. 8 (1929).

⁴⁵⁶ Yu Nengmo, “Tuerqi jinhoude zhengzhi jingji fangce [Turkey's Political Economic Policies from Today Onwards],” *Dongfang Zazhi*, vol. 26, no. 12, 1929. The article was actually first published in *Tianjin Shuangzhou*, vol. 1, no.3.

⁴⁵⁷ You Xiong, “Huijiao guojiazhi liang zhong lianhe yundong yu yingde [The Muslim Countries' Two Kinds of Unification Movement and the Russians and the British],” *Dongfang Zazhi*, 25, no. 15 (1928), 7.

national self-determination that emerged after the First World War and partly to the Russo-British contend for hegemony.⁴⁵⁸ It is not difficult to guess You's underlying intention in his argument. It was no region but Xinjiang that had the potential to claim national self-determination, and at the same time was under the influence of the Russians and the British. Thus, the author actually hinted towards the possibility of Xinjiang's national independence which may potentially have a connection with the Muslim world – the leader of which might be Turkey. Another article written by a certain Huang also draws in detail the Islamic movement of the times, analyzing North Africa (Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia), Turkey, Balkans, Persia, India, Afghanistan and Russian Turkestan. As usual, he pays the foremost attention to the Turkish revolution, though not uttering a word of Xinjiang.⁴⁵⁹

This idea of Muslim connections is more apparent in another publication again dating back to 1928. The anonymous work published under the title “The Xinjiang Problem” condemns the incompetence of the Chinese Republican regime, the way of which could well have “exhausted” according to the writer.⁴⁶⁰ On this scene of chaos, the writer claims that the “*Chanhui* more and more establish contacts with Afghans and Turkey; [and] ethnic complicities may be realized through Xinjiang's internal separatism which may start as a minor event but lead to a great trouble.”⁴⁶¹ Another work, though written in 1935, also underlines the Afghan and Turkish danger, and the writer Hong claims that this danger comes after the Russians, the British and the Japanese.⁴⁶² Hong assumes, not incorrectly, that now that the Japanese have taken the northeast, they also

⁴⁵⁸ *ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁵⁹ Huang Youxiong, “Huijiao minzu yundong [Muslim Nations' Movement]”, *Dongfang Zazhi* 26, no. 20 (1929), 47-57.

⁴⁶⁰ Guomin Waijiao Zongshushe Bianji, *Xinjiang wenti* [The Xinjiang Problem] (Shanghai: Zhonghua Shuju, 1928), 15.

⁴⁶¹ *ibid.*, 17.

⁴⁶² Hong Dichen, *Xinjiang shidi dagang* [An Outline of the History and Geography of Xinjiang] (Nanjing: Zhengzhong Shuju, 1935).

further their plans for the northwest; among these plans is the support for the Turkish Sultan to claim the throne of Xinjiang; and even though the Japanese have failed in their scheme, Turkey, Afghanistan, and Indian Muslims still have similar plans for the region.⁴⁶³

Therefore, it was these complicated discourses about the 'real' place of Turkey in Chinese politics that have prolonged the process of the signing of Sino-Turkish Friendship Pact.

The First Sino-Turkish Pact in 1934

I haven't been able to detect any source concerning the historical background of 1934 Sino-Turkish Friendship Pact except for one article published in *Dongfang Zazhi* in November 1934. This article tells us the intricate process of the signing of this treaty, a process that took around ten years.

The first motivation for the signing of a Sino-Turkish treaty came from Kamil Bey, the Turkish consul in Belgium, who met with Wang Jingqi, the Chinese consul in Belgium face to face on October 17, 1925. This showed that Turkey had an interest in signing a friendship-trade agreement with China. It was during this unofficial visit that Kamil Bey for the first time suggested the signing of such a treaty. Later, another unofficial meeting also took place in Moscow between the Turkish and Chinese consuls.⁴⁶⁴ These meetings present us the beginning of the political relations through the eyes of the ruling elite. Nevertheless, this rapprochement was not favored by the Xinjiang governor general Yang Zengxin who telegraphed Beijing Foreign Affairs Department on October 8, 1927, to oppose the Sino-Turkish engagements claiming that

⁴⁶³ *ibid.*, 238-242.

⁴⁶⁴ Wang Guang, "Zhongtu waijiao guanxizhi guoqu xianzai yu jianglai [The Past, Present and the Future of Sino-Turkish Foreign Relations]," *Dongfang Zazhi* 31, no. 22 (1934), 55.

it will have a lot of harms and not a single benefit (*you baihai er wuyi*).⁴⁶⁵ Despite Yang's concern and his anti-Turkish policy, the central government was not as determined as him in adopting an anti-Turkish stand. Moreover, there were also others, apart from the politicians, who demanded the signing of a treaty between China and Turkey.

These were the overseas Chinese residing in Turkey such as Wang Huishan 王會善 and Ma Hongdao 馬宏道, numbering 165 in total. Wang and Ma arrived in China in September 1928, and applied to the GMD court for accelerating the process of signing the friendship-trade treaty. The petition they gave to the court is quite interesting to quote in its full extent, for it displays the social reasons of their desire for this treaty:

When expatriate [Chinese] citizens travel [in Turkey], they often receive unequal treatment [when they encounter trouble]. The moment they speak or make their presence known they are restrained with legal sanctions and the repression of the security forces. Yet the fact that they pay taxes/tariffs and serve in the military makes them little different from the citizens [of Turkey]. When they occasionally protest, they encounter insults and all kinds of additional troubles. Sometimes they are even arrested without cause and fined. Chinese expatriate citizens who wish to enroll in schools and study are denied entry due to the fact that their parents' nationality is Chinese. When they try to invoke international precedent and establish their own schools to educate their children, they are denied permission to do so on the pretext that [China and Turkey] have not signed a treaty. Because of this, we have at times heard of many [Chinese citizens] who have been forced to become [Turkish] citizens. If they reside or travel [in Turkey] they encounter all sorts of inconveniences. Therefore we believe that this [present situation] is not only inimical to expatriate [Chinese], but also harmful to national prestige. Up until the present day, whenever [Chinese] expatriates travel in foreign lands, they have to endure [hardships] in silence. When they desire protection, they cry out for aid but receive no assistance.⁴⁶⁶

When the leaders of the Chinese community in Turkey was presenting the court their appeal, the GMD representative in Turkey (though not the consul, for there did not exist one at that time) had also informed the central government that the Chinese representatives were there for a common cause.

⁴⁶⁵ *ibid.*, 56.

⁴⁶⁶ *ibid.*

As the communication between the two sides started to increase, the Turkish government decided to make its first official contact with China. It was on February 12, 1929, that Turkey sent its first adviser, Hulusi Fuat Bey, to act as the Turkish representative. Up until then, Turkey and China had never established any formal contacts. Hulusi Fuat Bey (Tugay), who acted as the charge d'affaires in Tokyo from 1925 to 1929,⁴⁶⁷ reached Shanghai on the first of April and on the tenth, one day after he arrived in Nanjing, the Turkish Consulate was officially established. According to the accounts, this consul left Shanghai on the June 20, and returned back to China next summer, in June 1930, to make contacts with Li Jinlun, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to sign the friendship agreement, but all turned out to be futile efforts, as will be explained in the following paragraph. On 29 July, 1931, the Turkish Consul was dismissed, and afterwards China and Turkey never had a direct relationship until 1934, i.e. the signing of the treaty.⁴⁶⁸

Indeed, it was after GMD received the appeal from the Chinese citizens in Turkey that the Chinese foreign affairs department notified their consul in the US, Wu Chaoshu, that he may sign a friendship/trade treaty with the Turkish Consul Muhtar Bey in the US. However, the Turkish Consul only had the authority to sign friendship treaties, whereas it was the principle of China to sign both treaties at once. Thus, Muhtar Bey asked the Turkish government for permission to sign the trade treaty, but was rejected because the Turkish principle was to sign the friendship treaty first, as the author states. So the Turkish government decided to send the Turkish Consul Fuat Bey to meet Li Jinlun to sign the treaty, as mentioned above. Fuat Bey arrived at Nanjing on June 24, 1930. There they decided on a treaty draft to be signed, but did not sign it. In September 1931, in Geneva, the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs made a request to

⁴⁶⁷ "Büyükelçilik Tarihi ve Önceki Büyükelçilerimiz," *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Tokyo Büyükelçiliği* in <http://tokyo.be.mfa.gov.tr/MissionChiefHistory.aspx>

⁴⁶⁸ Wang Guang, *ibid.*

the foreign affairs representative of China, Wang Jiazhen, who was also in Geneva back then, that they should sign the treaty in Turkey for there was not any Chinese Consul in Turkey. However, because it was not well-arranged, the request did not come alive, again.⁴⁶⁹

After a standstill, the negotiations commenced again in April 1933, and they decided to sign the treaty in Sweden. However, again due to a certain problem on the Turkish side, the treaty remained unsigned. In February 1934, when Hu, the consul in Sweden, was returning back from Cairo, the Chinese authorities told him to make a visit to Turkey. At last, in April 1934, Hu arrived in Ankara and met with the Turkish authorities. They finally decided to sign the friendship treaty, though not a trade one. On the 4th of April, 1934, the two sides signed the treaty in Ankara. A few months later, in November, the first Chinese Minister was appointed in Turkey.⁴⁷⁰

However, as we understand from İsa Yusuf Alptekin's memoirs, the Turkish side was slow in sending a consul over to China. During his visit to Turkey in 1939, Alptekin told İsmet Pasha that the Chinese General was an important figure and it was discrediting not to send anyone to China. It was after this that İsmet Pasha decided to send Ali Sipahi who established the embassy not in Chongqing, which was then the capital of the Republic, but in Shanghai which was under Japanese occupation.⁴⁷¹ The diplomatic reasons of this action and the political relations that ensued afterwards still await disclosure, but they are out of the scope of this study.

Turkey: The Ghost Comes Back

The treaty being signed, Wang, the author of the article, was still hesitant in evaluating the Turkish stance as he notes: "Turkey's engagement with China is partly a desire for

⁴⁶⁹ *ibid.*

⁴⁷⁰ SMA, U38-2-1586. According to the French files, the name of the Minister is Major General Ho Yao Chu, I was unable to find out the actual Chinese name of this figure.

⁴⁷¹ İsa Yusuf Alptekin, *ibid.*, 421. It is also interesting to note that Ali Sipahi was a close friend of Ahmed Kemal.

the Muslim territories' (*huijiang* 回疆) trade routes, however its main motivation is not to throw its foreign relations into danger, for after signing Lausanne Treaty, Turkey has entered a new phase of establishing new foreign relations.⁴⁷² He further adds that although Turkey has abolished the Caliphate in March 1924, it still has a strong position as the leader of Muslims:

Because China's Western Territory (*xijiang* 西疆) has a lot of Muslims, they take Turkey as the holy land, and the Turkish people as sacred. It is as if Turkey has built a consulate in the Western Territory, and the consul's power over religion is really hard to eliminate. Even though Turkey does not have any conspiracy whatsoever, it cannot stop the violations which have already become established practices.⁴⁷³

To put it differently, Wang believed that despite Turkey's new foreign policy which disregarded earlier imperial policies, there still existed the remnants of the latter.

Therefore, the writer demands the need to gather intelligence about these phenomena before signing a treaty. In other words, the author's hesitant attitude is in tune with other intellectuals' ambivalent perception of Turkey. As a matter of fact, as shown in the first section of this chapter, their attitude was not unwarranted, for the Pan-Turkists did have an influence in the region during the 1930s.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I have tried to show the unstable character of Pan-Turkism as an ideology which was in no way monopolized by the Republic of Turkey itself, at least regarding the question of East Turkestan. I have pointed out the necessity to separate the Ottoman Pan-Turkism from the Pan-Turkism that persisted in the 1930s. In doing so, I have intended to show the impossibility of drawing a linear line from the 1910s to the 1930s and claimed that it was a re-articulation of Pan-Turkism with regard to the novel local conditions that the ideology was re-evaluated and re-localized.

⁴⁷² Wang Guang, *ibid.* 57.

⁴⁷³ *ibid.*, 58.

In this process of localization, however, the role of the ex-Ottoman Turks as well as the Japanese deserved a considerable place, since the former were the embodiments of this new ideology, and some of them were supported financially by the latter. Moreover, I have also underlined the fact that these policies were not supported by the Kemalist regime at all.

In the second section, I have emphasized the paradoxical thought-pattern of the Chinese intellectuals who regarded Turkey both as a role-model and as a detrimental nation that could become the leader of all the Muslims. What came out in the end was a double paradox: Turkish people aiding the rebellion in Xinjiang although not supported by the Turkish government, and Chinese idealizing the Turkish but criticizing the Turkish activities. This paradox was resolved in the end when the Sino-Turkish Friendship Pact was signed in 1934.

This treaty also marks the end of Turkey-related Pan-Turkist activities in Xinjiang, or at least I could not find out any document to decipher the period afterwards. However, this is not to say that Pan-Turkism was abandoned in Xinjiang. As discussed in the second chapter, the period after 1934 gave birth to the East Turkestan Republic, which again maintained a Pan-Turkist discourse, though it seems to have been less accentuated than in 1933. Nevertheless, the role of Pan-Turkism after 1934 would be another subject of study that exceeds the limits of my analysis.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUDING REMARKS

When history as a field acts as a joker to give meaning to the present, and while doing so, draws an arbitrary linear line that connects the past with today, it in fact does not help us understand the historical factors that lie under a certain phenomenon, but rather distorts the past so as to re-construct it again in line with the given contemporary political circumstances. This study was an attempt to show the distorted image depicted by Turkish and Chinese scholars in understanding the historical relationship between Turkey and Xinjiang.

As put in the “Introduction” chapter of this study, for the Turkish and Chinese intellectuals, the Ottoman/Turkish influence in Xinjiang is a topic of scholarly dispute, in spite of the heavy ideological swamp that conceals the true nature of this relationship. I have argued that the Ottoman, and later on Turkish, interest in the region cannot be regarded as a singular linear line that is cynically observed as a Turkish threat which has been detrimental to the territorial unity of China from late-Qing up until today. In putting forward my arguments, I used the nascent literature on “global history” as my theoretical framework to understand the nature of Ottoman influence in Xinjiang. In doing so, I defined “global history” as a field that has emerged because of the expanded nature of area-studies combined with a need to fulfill the ideological and intellectual gap created by post-colonialist studies that argued for a discursive repudiation of modernity, rather than a structural critique of it. As I have stressed, a common aim “global history” has with post-colonial historiography is its desire to refute Eurocentrism, and to come up with new ideas to comprehend the emergence of modernity.

In this regard, “global history” argues for the need to observe modernity not as

an entity that was solely created by the Western world, but rather as a shared experience mutually created by the participation of the whole globe. Framing it as such, there arise thousands of possibilities to re-write world history because the term “globe” does not privilege the “developed” to the “undeveloped,” nor West to non-West. The opportunity provided by such a narrative gives salience to the non-Western impact on the non-Western world. Therefore, in writing the history of a region, its relations with the non-Western powers become significant to understand how the modern history of that particular region was made. Xinjiang was my laboratory to test this theory.

Throughout the work, I have argued that the Ottoman influence in the region was indeed strong, and the Ottoman Empire as a non-Western power was a crucial component in making the history of modern Xinjiang. To strengthen this argument, the third chapter gave an account of the Russian influence in the region that brought with it the jadidist impact of the Tatars. Given that the Tatars’ role in the history of China has been hitherto disregarded despite their huge influence, I find this chapter especially valuable because although the sources I have used were very scarce, I elicited the role of Tatars in opening up the region to the flow of global ideas. In other words, I argued that the Tatars acted as brokers between Xinjiang and the world of modern Muslim ideas characterized by the *usul-u jadid* movement. It was a result of this jadidist influence that the Ottomans could also enter the region.

The fourth chapter argued that the Ottoman Pan-Islamist influence in the region was a manifestation of a global ideology that observed all Muslims as the equal subjects of the Caliph. Be it Chinese or Turkestan Muslims, they were all taken as equal in the eyes of the Sultan – the latter was not favored because of its Turkic identity. The only problem in this argument is the Ottoman interest in the Yaqub Beg Emirate when Sultan Abdulaziz sent rifles and ammunition to the Muslim leader of Chinese Turkestan. However, I have presented some archival documents to prove that the Ottomans did not

aid Yaqub Beg to fight against an infidel China, but to exist as an independent Muslim state that could stand up to –and optimistically thinking, weaken– Russia. In other words, Sultan Abdulaziz was playing the Great Game in Central Asia when he was assisting the Muslims of the Emirate, a substantial amount of which were not even Uyghurs but Khoqandis.

The fifth chapter posed the anomaly created by the Pan-Turkist or Turanist ideology in the face of a persisting Pan-Islamist notion. As argued, the Pan-Islamist dream which observed all Muslims as equal seemingly contradicted with Pan-Turkism which favored Turkic-ness, and did not hesitate to engage in military activities to establish a Turkic Empire, as Enver Pasha's adventure leading the Basmaci Rebellion on the mountains of today's Tajikistan tells us. Chinese Turkestan was one such region where the ideas of Pan-Turkism seemingly intersected with Pan-Islamism, but in fact, the Ottoman policies in the region did resolve this seeming contradiction. As the fourth chapter suggested, besides a Pan-Islamist perception of it, China was also perceived as a country that shared the same experiences with the Ottoman Empire in the sense that they were both exposed to the problems created by Western imperialism. As such, Chinese Turkestan was observed as a part of this fellow-sufferer China about to get ripped apart by Western powers. Therefore, the Pan-Turkist and Pan-Islamist policies in Xinjiang were not contradictory to each other but rather followed the same line, albeit some yet undisclosed differences. The Ottoman activities in the region were not belligerent in nature; and in essence, they did follow the Hamidian policies concerning the region, i.e. amelioration through education. However, as argued in this chapter, it seems possible to suggest that the Ottomans were also using the region as a military base from which they could attack Russia. Thus, while the Ottoman policies had an inherent jadidist notion of bringing light (*tenvir*) to the indigenous Muslim population through education, the actual content of their activities during the Great War seems to be

a bit more different. In this regard, I have also presented the Chinese documents to give a contesting narrative about the Ottoman activities, for the documents from the 1910s suggest that the Ottoman Turks in the region were engaged in provocative activities. However, I have also argued that the Chinese attitude towards the Ottoman Turks could indeed be, and probably was, a reaction to the Turkish activities in Central Asia. The Central Asian situation was threatening to the social and political stability of Xinjiang, and therefore the Turks in the region were observed as potential threats. Nevertheless, in order to prove this point, researchers should be allowed to enter the Xinjiang Municipal Archives, for unless permission is granted, we can do no more than speculate on the actual content of the Turkish activities given in the archival sources.

The sixth chapter, on the other hand, depicted a completely different picture. Contrary to the Ottoman period, during the 1930s the Pan-Islamist flavor in the perception of Chinese Turkestan left its place to a Pan-Turkist ideal that defined the region as “East Turkestan,” thus detaching it from a China-related geography and including it in a greater Turkic world. In this newly emerged consciousness, ex-Ottoman Turks also played a role; but their activities were no longer supported by the Republic of Turkey. The Turks in the region who played a significant role during the uprising in the early 1930s were lone voyagers who were attracted to a new Pan-Turkist imagination that promised freedom to an imagined East Turkestan. I have deliberately pointed out the need to separate this period from the earlier decades, for the global actors have also changed during the 1930s. One such actor that entered the game was Japan whose influence has been examined in detail. In this chapter, I have also narrated the failed Japanese plot to enthrone an Ottoman Sultan in Xinjiang, and thus displayed Xinjiang as a space where global ideologies converged.

Since the Chinese perception of Turkey during the 1930s was lacking in this study, I also presented an analysis of Chinese works on Xinjiang and Turkey, and argued

that there was a two-sided perception of Turkey: one side exalted it and took it as a role-model, and the other side saw it as a potential threat to the Republic's territorial unity. This apparent contradiction was at last resolved in 1934 with the Sino-Ottoman Friendship Pact, after the rebellion in Xinjiang was completely suppressed. I find the year 1934 as a milestone in Sino-Turkish relations as well as Xinjiang-Turkish relations, for I have not come across any activities after this date. It may indeed be taken as the year when the Turkish Republic has cut all its relations with Pan-Turkism, and showed that it was severely insistent on becoming Western.

To put it bluntly, in this study I have argued that in assessing the relations between Xinjiang and Turkey, an ex-temporal approach that regards the past as directly linked to the present is simply wrong. When the Ottoman period cannot be compared with the 1930s neither in form nor in content, how can it be possible to see *shuangfan* as ever-existing ideologies that permanently have the same aspiration of uniting East Turkestan with the freedom it deserves?

I firmly believe that scholars would underestimate the gravity of the situation if the contemporary political and social problems in Xinjiang are reduced to a Pan-Turkist ideology that takes its power from an imagined past. Devaluing the structural problems of the region and instead emphasizing an imagined past cannot help resolve any ethnically related issues; and historical studies can only help understand the region from a point of view that does not necessarily allow us to answer contemporary questions.

This study was an endeavor to understand Xinjiang in a limited sense. Although I have exhausted the Ottoman archives and familiarized myself with the Chinese sources as well as Uyghur and Turkestani journals, I still believe that there is a lot more to uncover to understand the modern history of Xinjiang. In this regard, I believe that Uyghur journals published during the 1920s, '30s and '40s may provide invaluable

information on the Republican history of Xinjiang. Moreover, the Second National Archives in Nanjing may also disclose a lot of unknown events of the same period once researchers are allowed in. In other words, there are still a lot of Chinese and Uyghur sources that await devoted researchers.

As I have mentioned in the Introduction of this study, my work was just a modest attempt to understand the history of modern Xinjiang under a different light, and it is far from being perfect. Nevertheless, perfection comes through dedication, and in order to unveil the yet unknown parts of its history, I sincerely hope that my study may inspire more dedicated and keen students to pursue the still difficult task of understanding modern Xinjiang.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A



چينده وحشيانه بر عادت

چينك بعض طرفلارده زوجي وفات ايدن بر قادينسك اثر عيت اولارق اتخار ايمسي پويوك بر فضليات عد اولونمقدهدر. رسميز، بر بياره وجاهل چينلي قادينسك — چينلورجه رنك ماتم اولان — بياشاره بورونمش اولديقي حالده اتخاري زماننده آليششدر. دار آناجي اورتمده كوردوليور. بو هول انكيز حادته ي مشاهده ايجك ايستمين بي حدوحساب سيرچيلر فاجعه نك وقوعي بگله وورلر.

This picture allegedly describes an “atrocious custom” in China. The woman in the middle, we are told, is committing suicide after her deceased husband. This is indeed a misinformation, for there was no such custom in China.

Şehbal, no. 2 (1325), 49.

مساکنده مفروشانتک موفقیتنه ایکی مثال



وئایق و حقایق

مدنیت عشقه نك منتج سلامت اولما یا جفنی نهایت
تقدیر ایده ريك طریق تجده کیرمک ایسته دیکی بر
کون قبول مشروطیته حاضرلا ناسندن آکلاشیلان
چین حکومتنده انقلابات فردیه واجتماعیه هر حالده
انقلاب سیاسیلی قدر فوری وقوع بولما یا جق کبی کورونو
یور . چینلیرک بزم بیلدیکن عادات ایله همان کاملاضد
بر طاقیم اعتیاداتدن بحث اولونمقی ئوته دن بری مودا اولمشدر .
یا زیلرینی صاغدن صوله و یا صولدن صاغه یازما یوب یوقاریدن
آشاغی به عمودی برشکه قوملاری ، هکیملرینه خستهک
زماننده اجرت و برمه یوب وقت صحته مهادیا معاش اعطا
ایتمه لری، زوجاتک، وفات ازواجدن سوکرا، اتخارلرینه
نظر تحسین ایله باقیماسی کبی بر چوق عادتلی واردر، که
بزم مدرکاتمه بوس بوتون یانلیجی کلیر. هله قادینلرینک
تا چوقوقلقدن اعتباراً آیقلرینی ده میردن باوجیلر ایچینده
صیقارق بومکدن منع ایتمه لری هر طرفجه معروف اولمشدر .
رسمزده بو صورتله کوجولتولوش بر آیغک

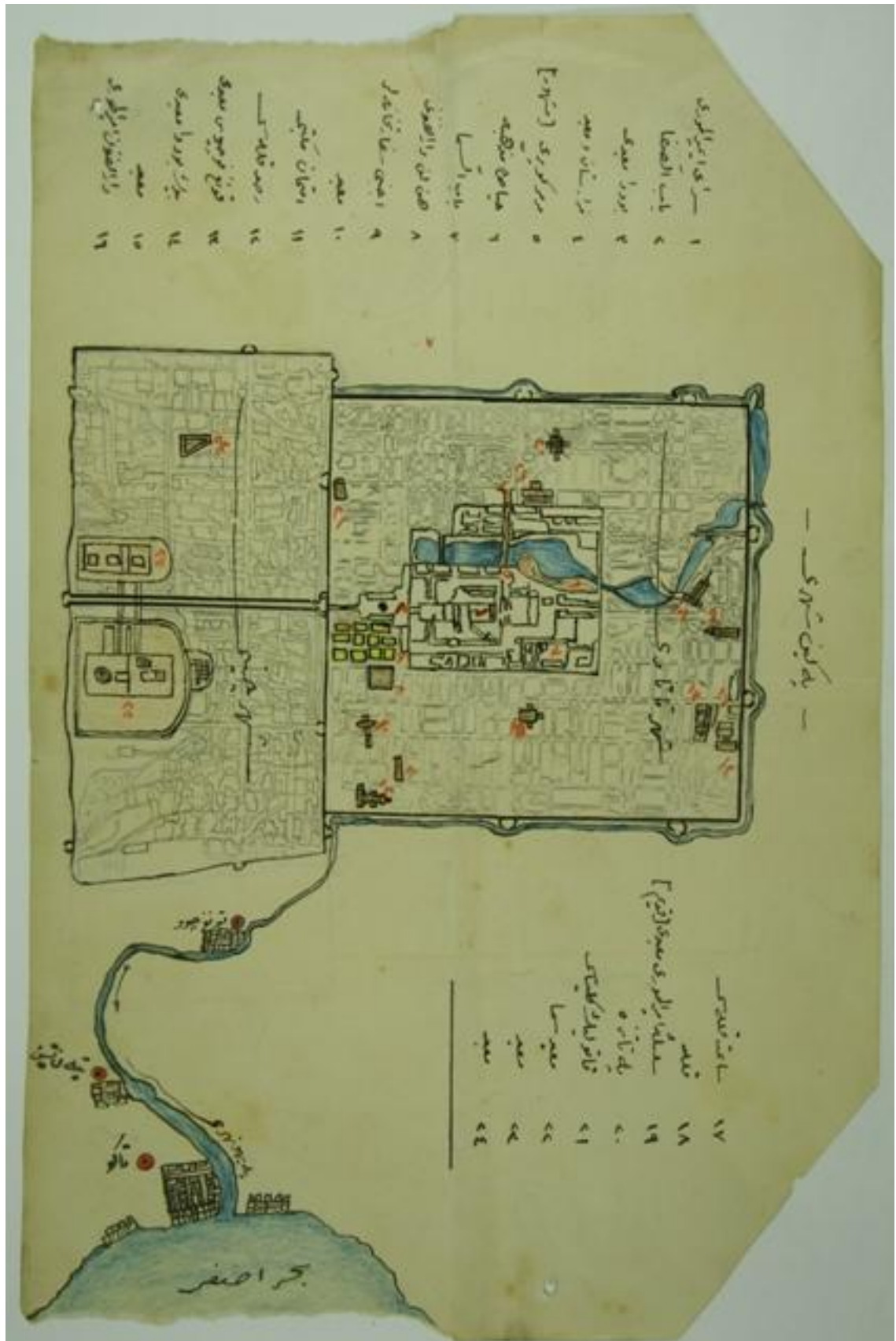


برهینلی قادینک کوجولتولوشه آیقلری

Depicting the “shrunken feet” of a Chinese woman, this little article stresses the discrepancy between “a great revolution” and the extant traditional social customs.

Şehbal, no. 44 (1327), 391.

APPENDIX C



A city map of Beijing.
BOA, Y.PRK.EŞA. 36-41.

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