

CALLING FOR RECOGNITION:
COUNTER-TERRORISM AND ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN XINJIANG, CHINA

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Abstract

One of the most debated aspect of puzzles in the study of the escalation of homegrown terrorism is why ethnic grievances can stimulate the activation process in terrorist groups. As the most representative origin of China's homegrown terrorism, the unharmonious factors in ethnic relations of Xinjiang, primarily between the Uyghur people and the Han Chinese, are worth considering. Past literature has comprehensively discussed the causes of the Uyghur groups' grievances, but few studies have paid enough attention to the way they influence the increase in terrorist activities. Based on the framework of the social movement (SM) theory, this thesis develops an analysis explaining that three different categories of reasons caused the growth of the local terrorist groups in recent years through triggering ethnic grievances in different ways. It concludes that bad ethnic relations and cultural disintegration, resources mobilizing structure, and changes in the political opportunity structure jointly create opportunities for the upgrade of terrorist threats.

Introduction

In many people's mind, compared to Western states who are struck by probably the most intractable global issue—terrorism, the People's Republic of China (PRC) used to be kept off “the radar of the international jihadist movement” (Potter, 2013). However, “On 2 Oct. 2013, a car crashed and exploded in the most politically sensitive place and Beijing's symbol—Tiananmen Square, leading to the death of five people” (Branigan, 2013). Soon afterwards the suspects arrested on suspicion of conspiring in the attack were all identified as people belonging to the Uyghur group, which swiftly turned people's attention to the Uyghur community, a Turkic ethnic group with Islam

belief living almost exclusively in southwest Xinjiang. Historically, the Uyghur groups in Xinjiang do not have traceable cultural connection to the Han Chinese, the overwhelming majority of China's population, rather, the Uyghur terrorists seek independence from China since 1990s and was named as the East Turkistan Independence Movement (ETIM) in the counter-terrorism actions implemented by the Chinese government. However, it is worth noting that the Uyghur terrorists' narratives have greatly changed in the recent years from the original calls for solely political autonomy and the preservation of Uyghur cultural and religious customs to the ambition of building an Uyghur nation state with independent political regime. As Cornelison stresses, the current terrorists forces in Xinjiang no longer belong to the ETIM and instead act as the Turkestan Islamic Party (TIP) who "has called for the liberation of 'East Turkestan' from 'infidel Chinese Communist invaders' and the establishment of an Islamic caliphate" (Cornelison, 2015, p. 31).

Consequently, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, mainly inhabited by the Uyghur people, became the most prominent origin of China's homegrown terrorism. According to a volume of past literatures, the geographic significance of Xinjiang is undeniable, which highlights the urgency of its terrorism issue. Mackinder's "Heartland theory" (Mackinder, 1904) initially revealed its geopolitical significance in a theoretical level: "the core of Euro-Asia" (See Figure 1). Recently, Xinjiang has become one of the two cores of the "One Belt, One Road Initiative", the so-called "China's Marshall Plan" (Curran, 2016). Therefore, some scholars predict that if the ethnic tensions and the terrorist issue in the Western minority region cannot be mitigated properly, Xinjiang may become the "Achilles Heel of China's rise" (Godbole, 2009).

Although first launched in the 1990s along with the emergence of terrorism, China's counter-terrorism campaign in Xinjiang is remarked as "a struggle that had been going on for years but only recently gained significant notoriety" (Wong, 2003, p.3). For more than 15 years, "China has sought to manage its domestic terrorism problem through a strategy that rests on three pillars: (1) enhanced regional economic growth, (2) stronger internal security capabilities; and (3) deepened

controls over ethnic and religious activities” (CNA, 2016, p.3). Externally, the principals initially published in the Counter-terrorism Agreement of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a security organization established by China and its Central Asian neighbors centers on regional security-related concerns, also revealed China’s purpose to strengthen international cooperation with neighbor countries. Regarding the legislative measures, the first comprehensive counter-terrorism law was published on 27th. December 2015, which officially includes counter-terrorism into the national security strategy of China. It deals with the issues including “terrorism designation and prevention, intelligence gathering, emergency response, safeguards, legal liabilities” (Zhou, 2016) and etc., as a guideline for the implementation at each level. Four specific aspects need to be highlighted in Zhou’s opinion: “China’s definition of terrorism; obligating technology companies to provide technical support for counter-terrorism purposes; placing restrictions on the reporting of terrorist attacks and government responses; and implementing a ‘people’s war on terrorism’” (Zhou, 2016). Afterwards, in the operational level, the counter-terrorism leadership organs at national level was established in charge of the general coordination and legislation enforcement. “The regular meetings were held between the counter-terrorism leadership organs and local police and security department aiming at strengthening the and continuity of the counter-terrorism work” (周栋梁&张铮, 2015).

Aside from the general legislation, other measures were exercised in Xinjiang such as “simulating the local economy, promoting the sinicization of education and “strengthening the monitoring system” (王茜&李吉和, 2015). Promoting local economy is the primary measure implemented by China’s central government. For example, nineteen provinces and cities in the East Coast of China, a relative prosperous region, have been assigned to provide aid to the poor areas in Xinjiang. However, measures in strengthening cultural integration turned out to be less effective because “while other Muslim minorities (like the Hui) exist in China, the Uyghur people have

traditionally resisted full assimilation into majority Han Chinese culture more than similarly situated minorities” (Mizzi, 2017). After many years’ efforts, the race relations in Xinjiang, which is believed to be the fundamental and direct motivating factor of terrorism, ; while instead, the growing Uyghur’s grievances in Xinjiang provided suitable environment for the spreading of radical ideas and the organizing of terrorist attacks. This paper will find out the relation of local ethnic violence and conflicts and escalation of terrorism in Xinjiang, specifically on the simulation of the Uyghur group’s grievances on the local terrorist activities, under the framework of social movement theory. It follows the result of past research on the ethnic causes of terrorism and argues that these causes stimulate local terrorism through triggering grievances in a dynamic way.

The remaining part of this thesis proceeds as follows. First, I review the past literature and research to discuss how ethnic grievances and terrorism might be connected theoretically and what empirical studies have found about the ethnic motivation to the development of terrorist forces. Particularly, I found that the discussion on the transformation of ethnic grievances to the escalation of terrorist activities in Xinjiang suffers from a lack of research. I then develop the hypotheses that draw on the social movement theory mainly developed by Alimi et. al (2015), present analysis regarding the activation of different categories of causes to the local terrorist groups through triggering ethnic grievances. The following section details my analysis by presenting relevant data and findings. The final section summarizes the analysis and draws conclusions for future research as well as for conflict prevention and resolution.

Literature Review

Much of the literature theoretically connects ethnic factors and variables to terrorism. This section reviews the past research on the relation of terrorism and ethnic violence, aiming at studying how terrorism emerged and developed in Xinjiang as one type of ethnic violence. This section also

summarizes the literature on explaining the domestic causes that promote the transformation of ethnic grievances to the stimulation of terrorism, with an emphasis on political and economic perspectives, the two most concerned dimensions in the terrorism study of Xinjiang. The review is far from exhaustive or solely targeted on Xinjiang, but it tries to discuss the theories and relevant empirical observations of similar regions in the rest of the world to formulate the hypothesis tested in the next section.

Why Should Ethnic Violence Affect Terrorism?

This thesis is based on the assumption that terrorism can be one type of ethnic violence. Many scholars have supported this proposition in their literature and research. In some research, on a macro level, terrorism is linked to the variables that may cause ethnic civil wars or armed conflicts: it is more likely to emerge “in the presence of excluded and concentrated ethnic groups” (Arva & Piazza, 2016; Choi & Piazza, 2016; Ezcurra, 2017) and “ethnically diverse countries” (Basuchoudhary & Shughart, 2010; Piazza, 2008). Empirical measurements like the ethnolinguistic fractionalization index (ELF) index and ethno-linguistic polarization are also widely applied to analyze the link of ethnic variables and terrorism. On a more micro level, an empirical test conducted by Nemeth, Mauslein and Stapley (2014) concluded that “number of minority groups and their diversities only matters in domestic countries”. On the basis of this, Python, Brandsch and Tskhay (2017) further proposed the most updated research result on the connection between ethnicity and terrorism, who added that, aside from the universally acknowledged aim of provoking the government, “ethnic terrorists have a second potential target for provocation, the opposing ethnic group”(Brandsch & Tskhay, 2017, p.87). In this regard, inciting ethnic variables and violence between ethnic groups might be a predictor of ethnic grievances driven terrorism.

The study object of this thesis—terrorism in Xinjiang—is an extreme performances of ethnic conflicts. In the category of terrorism proposed by Bigo and Bonelli (2007), terrorism in

Xinjiang is in the camp of “separatist terrorism (ethnic, regionalist, nationalist or independentist)”. Thus “China’s current counter-terrorism policies is exactly based on the assumption that Uyghur terrorism is an upgrade of ethnic violence”(王茜&李吉和, 2015, p.32). Furthermore, the theoretical foundation of most other Chinese studies on Uyghur terrorism always lies in ethnic terrorism (彭清, 2014; 都永浩&左岫仙, 2017; 许尔才&张建军, 2011; 郝时远, 2002).

What Caused the Transformation of Ethnic Violence to Terrorism?

Domestic factors that raised ethnic conflicts were studied in past literature. In the case of Xinjiang, many past research is applicable, specifically on the dimensions of political and economic environment. According to the relevant research, these factors led to ethnic violence and eventually, on the basis of literature and theory discussed before, caused escalation of terrorism.

Politicized Ethnicity

A group of related literature and empirical research apply Wimmer’s theory of ethnonationalist exclusion (Wimmer, 2002) to measure ethnic armed conflicts resulting from non-cohesion. Almost all of them hold that exclusion along ethnic lines, especially of powerful minority groups, increases the likelihood of ethnicity-based terrorism. Qualitative studies stress that “the state is not an ethnically neutral institution but is an active agent of political exclusion that generates these conflicts in the first place” (Brass, 1991; Breuilly, 1994; Wimmer, 2002; Cederman et al., 2010, p.89). Based on this, the literature regarding the exclusion theory mostly underlines the importance of politicized ethnicity in activating armed conflicts. Meeting the logic of ethnonationalist conflict, a basic consensus has been reached in the past few decades. Opinions are divided on how and when political exclusion results in the emergence of terrorist groups; however, all of the literature admits that, because of data limitations, the current study is far from the final word on ethnicity’s influence on terrorism.

This study is organized around several propositions, stated below. In the context of politicized ethnicity, a group of scholars emphasizes that ethnic structure plays a main role in transforming grievances into violent behaviors. A representative discussion can be found in the African research of Basedau et al. (2011), who suggest “the role of certain demographic religious structures that are conflict-prone”. Scholars (Buhaug et al., 2008) also study ethnic groups’ characteristics to explain their violent behaviors. More specifically, their findings on the links between geographic position and conflict escalation provide a sample for the study of Xinjiang. Another great volume of literature considers political inequality as an important factor. Cederman et al. (2010) explain the association of exclusion and competition along ethnic lines with internal conflict from the political side. The highly related relationships between ethnic and religious diversity and the likelihood of conflict imply that ethnic conflicts are more likely to happen in places “where the dominant group is a demographic minority: The more [that] demographically significant ethnic groups are excluded from state power, the more likely it is that there will be violent attempts at overcoming such imbalance” (Cederman & Girardin, 2007). Recent empirical research (Cederman et al., 2009; Wimmer et al., 2009; as cited in Cederman et al., 2010) offers support for the exclusion theory and holds that the probability of ethnic conflicts increases with the demographic power of the politically marginalized group.

Economic indices

Another major focus presented in much of the past literature is the local economy’s effect. Research from a great volume of literature regarding terrorism demonstrates that poverty is the most debated object in discussions about deteriorating ethnic relations (Berrebi, 2007). The disparity in living conditions of the Uyghur residents when compared to the local Han Chinese or residents in other areas, particularly when we use many variables like income, education and unemployment,

tends to be one of the primary causes of minorities' discontent and makes violent escalation more likely.

The major proposition regarding economic causes arises from three factors. The first factor that activates the transformation of grievances to terrorist activities is "the income gap between the most populous group and one or several other minority groups" (Blomberg et al., 2004). Other studies, such as Drakos and Gofas (2006), also consider the income gap as a "statistically significant predictor of ethnic conflicts". However, many subsequent research studies hold the opposite opinions. For example, Berrebi (2007) finds "both higher standards of living and higher levels of education are positively associated with participation in Islamic Jihad". The disputes about the link between a minority's income and grievances-caused terrorism remain but, more importantly, there is insufficient evidence to claim a corresponding situation in Xinjiang.

Additionally, the education level, which directly reflects the level of economic development, is emphasized by many policy makers in dealing with disintegration and lack of recognition, but their observations are much more pessimistic. Some worldwide research studies in different areas cast doubt on the claim that "a well-developed education system can certainly lead to fewer terrorist activities" (Brockhoff et al., 2010). But a survey (2014) by an Chinese Uyghur scholar Tursun (2014) in Xinjiang shows a different result. She claims that "the low education level among Uyghur youth in South Xinjiang creates social instability and facilitates the recruitment by terrorist organizations" (Tursun, 2014). We can, thus, find micro-level evidence in Xinjiang that suggests its education level is negatively associated in the short term with the ethnic grievances that can cause participation in terrorist activities.

Moreover, regarding unemployment, another frequently discussed variable, most scholars have not yet reached a consensus on its direct effect on ethnic, emotion-based terrorism. Most literature on this topic commonly assumes that "the unemployment rate is associated with income, in other words, improvement of local economy" (Sambanis, 2004; Caruso & Gavrilova, 2012).

However, when compared to other income indicators, “the unemployment rate can more directly measure the degree of relative deprivation that is a cause of economic grievances” (Gurr, 1970). In other words, unemployment can be considered as the most significant and direct generator of ethnic grievances. However, insufficient proof exists to verify that unequal, employment-produced grievances will certainly be associated with violent activities.

Theoretical Framework

Based on the brief literature review, combined with the specificities of Xinjiang, we can conclude that ethnic grievances truly stimulate terrorist activities and the escalation of terrorist groups within Xinjiang, but the actual process of the stimulation remains undiscussed. Past literature and research usually measure the influence of ethnicity on conflicts by capturing the country-level causes, namely insufficient political participation and unequal economic development. Thus, many ethnic causes of terrorism have been explored, few have applied a conceptual framework that can contribute to the study of the dynamic process of terrorism stimulation. This thesis, based on the social movement theory, will analyze that from the perspectives of terrorist groups to compensate for that gap. Thus, by developing an organization-oriented analysis, we can understand why and how a direct stimulation of local terrorist activities exists.

The creator and successors of the social movement theory primarily applied it to understand the origins, dynamics, and outcomes of political movements, while some scholars (McAdam et al., 1998; Oberschall, 2004; Beck, 2008; Alimi et. al, 2015) subsequently proposed its applicability to terrorism studies. The main reason that the terrorism issue can be analyzed under the framework of the social movement theory is that, on the basis of “common definitional elements of terrorism” defined by many scholars (Gibbs, 1989; Hoffman, 1999; Bergesen, 2007; Schmid, 1982; Goodwin,

2006), “it is appropriate to view terrorism as one form of contentious politics” (Beck, 2008, p. 1576). Tilly (2004) also supported this discourse by defining terrorism as a “tactic” in his work, namely “a type of contention that may or may not appear in a political struggle” (Beck, 2008). According to the introduction before, terrorist groups in Xinjiang is a analyzable form of contentious politics with political claims that originated from political conflicts. In this view, the social movement theory can provide a tool for researching the outcomes of Xinjiang’s ethnic grievances at the domestic security level.

In the study by Alimi et al. (2015), “the escalation of terrorist groups is activated by many causes and motivations that have already been discovered by some scholars which can be categorized into the rooted conditions, facilitative causes and precipitating events”. Additionally, McAdam et al. (1998) proposed the “3-fold framework of theoretical perspectives: mobilizing resources, political opportunities, and framing” to explain the emergence of social movements. In analysis, this thesis adopts the strategic interaction-oriented analysis approach that considers participation in terrorist activities a dynamic process unfolding during the interaction of ethnic emotions and terrorist ideologies under specific political environment. This approach is developed by Alimi et al. (2015) in the relational perspective that “posits the interactions (i.e., contacts, ties, exchange of information, bargaining, mediation, negotiation, etc.) between actors or parties in certain events as a ‘sub-mechanism’ that is further constituting the attribution of threat among minorities and movement organizations to our understand the process of radicalization”. This paper examines the stimulation of terrorism by discussing the main actors and their engagement (eg. strategic planning, decision, and choice) in political violence.

This thesis further explain this with three dimensions in the background of Xinjiang, including resources, mobilization and political opportunity structure. Having combined the already mentioned perspectives, the remainder of this thesis analyzes the three categories of stimulating causes on the local terrorist activities. The following discussion studies the triggering resources,

namely the ethnic grievances, as the rooted conditions, the mobilizing structure as the facilitative causes, and the political opportunity structure as the precipitating event. This leads us to the following three main hypotheses that are to be tested:

Hypotheses 1: Low level of ethnic economic and cultural integration leads to escalation of terrorism.

Hypotheses 2: Resources mobilizing structure facilitates development of terrorist forces.

Hypotheses 3: Political opportunity structure emerged in certain period upgrades the impact of Uyghur terrorism.

Methodology

This thesis applies the approach of qualitative analysis. The sources of data are reports, news and past studies carried out by scholars in relevant field. In the following discussion, it adopts the approach of critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Van Dijk, 2015). Van Dijk (2015) devises a theoretical framework based on the concepts of CDA, which will firstly “bridge the societal macro-micro gap” (Van Dijk, 2015, p.468) through analyzing the interaction of minority individuals and terrorist groups; and demonstrate “social power of groups or institutions” (Van Dijk, 2015, p.469) through examining the consequences of power control imposed by the dominant Han group and terrorist organizations to the Uyghur group.

Concepts and Operationalization

On the basis of the previously-introduced theoretical framework, the key concepts constructing the objects in this thesis are: ethnic grievances; activation of terrorism; counter-terrorism policies (development policies; ethnic policies; security policies); the failure of

integration; and political opportunity. Ethnic grievances and the failure of integration are the key research objects of this thesis. Ethnic grievances is rooted in the failure of integration of nation states and directly reflects the effects of state's ethnic policies on improving the race relations. The concept of social integration is difficult to be visualized, it can be reflected by the economic and educational statues of minority groups. The Uyghur people's grievances towards other groups, primarily the Han Chinese charging the main power of the state, are embodied in the sense of economic inequality, indicated by the economy-based factors like employment and poverty rate, and cultural disintegration, indicated by social-based factors like the education level and the feeling of belongingness. Activation of terrorism, in this thesis, is mainly derived from Uyghur people's ethnic grievances and measured by the number of ethnic hatred-driven violate activities and the scale and influences of terrorist groups in a certain period of time. China's counter-terrorism policies are reflected in the newly published counter-terrorism law, its local development and security (preventative) policies and a series of governmental documents. Combined with its consistent ethnic policies, the effects of the counter-terrorism policies can be evaluated in several criterions: regional economy, religious recognition, the ethnic groups' political rights, the influence of overseas extremists, propaganda and media exposure. The first three dimensions are the most worthy to consider in the following discussion. Lastly, the concept of political opportunity refers to the special opportunity for terrorism to prosper, which is created by the national development strategies and policies toward certain historical events.

Ethnic Grievances as the Rooted Conditions of Xinjiang Terrorism

No movements can survive without enough resources and supporters. The social movement (SM) theory, according to Alimi et. al (2015), considers ethnic grievances and resources, namely the "rooted conditions", as the first main cause that promotes the escalation of terrorist groups'

violence. Regarding the case of Xinjiang, the “rooted conditions” (Alimi et al., 2015) can be further divided into economic grievances and ideological grievances that are jointly activated by the development policies, the security system and, most importantly, the ethnic and cultural policies used to cope with the ever-growing terrorist forces. Thus, led by bad ethnic relations and a low level of integration, ethnic grievances as the main resources serve to escalate terrorist groups’ violence.

On the one hand, the Uyghur’s “economic grievances” (Reed & Raschke, 2010) towards the Han Chinese and government should be considered as the main *ideological resources* of Xinjiang’s homegrown terrorism. It is caused, firstly, by the long-existing economic disintegration and failure of local economic development policies to improve the living standard of the Uyghur people, the original residents in this region. After all, “competition for state resources is seen as a matter concerning not just individuals or associations of shared interests, but rather whole ethnic groups” (Wimmer, 2002, p.103). As already introduced above, the counter-terrorism law and most of the official papers of the central government consider promoting local economic development as Xinjiang’s top mission. In fact, the current overall economic performance of Xinjiang is much better than many other provinces (see Figure 1) due to its benefitting from the exploitation of West China: “...among 31 administrative units in China, Xinjiang ranked 18th in terms of GDP per capita in 2012” (Lee, 2014, p.5). Based just on the provincial-level statistics Lee provided (2014), we see that Xinjiang's socioeconomic condition is closer to the average group’s level rather than the group that lagged behind. As a result, economic inequality appears to have been raised by the “intra-provincial variance” (Lee, 2014), namely, the disparity between the prefectures and the gap between different ethnic groups. The data from the empirical tests launched by Tian and Yu (2013) reveal the astonishing regional inequality between northern and southern Xinjiang: “...northern Xnjiang has only 1/3 of [the] land area and 54% [of the] population but its fixed asset investment accounts [for] 74.8%, GDP accounts [for] 76%, and industrial production accounts [for] 78.8%” (Tian and Yu, 2013; translated by Lee, 2014, p.6). All these data reveal that the average living conditions in

northern Xinjiang, where the majority of Han immigrants reside, are much better than in southern Xinjiang, where the population of the Uyghur exceeds the Han Chinese. More importantly, southern Xinjiang, particular in Kashgar and Hotan, is also where the recent terrorist attacks are mostly concentrated. Thus, we can conclude that even though the recent stimulative policies have brought much improvement to Xinjiang's overall economy, "economic performance may not work as is expected" (Yin, 2017, p.41; 彭清, 2014) in decreasing "economic grievance" (Reed & Raschke, 2010); instead, the Chinese government has not properly solved the rooted contradiction among minority groups—resources allocation (Wimmer, 2002). The huge flood of immigrants, stimulated by the policies that boost the economy, conversely decreases the employment rate of the local Uyghur people, the group originally targeted by the incentive policies. The definition of terrorism proposed by Kydd and Walter (2006) revealed its nature of low costs, risk and military influence: "deliberate targeting of civilians by non-state actors to attain political goals". Thus, being in a relative weaker position, the Uyghur's ethnic grievances from living in poor areas can be easily triggered to fuel resistance activities. When compared to protests and rebellion, which are harshly forbidden by Chinese law, terrorist attacks became a preferable option due to their smaller costs and greater impact and influence for the Uyghur living in the economically backward regions.

On the other hand, the Uyghurs' ideological grievances towards the Han Chinese are also becoming more impactful in the last few years. In Xinjiang, the Uyghur's appeals at the national level and the nature of their appeals are ignored during the counter-terrorism implementation. Firstly, the Uyghur groups' appeals have been overlooked to some extent due to the unequal political opportunity among the diverse minority groups. Observation reveals that, when compared to the Uyghur group, other ethnic minorities who are also living inside Xinjiang have received better political treatment from the national government. In fact, other minority groups occupy a much smaller portion of Xinjiang's total population: "in addition to 10.74 million Uyghurs and 8.6 million Han Chinese, there were also approximately 1.59 million Kazak, 1.05 million Hui, 0.2

million Kirgiz, 0.18 million Mongols, and 0.04 million Xibo living in Xinjiang in the year of 2013” (Xinjiang Statistical Yearbook, 2014). In political sphere, “since these ethnic minorities are outnumbered by the Uyghur, they are not willing to see an independent Xinjiang/East Turkistan that is dominated by the latter” (Wang, 2007, p.263-264). To assure political support from these smaller ethnic groups inside this region, the Chinese government has chosen to utilize their natural concerns towards the Uyghur, which are particularly triggered by the recent violence on the common citizens, by implementing an actual unfair distribution of “political resources”, such as the right of delegation. Moreover, to better govern the region and maintain the Han authority’s supreme status, the Kazak, Hui, Kirgiz and Mongols have been given autonomous prefectures, despite not being the most populous ethnic groups in the corresponding areas. The result of these uneven treatments of different minorities is obvious, and the opinions and emotions of the Uyghur, although ranked as the most populous minority group, are overlooked in many past cases. Hence, there is reason to believe that the government’s intentional or unintentional ignorance of the Uyghur’s appeals encourage them turn to other means of expression, and the local Islamic organization is an obvious choice. Secondly, the spirits of the terrorist groups is more convincing with the sense of unification within the minorities that are triggered by the repressive policies.. As stated earlier, the Uyghur’s grievances towards the Han Chinese and government are the main *ideological resources* of Xinjiang’s homegrown terrorism. It also appears to serve as a reason for the escalation of terrorist groups, because the ideology and spirits of the terrorist groups who are under cultural and religious repression can be more convincing. It is commonly acknowledged that “terrorist organizations spend much time and effort in justifying and explaining their actions” (Beck, 2008, p.1570). But things are simpler for participants in the Uyghur’s terrorism: the ideology that the terrorists wish to spread can be more convincing if combined with the religious background and through organizations like the previously mentioned underground Islamic schools. Moreover, the national spirits of the minorities that are triggered by the central government’s repressive policies, prompt

people's trust in those Muslim-operated organizations. The economic and political appeals, which have been analyzed in the past literature, will not be discussed in detail here; instead, the following analysis focuses on the Uyghur's ideological appeals, namely the appeals for recognition. In fact, the ideological appeals of the Uyghur group cannot be explained with a single perspective. These appeals can be categorized into two aspects, based on their nature: the inner identification or sense of unification among the whole Uyghur group and the external recognition of national identity for both the group and its individuals.

It is understandable that the sense of unification or ethnic identity among the whole group can be easily triggered by the repressive policies or unfair treatment. Many reasons can be provided to prove that a strong inner identification within a minority group is crucial for the escalation of terrorist groups. According to McAdam et al.'s (1998) theory, the organization of terrorist groups can be explained by the idea of "framing", which also refers to the process of "frame alignment" (Benford & Snow 2000; Snow et al., 1986) in other literatures. That is, namely, "the justifications and appeals movements use to mobilize support" (Beck, 2008, p.1569). In this regard, the appeals of both the Uyghur and the founded terrorist organizations are framing the terrorists' actions in the process of obtaining support and popularity. The Uyghur groups' appeals are understandable, but in Beck's (2008) opinion, the inner identification can also be explained as a collective identity that can be explained by the cultural perspective of the "new social movement process" (Sutton & Vertigans, 2006): "collective identity is important for understanding how contention is sustained in the absence of formal organizations" (Beck, 2008, p.1571). Gurr also proposes that "mobilization depends on the availability of collective identities, shared motivations, capacities, and opportunities for collective action" (Gurr, 2000, p.60). Thus, some of the Uyghur people in Xinjiang may have a strong collective identity as well as a shared motivation to improve their political and economic treatment, but they probably lack sufficient capacities and opportunities to mobilize and organize a collective action with mass participation. "From a rational point of view,

it is much more feasible, much less costly, and relatively more effective to conduct terrorist attacks, particularly when the dissidents are living under a strictly controlled society”(Yin, 2017, p.60). Moreover, in this regard, recognition is equally important even for the individual terrorists. Conversely, Beck also proposes that “a movement approach could stress terrorism as a method for creating and maintaining a collective identity” (Beck, 2008, p.1571), which means the successful launching of terrorist attacks will further strengthen the collective identity. However, some scholars have pointed out that “the Uyghurs are not necessarily united as Muslims” (Steele and Kuo, 2007, p.11), and they doubt the power of the Uyghurs’ collective ethnic identity. Like the categories of the Islamic groups in the rest of the world, the Uyghur as a group are actually fractured. In fact, there are two competing factions within the Uyghur communities: the Sufi and non-Sufi, with “age-old territorial loyalties and linguistic discrepancies” (Mackerras, 2005, p.8). Additionally, as Millward proposed, many victims of these terrorist attacks have been the innocent Uyghur residents, rather than the commonly acknowledged targeted symbols of PRC authority” (Millward, 2004). Hence, “while numbers are obviously difficult to come by, anecdotal reports from journalists, international rights organizations and researchers appear to confirm that the majority of Uyghurs favour non-violent protests and perhaps autonomy over separation” (Steele & Kuo, 2007, p.11). However, the inner cleavages inside the Uyghur groups will actually further foster the resentment and existence of violent Islamist elements. As a whole, the identity of the Uyghur as a representative outcome of ideological appeals will make the organization of terrorist groups more convenient.

Resources Mobilizing Structure as the Facilitative Causes

On the basis of the rooted grievances and resources, the mobilizing structure also provided space for the emergence of terrorism according to the social movement theory. McAdam and Scott’s

(2005) research asserts the significance of resource mobilization, “rather than stressing common grievances, SM theorists focused attention on mechanisms of mobilization and opportunities to seek redress” (McAdam & Scott, 2005, p.6). In other words, the successful transformation of grievances into the motivation for terrorist activities relies heavily on the phase of resource mobilization. In the traditional ideas of mobilization, a successful ethnic mobilization depends on grassroots support, namely the aggrieved populations who can provide the necessary material resources and labor as internal support. From the theoretical perspective, McCarthy and Zald (1977) explain the terrorist groups’ mobilization process within the framework of resource mobilization. According to their theory, “social movements may or may not be based upon the grievances of the presumed beneficiaries” but “conscience constituents, individual and organizational, may provide major sources of support”. Conscience constituents, a phenomenon in terrorist activities that usually occurs in states or regions that are economically highly developed, are people who support a movement even though they might not directly benefit from it. Currently, considering that there is still a large gap between the overall status in Xinjiang and the necessary condition that determines the emergence of conscience constituents, the escalation of terrorist groups inside this region still heavily relies on the Uyghur people’s negative ethnic emotions towards the government and other groups.

However, with the failure of the Uyghurs’ cultural integration into the Han communities, as analyzed before, the social network inside the Uyghur communities provided a *material foundation* for the resources mobilization and the recruitment of participants for terrorism. McAdam’s political process model (1982) clearly stresses “the importance of social network connections in the terrorism-oriented resources mobilization and the successful recruitment of participants and supporters” (McAdam, 1982), which is also applicable to the case of Xinjiang, where recruitment usually happens in the relative implosive areas inhabited by the Uyghur groups. According to McAdam’s theory, “every individual is embedded in different organizations or association based

social networks or private relationships that is very likely to form a kind of conflicting behavioral pressures” (McAdam & Paulsen, 1993). The close ties founded on the inherent social network within the Uyghur communities thus became a feasible approach to recruitment. Micro-level data collected by Yin (2017) on the individual features of terrorists in Xinjiang also show that terrorist attacks are more likely to be carried out by local perpetrators (see Figure 2). Although the data are selected from a small part of the terrorist organizers, the scholar still concludes that the performers of terrorist attacks do “have a preference to target places where they have more associations” (Yin, 2017, p.56). Thus, the social network inside the Uyghur communities in Xinjiang not only accelerates the spreading of those terrorist organizations’ influence, but it also increases the occurrence of terrorist activities in the Uyghur-concentrated regions. This phenomenon can be observed more with the emergence of “underground Islamic Schools”, which the next section discusses in detail. However, a weakness still exists in this conclusion, because the effective transformation rate of the personal social network to the available resources for recruitment remains questionable for lack of relevant data and covered facts by the Chinese government.

Successful mobilization is only the beginning for a series of successful terrorist activities for violent terrorist groups; a suitable external environment also plays an equally significant role in the escalation of local terrorism. As some scholars have stressed, “movements arise not only because they are able to successfully mobilize resources, but because overall political or social conditions are ripe for successful and sustained contention” (Beck, 2008, p.1568). Beck further adds that regarding terrorism, the conditions are usually created under the “repression by governments, such as the use of physical violence or intimidation by police and clandestine services” (Beck, 2008, p. 1572), which is a noteworthy outcome that can be seen from the content of China’s counter-terrorism law and policies, as previously introduced. Hence, it is reasonable to conclude that the grassroots political environment in Xinjiang and the implementation of counter-terrorism policies

targeted to the Uyghur groups jointly create a suitable space for the emergence and successful campaigns of terrorist groups within this region.

Firstly, the inefficiency and low prestige of the local grassroots organizations provided enough opportunities for terrorist groups to grow. The political process theory of McAdam (1982) is also applicable here for examining the external environment intentionally or unintentionally created by the local authorities and their counter-terrorism policies. McAdam's (1982) political process theory stresses the importance of appropriate political conditions: "the emergence of most social movements benefited from the combination of both political opportunities and the organizational capacity". In Xinjiang's case, the grassroots organizations as the main actors in policy implementation, no matter the counter-terrorism policies or other conventional policies, directly determine the local Uyghurs' impressions and attitudes towards the Han Chinese, who are actually in fully charge of the decision-making process. Compared to other provinces, the efficiency of the local grassroots organizations in Xinjiang is an intractable issue because of its ethnic and religious structure (minorities exceed the Han Chinese), relatively independent political position (an autonomous region), and terrorist history. The insufficient implementation of local development policy particularly results in educational deficiencies caused by the unsolved financial difficulties in remote areas, which brings a large amount of jobless people with low education levels and resources for terrorist recruitment. As an important fraction of China's non-military counter-terrorism measures, although building a strong grassroots organization has always been in the top priority of the regional development work in the village, "its actual efficiency still remains questionable" (王茜&李吉和, 2015, p.31). On the other side, regarding the case of Xinjiang, there is enough evidence to show that those "underground" Islamic schools are an important actor during the recruitment of regional terrorist groups. "Evidence shows that violent actions in the aftermath of China's new counterterrorism policy are usually spontaneous acts initiated by religious preachers and followers of 'underground' Islamic schools" (Morin, 2017). The massive rise of those

underground Islamic schools is partially obscured because, apart from its historical origin and overseas power influences, in China, “authorities have placed draconian restrictions on the traditional cultural, religious and linguistic practices of ethno-religious minority groups” (Famularo, 2015). As a result, with the growing need for scriptures study stimulated by the recent rise in religious members among the Uyghur population (see figure 3), a remarkable phenomenon emerged: the flourishing of underground Islamic schools. The harsh restrictions on religious activities, having lasted for several decades, undoubtedly turned people to those growing underground organizations, which are operated by people who seem to be more trusted and beneficial for the common Uyghur residents. As Lee (2014) highlighted in his report, “these unofficial religious organizations are very capable to attract followers and build mobilizing power through underground religious preaching”. This does not mean that the participants in those unofficial religious organizations are exposed to the radical and separatist ideas and will join in the launching of terrorist attacks, but their ever-expanding scale will certainly provide a foundation for terrorist groups to inculcate the terrorist ideology and even foster the potential execution of violent attacks. The inefficiency of local grassroots organizations further pushes this process. Based on this, the local grassroots organizations lose people’s trust and further yield the actual ruling rights to those underground religious organizations. Thus, we can conclude that the low efficiency and prestige of the local grassroots organizations provided an encouraging external environment for recruiting and expanding the terrorist and extremist groups. However, there are other powerful actors who can assist the desperate Uyghur people, including local authorities, such as the NGOs, the media, and so forth. In this regard, the underground Islamic schools may not be the only choice for them under such situation so that the increasing number of terrorist activities should not be fully blamed on the low efficiency and prestige of the local grassroots organizations.

Secondly, the repression imposed by the counter-terrorism policies of the central government, especially security policies such as the long-standing monitoring system, has raised the

Uyghur's distrust and hatred towards the Han Chinese-controlled government and further propelled the transformation of some Uyghur to become potential radical terrorists. Georgetown Security Studies Review's columnist, Shannon Mizzi, thinks that "the longstanding political, cultural, and religious repression of Xinjiang's Uyghur ethnic minority will only serve to make China's terrorism problem worse, and may have created it in the first place" (Mizzi, 2017). According to the previously introduced counter-terrorism law, the broad monitoring project targeting at the Uyghur groups is criticized as unreasonable, for it has raised the greatest human rights concerns around the world. For example, one of the most controversial policies in the newest Counter-terrorism Law (2015) is that the Chinese government obliges technology companies to provide technical support and decryption by providing so-called "backdoor provisions" for the prevention and investigation of terrorist activities. This article also restricts the rights of media and social media to report on the details of terror attacks that might lead to imitation or show scenes that are "cruel and inhuman" to the society. Western media strongly criticized this provision by stressing that freedom of the press is not only a fundamental human right but also a major foundation of democracy; moreover, they expressed their concerns for the capability of emergency responses for other common citizens when there is not enough awareness of the hidden threats. Nevertheless, China is known for maintaining a powerful censorship apparatus for sensitive topics. Thus, in practice, the local monitoring system is also expanding. "Political leaders are also implementing a number of new programs aiming at enabling the local authorities to verify the identities and track the digital footprint of individuals online" (Famularo, 2015). A prominent wave of resistance activities happened after the bloody riots on 5 July, 2009, when the "Internet access in the region was cut off in the wake of the riot to prevent violent crimes from happening again" (Cao, 2014). All of the facts mentioned here can prove that the various repressive policies on the whole Uyghur community buries suspicions in people's minds and "inflames matters, provoking anger among the Uyghur people, and creating fertile soil for further religious extremism" (Lee, 2015). Despite the economic indicators mentioned before, we

can easily conclude that Xinjiang's minorities, especially the Uyghur, appear to suffer from some "systemic discrimination" (Steele & Kuo, 2007, p.12) only because of their unique ethnic identity rather than any other criteria such as crime records. These policies have, thus, given many Uyghur reasons to believe that the Chinese central government imposes a salient threat to their basic rights, cultural and religious viability, and so forth. Having realized that there exists broad disintegration and discrimination ranging from the culture to personal rights, the common Uyghur residents can hardly build a sense of trusts and belongingness on the Han Chinese ruling authorities, especially when they are the key actor in exercising the monitoring system. However, cultural disintegration can only be considered as one aspect of the impetus for the Uyghur to support the local extremist forces in that, for most of the common residents, especially people living in poorer conditions and relatively closed regions, a more peaceful way is much better than exercising unpredictable violent attacks that might do harm to their own benefits. Thus, further observation is needed to fully explain the relationship between cultural disintegration and the escalation of terrorist groups.

The Changes in the Political Opportunity Structure in 2008-2009 Were the Precipitating Events

The year 2008 marked a historical change in China's developing path since the start of the 21st century. The 2008 Olympic Games "confers an opportunity for the Chinese people to raise their confidence in their country as a civilized host of a major international event" (Chen et al., 2010, p.120). As the host country, China went through a turning point in its domestic ethnic issues and international status. Those factors further caused a survival crisis in the Uyghurs' culture. On the one hand, the Olympic Games strengthened the overall national identity of the whole country, mainly represented by the Han Chinese identity, and an increased sense of alienation for minority groups; on the other hand, the games greatly improved China's international status and attracted

global concerns that provided terrorist groups a chance to improve their national influences. Impacted by the unsolved ethnic contradictions and the Chinese government's policies promoting Han culture, a survival crisis in the Uyghur culture finally broke out after 2008. These changes jointly performed as the "precipitating events" (Alimi et al., 2015) of the escalation of terrorist forces.

The long-standing and hidden trouble in China's ethnic policies thus broke out, highlighting its questionable human rights record in the world, and "the combination of demonstrators desperate for the world's attention and the heightened nationalism of Chinese citizens makes for an extremely combustible situation" (Economy & Segal, 2008, p.55). However, China tend to impose the spearhead of the responsibility of the increasing terrorist violences to the foreign forces or organizations, in order to avoid the essential problems existed its ethnic policies. As revealed in the earlier introduction, the effective counter-terrorism actions of Chinese government mainly rely on harsh policies on the suspected Uyghur communities; and this tendency becomes more prominent after 2008. There is record showing that the monitoring system is upgraded after this "turning point": "The process of increasing cameras has accelerated following the 2008-2009 unrest in ethnographic Xinjiang, imposing increased monitoring on the religious activities in the mosque and schools" (Famularo, 2015). In comparison, the Uyghur group's external appeal—the outside recognition of their national identity—has not received enough attention from the Chinese government ever since the founding of Xinjiang province. In other words, the state-level recognition of their national identity as the main appeal for the common Uyghur people, while actually ignored by the Chinese government's cultural and religious policies for counter-terrorism, may be utilized by terrorist groups. Accordingly, cultural recognition as a main appeal for the common Uyghur people can be utilized by both the Chinese government and the terrorists; however, some of them are already inclined to the latter due to the government's ignorance of the importance of promoting their integration in the cultural and religious levels.

Secondly, the promotion of China's international status attracted increasing concerns around the globe; thus, it was a good timing for terrorists and extremists to generate public opinion and boost their terrorist forces. In fact, activists like the Tibetan demonstrators saw the chance to express their long-standing political dissents. In their minds, also in many foreign media's ideas, "the Olympics highlight the yawning gap between the very attractive face that Beijing presents to the world and the much uglier political reality at home" (Economy & Segal, 2008, p.50). Ignoring the appeals of the terrorist groups, however, the Chinese government responded to the domestic security threats "with a traditional mix of intimidation, imprisonment, and violent repression" (Economy & Segal, 2008, p.50). These measures further deteriorated the tensions in ethnic relationships. Additionally, the nature of social movement determines that the ignorance of terrorist groups' appeals usually leads to a much worse outcome. In Beck's study, radicalization centers not only on the repression by the state's side but also on "the movement cycles" (Beck, 2008). In this regard, there is an organizational life cycle in the social movement that is applicable to the terrorism research in Xinjiang. Koopmans's (1993) findings express a similar opinion: "...social movements might become more radical with failure of achieving their initial goals since firstly founded" (Koopmans, 1993). As introduced earlier, in fact, the initial target of Xinjiang's terrorist groups indeed underwent a drastic change compared to few decades before. According to McAdam (1983), who argues that "movements must continually innovate new tactics as governments and counter-movements adapt to previous modes of contention" (McAdam, 1983; Beck, 2008, p.1573), the ever-changing appeals of terrorist groups themselves are continuously generating new motivations for further activities. As a result, and as previously proposed, the actual transformation of the Uyghur extremists' initial goals also promoted the process of radicalization and the continuous emergence of new forms of terrorist actions.

In addition to the Olympic Games, the Chinese government's decision to promote the Han cultural renaissance unintentionally prompted a survival crisis of Uyghur culture in Xinjiang. The

most prominent measure of the renaissance plan was that several Han traditional festivals have been included in the national official holidays since 2008, which is undoubtedly a threat to the Xinjiang's Uyghur culture. As discussed earlier, the cultural integration in Xinjiang have not been successful due to the harsh ethnic and cultural policies on the Uyghur groups. Under such conditions, a compulsory implementation of the Han culture outputs became a source of grievances and eventually provided ideological support for the terrorist groups' activities in seeking cultural recognition and independence. However, this is solely one of the many factual motivating factors that turns the grievances to the violent expression in terrorist means, while the substantial culprit still buried in the unsolved ethnic inequality problem.

Conclusion

There is much debate as to what actually constitutes the activation of terrorism in Xinjiang's Uyghur Autonomous Region. On the basis of the national law, the Chinese government have launched comprehensive policies, ranging from the economy to the culture, to counter the terrorist groups inside this region. However, in fact, the policies' weaknesses and some misinterpretations still remain during the enforcement process at the local level, which causes grievances and distrust in the Uyghur group.

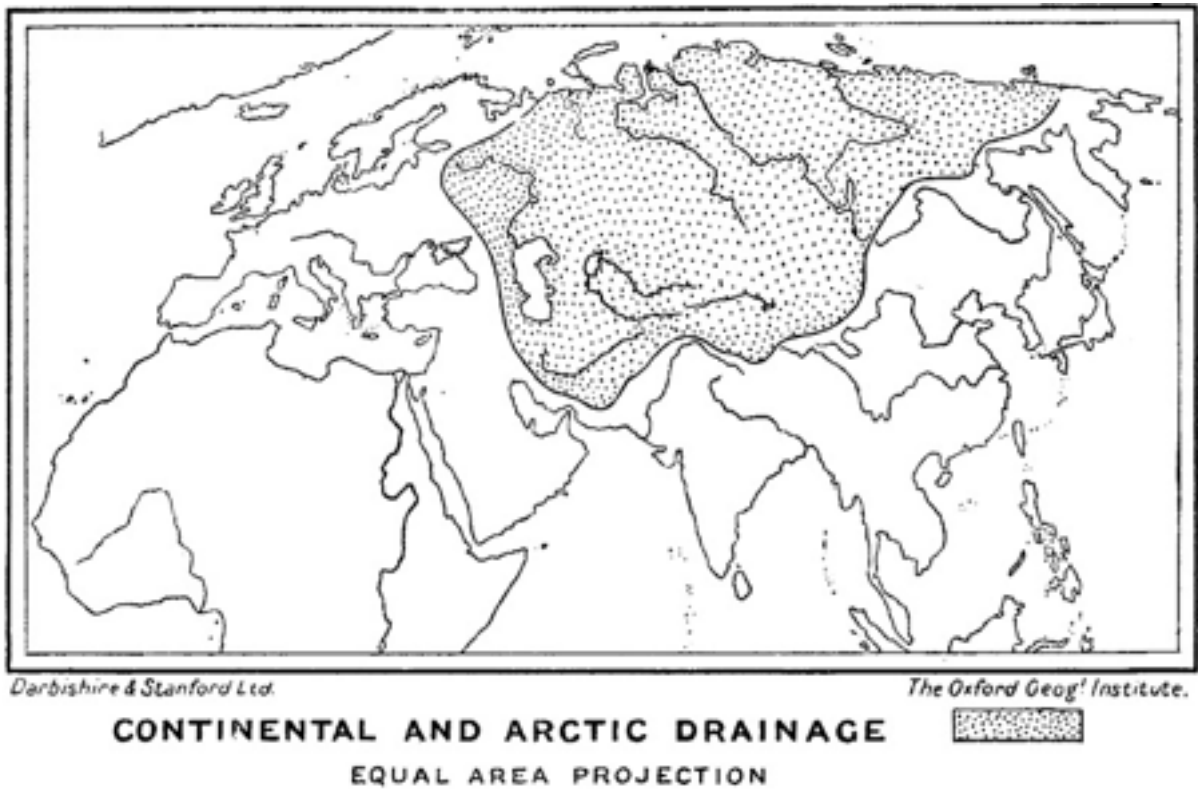
To understand how the Uyghur's grievances stimulate homegrown terrorism in Xinjiang, this thesis adopted the social movement theory (SM) to explain the transformation of ethnic grievances to terrorism from the perspectives of resources mobilization, political environment and the organization of local terrorist groups.

More specifically, the rooted grievances and resources generated from it provides sufficient ideological and material resources for terrorist groups. The ideological resources of terrorist groups are raised by the Uyghur's grievances towards the Chinese government and the Han Chinese. since ignorance of the Uyghur groups' appeals at the national level can turn them into a violent type of

expression. The appeals discussed here are not the traditional economic or cultural ones but the recognition of the ethnic identity, both inside and outside the group. Moreover, the mobilizing structure of Xinjiang terrorist forces creates enough surviving space for those terrorist organizations. This is because, firstly, the failure of cultural integration into the Han communities makes the social network inside the Uyghur community a material foundation for the mobilization and the recruitment of participants in terrorism; secondly, the local grassroots organizations' inefficiency and low prestige and the Uyghur people's distrust and hatred towards the government, which is caused by the cultural repressive policies in the Chinese government's counter-terrorism implementations, especially the security policies and monitoring system, jointly provides suitable political environment for mobilization and recruitment of terrorist groups. Last but not the least, the political opportunity structure in the period of 2008-2009, represented by the 2008 Beijing Olympics Games and the Han culture renaissance policies, result in the escalation of Uyghur terrorism in a large scale. Having taken all these into consideration, the most practical suggestion for the Chinese government to decrease the influence of the Uyghurs' grievances on the escalation of terrorist groups is to actively promote their cultural and religious recognition rather than the harsher exercises of the repressive policies. This can improve ethnic relations, change the political environment, and better satisfy the appeals of local Uyghur people.

The arguments of this thesis are based on the facts and data released by the Chinese government, but in view of its harsh control over the information sources, some figures will probably remains covered or unreported. However, the final conclusion of this study will not be changed due to the volume of figures. The discussions formulated in this thesis are selected from the representative events in the case of Xinjiang; the facts and figures presented in it are not exhaustive but try to remark on all the possible causes and effects regarding the issue. Furthermore, since the terrorist issue in Xinjiang and China's countermeasures are still in a developing phase, further research should be done into the ever-changing situations.

Figure 1 Map of Mackinder's "Heartland" Theory



Source: "The Geographical Pivot of History" (1904)

Figure 2 Data on the Individual Features of Terrorists in Xinjiang

Provincia l Ranking	Province or Xinjiang's Prefectures	GDP per capita (US\$)	Provincia l Ranking	Province or Xinjiang's Prefectures	GDP per capita (US\$)
	Hotan (Southern Xinjiang)	1111		Bortala (North Xinjiang)	6042
	Kizilsu Kirghiz (Southern Xinjiang)	1725		China (Overall)	6091
	Kashgar (Southern Xinjiang)	2030	14	Shaanxi	6108
31	Guizhou	3100	13	Hubei	6111
	Ili (Northern Xinjiang)	3356		Turpan (Southern Xinjiang)	6189
30	Gansu	3482	12	Chongqing	6191
29	Yunnan	3516		Tiemenguan (Xinjiang PCCs)	6322
28	Tibet	3633	11	Jilin	6877
	Aksu (Southern Xinjiang)	3841		Hami (Southern Xinjiang)	7226
	Tumushuke (Xinjiang PCCs)	4370		Wujiagu (Xinjiang PCCs)	7619
27	Guangxi	4427		Changji (Northern Xinjiang)	8113
26	Anhui	4561	10	Shandong	8201
25	Jiangxi	4562	9	Fujian	8359
24	Sichuan	4686	8	Guangdong	8570
	Altay (Northern Xinjiang)	4848		Aral (Xinjiang PCCs)	8593
23	Henan	5025	7	Liaoning	8958
22	Hainan	5129		Urumqi (Northern Xinjiang)	9438
21	Qinghai	5231	6	Zhejiang	10022
20	Hunan	5304	5	Inner Mongolia	10189
19	Shanxi	5327		Shihezi (Xinjiang PCCs)	10193
18	Xinjiang (Overall)	5372		Bayingholin (Southern Xinjiang)	10359
17	Heilongjiang	5657	4	Jiangsu	10827
16	Ningxia	5729	3	Shanghai	13471
	Tacheng (Northern Xinjiang)	5790	2	Beijing	13797
15	Hebei	5796	1	Tianjin	14750
	Beitun (Xinjiang PCCs)	5823		Karamay (Northern Xinjiang)	21389

Note: PCCS represents "Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps", which is an economic and military government organization that rules several administrative units in Xinjiang.

Source: Compiled data from wikipedia.com ⁽³²⁾

Source: Report: "Unrest in Xinjiang, Uyghur Province in China" (2014)

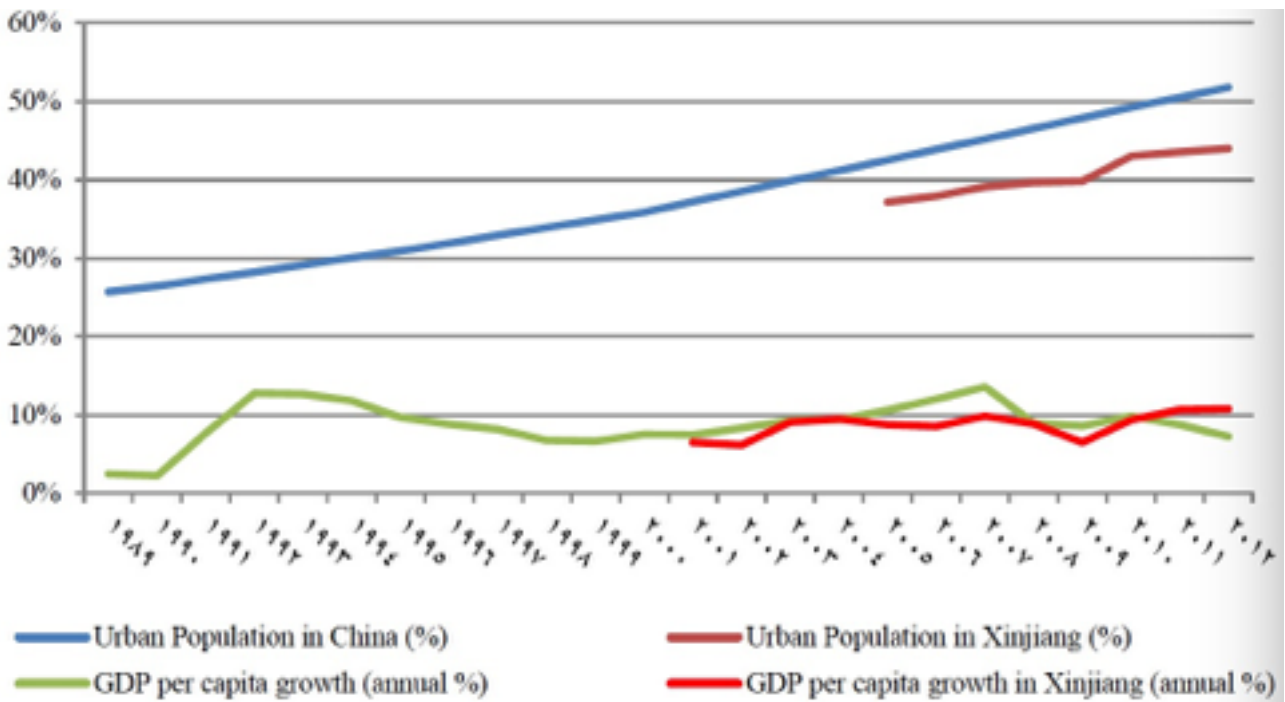
Figure 3 Data on the Individual Features of Terrorists in Xinjiang

Name in English	Place of Origin	Affiliated Organization	Place of Activity	Sites of Organized Terrorist Acts
Hasan Mahsum	Shule County, Kashgar	ETIM ¹	Afghanistan	Hotan; Urumqi
Muhanmet Emin Hazret	Moyu County, Hotan	ETLO ²	West Asia, Central Asia	Urumqi; Kirgizstan
Dolqun Isa	Aksu City, Aksu	ETLO	German, Turkey	Xinhe County, Aksu; Hotan
Abudujelli Kalakash	Moyu County, Hotan	WUYC ³	German	Africa; Railway between Lanzhou and Hami
Abudukadir Yapuqan	Shele County, Kashgar	ETIM	West Asia, South Asia	Moyu County, Hotan; Urumqi
Abudumijit Muhammadkelim	Shele County, Kashgar	ETIM	West Asia, South Asia	Akto County, Qizilsu; Wensu County, Aksu; Kuqa County, Aksu; Kashgar City, Kashgar
Abudula Kariaji	Shache County, Kashgar	ETIM	South Asia	Seeding terrorists to penetrate
Abulimit Turxun	Urumqi	ETLO		Kazakhstan; Kirgizstan; Urumqi
Hudaberdi Haxerbik	Yining County, Ili	ETLO		Yining City, Ili
Yasen Muhammad	Zepu County, Kashgar			Zepu County, Kashgar
Atahanabuduhani	Yecheng County, Kashgar		Central Asia	Xayar County, Aksu

Notes: ¹ETIM is the abbreviation of East Turkistan Independence Movement. It can be dated back to the 1930s and 1940s when the Uyghurs founded the First and the Second East Turkistan Republic with the support from the Soviet Union. For the historical background of ETIM, see Wang (2013).
²ETLO is the abbreviation of East Turkistan Liberation Organization.
³WUYC is the abbreviation of World Uyghur Youth Congress.
⁴The Public Security Ministry identified three batches of terrorists in 2003, 2008, and 2012, respectively. I did not list the second or the third batch because their *jiguan* (place of origin, not necessarily place of birth) is not specified. Moreover, the second batch consists exclusively of perpetrators who were responsible for a series of attacks before the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, and half of them (4 out of 8) were actually targeting Chinese citizens outside the country. See the website of the Ministry of Public Security of the PRC, <http://www.mps.gov.cn/n16/n983040/n1988498/index.html> [accessed 4 March 2016].

Source: “Rooted in Poverty?: The Political Economy of Terrorism in Xinjiang” (2017)

Figure 4 Number of Mosques in Xinjiang Since 1949



Source: “Report: Unrest in Xinjiang, Uyghur Province in China” (2014)

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