



**CLOUDS
OVER
TIANSHAN**

**Essays on Social
Disturbance in Xinjiang
in the 1940s**

David D. Wang

NIAS

NORDIC INSTITUTE OF ASIAN STUDIES
Recent NIAS Reports

28. Christopher E. Goscha: *Vietnam or Indochina? Contesting Concepts of Space in Vietnamese Nationalism, 1887–1954*
29. Alain Lefebvre: *Islam, Human Rights and Child Labour in Pakistan*
30. Mytte Fentz: *Natural Resources and Cosmology in Changing Kalasha Society*
31. Børge Bakken (ed.): *Migration in China*
32. Donald B. Wagner: *Traditional Chinese Iron Industry and Its Modern Fate*
33. Elisabeth Özdalga: *The Veiling Issue, Official Secularism and Popular Islam in Modern Turkey*
34. Sven Cederroth: *Basket Case or Poverty Alleviation? Bangladesh Approaches the Twenty-First Century*
35. Sven Cederroth and Harald O. Skar: *Development Aid to Nepal*
36. David D. Wang: *Clouds over Tianshan. Essays on Social Disturbance in Xinjiang in the 1940s*
37. Erik Paul: *Australia in Southeast Asia. Regionalisation and Democracy*
38. Dang Phong and Melanie Beresford: *Authority Relations and Economic Decision-Making in Vietnam*
39. Mason C. Hoadley (ed.): *Southeast Asian-Centred Economies or Economics?*
40. Cecilia Milwertz: *Beijing Women Organizing for Change*
41. Santosh K. Soren: *Santalia. Catalogue of Santali Manuscripts in Oslo*
42. Robert Thörlind: *Development, Decentralization and Democracy. Exploring Social Capital and Politicization in the Bengal Region*

CLOUDS OVER TIANSHAN

ESSAYS ON SOCIAL DISTURBANCE IN XINJIANG IN
THE 1940S

David D. Wang

NLAS

Nordic Institute of Asian Studies
NIAS Report Series, No. 36

First published 1999 by NIAS Publishing
Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS)
Leifsgade 33, 2300 Copenhagen S, Denmark
Tel: (+45) 32 54 88 44 • Fax: (+45) 32 96 25 30
• e-mail: books@nias.ku.dk
Online: <http://nias.ku.dk/books/>

Typesetting by the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies
Printed and bound in Singapore by
Prime Packaging Industries Pte Ltd

© David D. Wang 1999

The author thanks the Chinese University Press, Hong Kong, for permission to use material from his forthcoming work, *The Yining Incident: Ethnic Conflicts and International Rivalry in Xingiang, 1944-1949*, in substantially unaltered form.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Wang, David

Clouds over Tianshan : essays on social disturbance in Xinjiang in the 1940s. - (NIAS reports ; no. 36)

1. Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region (China) - History
2. Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region (China) - Politics and government

I. Title

951.6'042

ISBN 87-87062-62-3
ISSN 1398-313x

About the author:

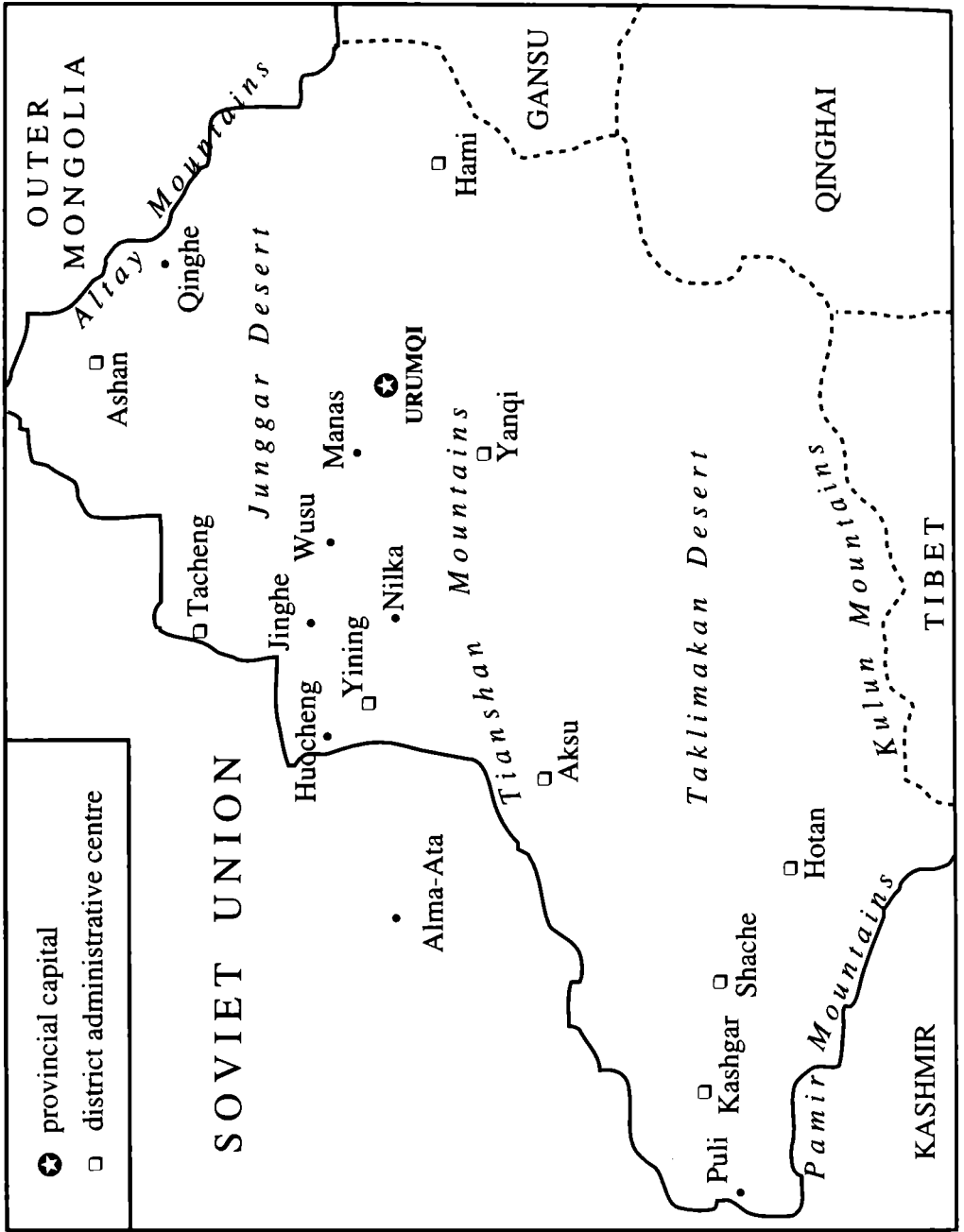
David D. Wang graduated from Nankai University, Tianjan, PRC. and has taught at several universities in China and Australia. He obtained his Ph.D. degree from the University of Tasmania and was visiting Research Fellow at East Asia Institute, National University of Singapore in 1997-98. He is currently working in Australia.

CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations	7
Introduction	9
I. Nationalism or Power Struggle	13
II. Two Administrations in Xinjiang	37
III. Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government 1946-47	69
Summary	113
References	115

Maps

1. Xinjiang Province	6
2. <i>The Three Districts under the Yili Regime, 1946</i>	36
3. <i>Growing Military Power of Eastern Turkestan Republic, November 1944-September 1945</i>	68



Map 1: Xinjiang Province

ABBREVIATIONS

CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CF China IA	Confidential U.S. State Department Central Files China Internal Affairs 1945-49
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
ETYL	Eastern Turkestan Youth League
ETR	East Turkestan Republic
FDD	Fawubu Diaochaju Dang'an (Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice) (Taipei)
GSD GD	Guofangbu Shizhengbianyiju Dang'an, Guojun Dang'an (Archives, Historical and Political Compilation and Translation Bureau, Department of Defence, National Military Archives) (Taipei)
GXD	Guoshiguan Xingzhengyuan Dang'an (Academia Historia, Archives of the Administrative Yuan) (Taipei)
GMD (or KMT)	Guomingdang
JXZ	Jiefangju Xinjiang junqu Zhengzhibu (Department of Politics of PLA Xinjiang Military Region)
LDD	Liqun Diantai Dianwen (telegrams of Liqun Station in Yining and Dihua to the Central

	Committee of the Chinese Communist Party in Beiping (subsequently Beijing) and Peng Dehuai, the deputy commander-in-chief of the People's Liberation Army in Xi'an and Lanzhou, August–December 1949)
PLA	People's Liberation Army
TIRET	Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan
UJB	Urumqi Junqu Bianxiezu (Editorial Group of Urumqi Military Region)
USA	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WDZ	Waijiaobu Dang'an Ziliaochu (Archives, Department of Foreign Affairs) (Taipei)
XJZ	Xinjiang Junqu Zhengzhibu (Political Department, Xinjiang Military Region)
XM	Xinjiang weiwuer zizhiqu Minzhengting (XUAR Bureau of Civil Affairs)
XSL	Xinjiang Shehui kexue yuan, Lishi yanjiusuo (History Institute, the Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences)
XUAR	Xinjiang weiwuer zizhiqu (Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region)
YNA	Yili National Army
ZX	Zhongguo gongchangdang Xinjiang weiwuer zizhiqu weiyuanhui (CCP XUAR Committee)

INTRODUCTION

In November 1944 Moslems in Yili [Ili], Xinjiang, with assistance from the Soviet Union, rose in rebellion in Yining [Ining], the administrative centre of the Yili District. This was followed by the establishment of the East Turkestan Republic (ETR) and the Yili National Army (YNA). Subsequently the YNA took over the three districts of Yili, Tacheng and Ashan [Altay]. In September 1945, the YNA stopped at the Manas River, near Dihua, the capital of the province, to start negotiations with the Chinese Guomindang (GMD or KMT) government. Chiang Kai-shek sent Zhang Zhizhong, Head of the Political Department of the GMD Military Committee, to Xinjiang to negotiate with the Yili rebels. In July 1946 a peace agreement was reached and the Xinjiang provincial coalition government was formed. The three districts were under the control of the Yili regime for four years, up until 1949, when the Yili regime merged into the administration of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Although this event was presented in English sources as a Moslem challenge to the Han Chinese, it can also be viewed as a part of the Chinese revolution under the leadership of the CCP (after 1949, the Yining rebellion was renamed the Three Districts Revolution in mainland China).

The Yili rebellion was a result of the confrontation between the Moslems and the Han Chinese rulers in Xinjiang. It was, however, not a purely domestic affair. It was closely linked with the then international rivalry in post-war Asia. During the period between 1944-49, the political situation in Xinjiang resembled a

jigsaw puzzle, characterised by international rivalry, ethnic disputes and confrontation between the Moslems and the Chinese authorities. For many years foreign powers tried to exploit Moslem nationalism in Central Asia to realize their own political ambitions in this region. The case of the Yili rebellion was no exception.

The rebellion was initiated with the USSR encouraging the Islamic spirit and Moslem nationalism. The Yili regime and its religion, however, were just the Soviet Union's tools for dealing with the US-backed GMD. Shortly after the conclusion of the negotiations with the GMD, the pan-Islamic elements of the Yili regime were checked by the Soviets. pan-Islamists and pan-Turkists in both the Soviet-controlled Three Districts and the GMD-controlled Seven Districts shared the same goals of establishing an independent Islamic state in Xinjiang. Their anti-Soviet attitude, however, was not anticipated by the Russians. Anti-Soviet and pro-American/pro-British pan-Islamists and pan-Turkists on both sides were outmanoeuvred by pro-Soviet Moslems. Therefore, the confrontation between the Yili regime and the GMD indicated that antagonism existed, not only between Moslems and their Han rulers, but also amongst the Moslems themselves. This antagonism between the Moslem factions was interlinked with the power struggles between the Soviet Union and pro-Soviet Moslems in both the Three District and the Seven Districts, on one side, and the US-backed GMD and anti-Soviet/pro-American Moslem followers in Xinjiang, on the other. Under these circumstances the Yili regime with its Moslem nationalism became a docile pawn of the Russians in their struggle against the US-backed GMD.

The three major frontier regions of China, Xinjiang, Outer Mongolia and Manchuria, had long been a target of control for Tsarist and Soviet Russia and other major powers. In the early 1930s, shortly after the occupation of Manchuria by Japan, the Soviet Union successfully turned Xinjiang into a buffer between itself and Japan by taking advantage of the situation of Sheng Shicai, a warlord in Xinjiang. When Sheng ceased co-operating with the Soviet Union in 1942, it was forced to withdraw from

Xinjiang. This was followed by the extension of American and British influence into Xinjiang. The Russians were obviously unhappy with this situation but it was difficult for them to do anything about it at that time.

From 1943, when the Teheran Conference was held, to 1945, when the Yalta Agreement was reached, the Soviet Union re-adjusted its East Asia policy and successfully re-established itself in East Asia. During this period, Stalin used Xinjiang as a bargaining chip to realise his goals in this region.

Under the Yalta Agreement, the independence of Outer Mongolia was to be recognised, and the privileges of former Tsarist Russia in the Far East - Manchuria in particular - were to be regained by the Soviet Union as preconditions for the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan. The main points of the Yalta Agreement were concerns of Chinese sovereignty. This was why the Chinese government had to negotiate with the Soviet Union for a treaty in the summer of 1945.

At that time the Chinese government was facing four major domestic problems: the CCP, Outer Mongolia, Manchuria and Xinjiang. These problems were all related to the USSR. Stalin, during the negotiations with the Chinese government in the summer of 1945, used Xinjiang and the CCP to bargain with the Chinese by promising no interference in Xinjiang's affairs and no assistance to the CCP in exchange for the Chinese government's recognition of the independence of Outer Mongolia and of Soviet privileges in Manchuria and the Far East. As a result, the Sino-Soviet Friendship Treaty was signed on 14 August 1945.

Following the formation of the Xinjiang provincial coalition government in July 1946, the Yili regime retained its de facto independence until 1949, when Xinjiang (the Three Districts of Yili, Tacheng and Ashan in particular), Manchuria, and Outer Mongolia became the exclusive spheres of influence of the Soviet Union behind the Iron Curtain in post-war Asia during the early stage of the Cold War.

The present collection of essays attempts to offer a picture of political situation and social disturbances in Xinjiang of 1945-49.

The first essay describes the confrontation between the Soviet-controlled Yili Regime in the Three Districts and the US-supported GMD in the Seven Districts during 1945-49. The political offensive of the Yili Regime in the Seven Districts was definitely beneficial to the Soviets in its effect to reduce the influence of the pro-US Moslems in the Seven Districts. The situation also indicates that, in the view of the struggle between the pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet factions among the Moslems in Xinjiang as a whole, the Islamic nature of the Yili regime was firmly overshadowed by the Soviet interference in the affairs.

The second analyses the two administrations of Xinjiang during the period of study. Being a part of China in name, the Yili Regime in the Three Districts was an exclusive Soviet sphere of influence – politically, militarily and economically. Facing the Yili Regime's political offensives in the Seven Districts, the GMD authorities were in a defensive position until 1947 when the Yili men left Dihua for Yili. Due to Zhang Zhizhong's peace policy, Xinjiang, an outsider of the Civil War in China Proper, was ready for the peaceful take-over by the CCP. In both the Three Districts and the Seven Districts, there were Moslem internal conflicts, focused on attitudes towards the Soviet Union.

The third essay concentrates on the social disturbances under the Coalition Government of 1946-47. This period highlighted the jigsaw pattern of conflicts between Moslem regime in Yili and the GMD rulers in Dihua as well as antagonism between the pro-Soviet Moslems and anti-Soviet Moslems in Xinjiang as a whole. As the civil war was looming in China Proper, the Soviet Union was not happy with the extension of the US-supported GMD into Xinjiang. Under this circumstance, the Yili Regime refused to give up its *de facto* independence in the Three Districts, and launched continuous political offensives in the Seven Districts, which was the cause for the social unrest during this period of time in Xinjiang. The Soviet interference in Yili Rebellion under the cover of support for Moslem nationalism, by all means, exercised a significant role in these social disturbances.

I.

NATIONALISM OR A POWER STRUGGLE?

YILI MOSLEMS' CHALLENGE TO THE GMD AUTHORITIES IN XINJIANG

Antagonism between the Yili Regime and the GMD

From September 1945, when the Yili regime halted its troops at Manas River, up until September 1949, when the civil and military authorities of the GMD in Xinjiang peacefully surrendered to the Communist Party of China, there were two parallel administrations in Xinjiang: the Yili regime in the Three Districts and the GMD authorities in the Seven Districts - independent from and in conflict with each other. The confrontation between the Soviet-controlled Yili regime and the US-supported GMD was the focus of the political situation from 1945-49 in Xinjiang. During this period the Yili regime still maintained its powerful offensive position. The GMD was hardly able to defend itself. The four-year political struggle went through the following three stages:

The first stage occurred during the period from September 1945 to July 1946. The Yili regime's severe military attack on Wusu and Jinghe, near Dihua, in early September created great fear and chaos in Dihua. From mid-September 1944, when Sheng Shicai

was dismissed from the governorship of Xinjiang, the GMD's central government in Chongqing appointed senior officers, Zhu Shaoliang, Wu Zhongxin and Guo Jiqiao to deal with the difficult situation in Xinjiang. They all suffered major military losses and had to leave Xinjiang one after another. Only after the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty did Zhang Zhizhong with his pro-Soviet and pro-peace policy, just manage to stabilize the situation in Xinjiang.

Zhang Zhizhong began negotiations with the Yili regime in October 1945. In order to reach an agreement with them, Zhang Zhizhong, guided by his pro-Soviet policy, made a number of concessions in the negotiations. Under the Peace Agreement of June 1946 between the Yili regime and the GMD, the Xinjiang provincial coalition government was established.¹

The coalition of July 1946–August 1947 marked *the second stage* of political development in Xinjiang. During this period the Yili regime's representatives went to the Seven Districts and took up their positions in the coalition government. A CCP source in Urumqi remarks on the struggle of the Yili regime against the GMD at this stage:

After the formation of the provincial coalition government ... the Three Districts government was determined ... to extend the influence of the revolution into the GMD's Seven Districts through the Peace Agreement and the provincial coalition government ... the Three Districts had no dealings with the provincial [coalition] government. The GMD's administrative orders had no effects in the Three Districts. The [GMD's] troops, of course, were not allowed to enter the Three Districts. In short, everything remained as it was before September 1945.²

In other words, the Three Districts, independent of the GMD regime in Xinjiang, comprised “a state within a state” on China's

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi* [A Concise History of Xinjiang], (Xinjiang ren-min, Urumqi, 1987) vol. 3, p. 428.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 453–454.

soil. The situation was made worse for the GMD when the Yili regime's representatives, now holding legitimate positions in the provincial coalition government, intensified their subversive activities in the Seven Districts, particularly in Dihua, Kashi (Kashgar) and Turpan. Their activities led to the Uighur demonstrations in Dihua in February 1947, anti-government demonstrations in Kashi, and the uprisings in Turpan, Shanshan and Toksun (Tu-Shan-To).

In the face of the Yili regime's political offensive, the GMD authorities, especially the hard-liners, were well aware that a compromise in policy might forfeit Xinjiang. Their counter-attack resulted in bloodshed in Dihua in February, in Tu-Shan-To in July 1947 and in Osman's fight against the Yili regime in Ashan (Osman was the Commissioner in Ashan under the Yili regime). The Yili regime's political offensive and the GMD hard-liners' counter-attacks caused the resignation of Zhang Zhizhong and pro-US and pro-GMD Masud Sabri was appointed as the new governor. To oppose the appointment of Masud, the Yili regime withdrew its personnel from Dihua to Yili and the Xinjiang provincial coalition government collapsed.

In the *final stage*, the stalemate period which lasted from August 1947 to September 1949, there were no frontal assaults from either side, except when Osman, supported by the US and the GMD, fought against the Yili regime in Ashan. The dispute between Osman and the Soviet-backed Yili regime ended in October 1947 with the defeat of Osman. Due to the withdrawal of the Yili regime's representatives to the Three Districts, and thereafter the ending of the Yili regime's political offensive in the Seven Districts, the GMD-controlled area settled down to a period of peace and order, as no further unrest occurred.

When Zhang Zhizhong resigned his governorship, disappointed with the Yili regime's infringement and non-fulfilment of the Peace Agreement, he nominated Masud as his successor. The Soviet Union was not happy with pro-Soviet Zhang Zhizhong's resignation and the appointment of anti-Soviet and pro-US Masud Sabri. During the stalemate period the Yili regime fought for

Masud's dismissal. Zhang Zhizhong conceded again to the Yili regime's demand. In 1948, in his capacity as the Director of the Northwest Headquarters of the nationalist government, Zhang Zhizhong arranged for the replacement of Masud Sabri with pro-Soviet Burhan Shahidi. This certainly was a victory for the Yili regime. At the same time, the domestic situation in China proper was taking a turn in favour of the CCP. The Soviet Union decided to support the CCP on the Xinjiang question. With the assistance of the Soviet Union and Zhang's pro-Soviet peace policy, the CCP successfully found a peaceful solution to the Xinjiang affair in September 1949, and brought the two parts of Xinjiang together under its regime.

In short, the highlight of the political struggle in Xinjiang from September 1945 to September 1949 was a confrontation between the Soviet-controlled Three Districts and the US-backed GMD Xinjiang authorities in the Seven Districts. Within both the Three Districts and the Seven Districts there existed two opposing Moslem factions. By the time of the formation of the provincial coalition government, the struggle between the pro-Soviet and the anti-Soviet Moslem factions in the Yili regime had been concluded in favour of the pro-Soviet faction. The political offensive of the Yili regime in the Seven Districts was definitely beneficial to the Soviets by reducing the influence of the pro-US Moslem nationalists there. The situation, however, became more complicated when the struggle between the pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet factions also involved ethnic disputes within each camp.

Ethnic Disputes in Xinjiang

Anti-Hanism, pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism

From the very beginning of the Yili rebellion, all participants in the movement were non-Han peoples, and all members of the government at all levels were non-Han ethnic peoples, most of whom were Moslems. It appears that the Yili regime represented a revolution of all ethnic nationalities against the Han Chinese.

Forbes, a British scholar who had examined sources in Russian, Chinese and English, wrote on the anti-Hanism of the Yili rebellion:

Turrall, the British Consul at Urumchi in 1944-45, identified the most common victims of anti-Han pogroms as first-generation Chinese immigrants, KMT officials, and soldiers. This point is elaborated by Graham, who notes that: Hardly any Chinese civilian officials escaped. For example, of over a hundred telegraph employees in the Ili Ch'u, only three are known to be safe ... Of non-official Chinese, men from Manchuria had the least chance ... The descendants of the camp followers of Tso Tsung-T'ang's army in the 1870s, fared best; and generally, though by no means invariably, the mobs spared women and children. Fanaticism was evidently not entirely unbridled.

... here can be no doubt that anti-Han sentiment played a major role in the initial stages of the Ili Revolt.¹

A restricted source in Xinjiang has the following to say regarding the anti-Hanism of the Yili Rebellion:

Under the slogan of annihilation of the Han and the elimination of the Hui ... many Han adults were murdered, most of them fled to the GMD-controlled area. Only approximately three thousand Han Chinese remained, most of them were elderly people, children and disabled. The business properties of Han Chinese were either looted by the people or confiscated by the [ETR] government for use as rewards for senior officers of the government.

At the early stage [of the Three Districts Revolution], the anti-Han drive was so severe that even Han babies were massacred.²

1. Forbes, A. D. W., *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republic Sinkiang, 1911-1949* (Cambridge University, Cambridge, 1986), pp.178-179; 183; 201.

2. LDD, 24/08/1949.

Ahmet Jan, the top leader of the Yili regime in its late stage, called the anti-Han drive “an action for revenge” of the Moslem peoples, and admitted that looting and rape were so commonly practised that even the decree of a death penalty could not stop Moslems from doing so.¹ During Zhang Zhizhong’s visit to Yining in 1946, Ahmet Jan admitted to him:

[In the early stage of the Yili rebellion] if we had allowed the extremists to do their will, none of the Han people would be able to survive the anti-Han massacre.²

When the Yining uprising occurred, Saifudin’s – the top leader of the Yili Regime in 1949 – stated:

[T]he uncovered reactionary elements within the [Three Districts] Revolution ... turned the righteous indignation of the peoples against the savage of the GMD reactionary authorities into hostility towards the Han people. In only a few days [after the uprising], looting and murders of the ordinary Han people continuously occurred.³

In Soviet literature, anti-Hanism is presented as “the mistake at the early stage of the movement” or “the weak side of the Revolution”.⁴

1. LDD, 21/08/1949.

2. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu* [Memoirs of Zhang Zhizhong] (Wenshi ziliao, Beijing, 1985), p. 487.

3. Saifudin A., *Tianshan xiongying* [A Tianshan Eagle] (Zhongguo wenshi, Beijing, 1987), p. 74.

4. Rakhimov, T. R. “Mesto Bostochno-Turkestanskoi Respubliki (VTR) v Natsional’no-Osvoboditel’noi Bor’be Narodov Kitaya” [Role of the Eastern Turkestan Republic (ETR) in the National Liberation Struggle of the Peoples in China], A paper presented at 2-ya Nauchnaya Konferentsiya po Problemam Istorii Kitaya v Noveishchee Vremya, (Moscow, 1977), p. 70; Mingulov, N. N., “Natsional’no-Osvoboditel’noye Dvizheniye Narodov Sin’tszyana kak Sostavnaya Chast’ Obshchekitaiskoi Revolyutsii (1944-1949 gody)”, [The National-Liberation Movement of the Peoples in Xinjiang in 1944-1949 as a Part of the People’s Revolution in China], *Trudy Instituta Istorii, Arkheologii i Etnografii, Tom 15* (Alma-Ata, 1962), p. 101.

Only five per cent of the population in the province were Han Chinese although most civil and nearly all military appointments in the GMD's Xinjiang government were occupied by them. During the sixty years after Xinjiang had become a province of China in the late Qing period, most posts in the provincial government were filled by Han Chinese from China proper. Not even local Han Chinese were considered for these appointments. The major causes of Moslem rebellions in Xinjiang, including the Yili rebellion, were the misrule, oppression and exploitation by the Han ruling class. The anti-Han massacre was clearly the Moslem voice of opposition to the misrule of the Han Chinese-controlled government. It was, of course, unfair to consider all Han Chinese as oppressors. During the Yili uprising, however, very few of its leaders, including Abasoff, resisted the anti-Han fanaticism.¹ The anti-Han massacre was not restrained until the declaration of the coalition government.

While anti-Hanism could be regarded as an expression of strong ethnic opposition to the misrule of the Han ruling class, the anti-Han massacre was also influenced and encouraged by pan-Islamic and pan-Turkist propaganda in Xinjiang. pan-Islamism began in the late nineteenth century. It implored all Islamic countries and Islamic people to establish a universal Islamic state under the leadership of the Turkish Sultan. During the First World War, both the British and the Germans tried to use pan-Islamism to further their influence. Great Britain wished to expand its colonial sphere of influence to Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, Egypt and French colonies in northern Africa. The Germans hoped to check British expansion by using pan-Islamism through Turkey. Turkish nationalists created pan-Turkism, whose purpose was to unify all of the Turkish-speaking peoples into a pan-Turkish state in the area from Inner Asia to Turkey. The idea of pan-Turkism was once popular in the Russian-dominated Inner Asia. Germany had encouraged pan-Turkism during the final stage

1. Saifudin, *Tianshan xiongying*, pp. 74-77.

of World War One. After the war, Britain hoped to extend its influence into Inner Asia by supporting anti-Soviet Turkish troops in Inner Asia, however, the attempt failed when these troops were wiped out by Soviet Russia.¹

From the early twentieth century, when pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism were being disseminated in Xinjiang, Germany, Great Britain, Japan and Turkey, all were bent on intensifying their own influence in Xinjiang by encouraging these ideas. At that time, there were two types of schools in Xinjiang: the old religious school, or *Usule Kader*, which specialized in teaching Islamic scripts, and the new school, *Usule Kate*, in which religion, mathematics, geography, and history were also taught. pan-Islamism was very popular in the old schools, while the pan-Turkists were very active in the new schools.²

In order to keep Soviet influence out of India, Great Britain attempted to use pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism to create a buffer in Xinjiang. Japan also tried to establish a “Moslem state” in Xinjiang with Abdul Muhit Abit, a brother of the former Turkish emperor, as the king. The Japanese supported Ma Zhongying’s (a Moslem warlord in Gansu) troops in their march into Xinjiang in the early 1930s to counter-balance the British-backed Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan (TIRET) in Kashi.³

During the 1930s, the Soviet Union assisted Sheng Shicai in defeating the Japanese-supported Ma Zhongying and crushing the British-backed Turkish-Islamic TIRET in Kashi. During the Soviet-Sheng honeymoon and following the removal of all imperialist influence from Xinjiang, pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism were also eliminated. In the early 1940s, however, in the face of the extension of American influence into Xinjiang, the Soviet Union encouraged pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism by instigating the Yili rebellion. To oppose the Soviet-supported Yili

1. Burhan, S., “Fan yisilan zhuyi he fan tuerqi zhuyi zai Xinjiang de xingmie”, in Burhan, S., *Burhan xuanji* (Beijing, 1989), pp. 126–127.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 128–129.

regime, the GMD, as well as the Americans and the British had also employed pan-Islamists and pan-Turkists in the Seven Districts. In Yakovlev's words:

Pan-Turkist and pan-Islamic ideas were the traditional ideological tools in Xinjiang for the imperialists, who attempted to turn Xinjiang into a base to attack Russia, and subsequently the Soviet Union.¹

To oppose the deeply entrenched Han Chinese rule, the Moslem nationalists in Xinjiang, under the influence of pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism, sought the assistance of foreign powers to realize their dream of independence. For their part, foreign powers interfered in Xinjiang's affairs for reasons of self-interest.² The Yili rebellion and the subordination of its Moslem nationalism to Soviet interests is a case in point. It is an indication of the extent to which Islamism was exploited by the Soviet Union to serve its struggle against the US-backed GMD authorities in Xinjiang.

Ethnics between the US-backed GMD and the USSR

In both the Three Districts and the Seven Districts there were pan-Islamist and pan-Turkist activists with different aspirations and aims. The Three Districts had Ali Han Ture, the nominal Chairman of the Yili regime and his pan-Islamic followers who opposed the pro-Soviet group led by Ahmet Jan. Within the Seven Districts there was a confrontation between the pan-Turkist factions headed by Masud Sabri and the pro-Soviet faction led by

1. Yakovlev, A. G., "K Voprosu o Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'nom Dvizhenii Narodov Sin'tzyana v 1944-1949", [Question on the National Liberation Movement of the Peoples in Xinjiang in 1944-1949], *Ucheniye Zapiski Instituta Vostokovedeniya* 7, *Kitaiskiy Sbornik*, vol.xi (1955), p. 171-172.

2. Burhan criticized the British and American imperialists as well as the GMD reactionaries for their supporting the pan-Turkists and pan-Islamists in Xinjiang headed by Masud, Isa and Emin. For more information, see Burhan S., *Xinjiang wushi nian* [Fifty years in Xinjiang], Wenshi ziliao, Beijing 1989, pp. 129-132.

Burhan Shahidi. It was much easier for the Soviet Union to deal with pan-Islamists within the Three Districts. When the provincial coalition government was about to be formed, Ali Han Ture was dismissed and kidnapped to the Soviet Union.¹ Even the Soviet Union itself could not do anything directly to counter the pan-Turkists within the Seven Districts. The activities of pan-Turkists were, however, successfully checked by the Yili regime's political offensives and Zhang Zhizhong's pro-Soviet policy. In 1949 the pro-Soviet Moslem factions both in the Three Districts and the Seven Districts were dissolved by the CCP regime. pan-Islamic and pan-Turkist Moslems had to flee either to Taiwan or Turkey, or face execution by the CCP. In this light, how could the Yili rebellion be treated purely as Turkish-Moslem nationalism?

At the very early stage of the Yili rebellion, in order to arouse Moslems and to attract the ideologically conservative masses, pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism were encouraged under a feudal influence by the Soviet Union. A typical representative figure of the pan-Islamic and feudal influence in the Yili rebellion was Ali Han Ture, a famous Imam and Islamic scholar in Yili. Why and how was he used? Saifudin stated thus:

[At that time] in Yili, Ali Han Ture was the most influential figure in the propaganda war against the Sheng Shicai-GMD reactionary rule. ... With a glib tongue, his speech was vivid and very moving. The masses were strongly attracted to him as a religious figure...

On the question of establishing a united front, Abasoff thought it was very necessary to use Ali Han Ture. His idea was supported by all colleagues...

One day [in the summer of 1943], Abasoff, Seuyfullaev and I got together [to discuss our policy towards Ali Han Ture] ...

1. Wang, D., "Under Soviet Shadow: The Yili Rebellion of 1944-1949 in Xinjiang – a Revolution, Nationalism or a Power Struggle?", Ph D thesis, University of Tasmania, Australia, p. 254

Abasoff said: "... Without him, we would have lost most of the masses... I hate most his hundred per cent dedication to pan-Islamism. In spite of this, we will still be able to find something in common with hi ... It is said that Ali Han Ture is prepared to establish his own organization now. The urgent question is whether we should separate our organization from his, or cooperate with him, the so-called 'the speaker of Allah' in the foundation of the organization".

... I [Saifudin] said: "...it is better for us to cooperate with this old man. By using his prestige and influence, we will pursue our own objectives."

... Abasoff agreed: "...we should not only cooperate with him, but also struggle against him when it is necessary.... In any case, by cooperating with him, the initiative should always be in our hands... "

After our discussion, we asked advice from other comrades. Finally, we decided to establish a "Liberation Organization" with Ali Han Ture...¹

Saifudin did not specify who the "other comrades" were or what the Soviet attitude to their decision was. He did not do so probably because the above statement was made in an official open publication of 1987 and the detailed story of Soviet involvement in the Yili rebellion was not allowed to be released. In the words of Mingulov, a Soviet scholar,

On 14 November [1944] ... Ali Han Ture ... came to the Headquarters of the rebels, and offered to help the rebels. He promised to inspire all the Moslem population in Yining to oppose the GMD. Thanks to the efforts of Ahmet Jan, negotiations with Ali Han Ture were very successful, as a result, the provisional government of the ETR was formed on 15 November 1944, with Ali Han Ture as the Head...²

In Mingulov's view, to use Ali Han Ture was one of the "flexible tactics" of the ETR.

1. Saifudin, *Tianshan xiongying*, pp. 47-50.

2. Mingulov, "Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noye...", p. 74.

Forbes also noticed the confrontation between the two factions in the Yili regime:

... during the initial stages of the rising at Kulja [Yining], the rebel forces were divided into two main factions. Of these the largest and the least well organized might loosely be described as “Turkish-Islamic” and conservative. ... In marked contrast to this group, the Soviet-sponsored STPNLC [Sinkiang Turkic People’s National Liberation Committee] under Ahmadjan Qasim [Ahmet Jan Kasim] sought to establish a secular, pro-Soviet secessionist state which might – ostensibly – embrace people of all nationalities and religious persuasions, not excluding Han Chinese.

... It is at least clear that the ETR government proclaimed on 15 November 1944 was based on a coalition between “progressive” and “reactionary” elements within rebel ranks. ... Accordingly, in a move designed to promote unity amongst the anti-KMT forces, the Uzbek ‘Alim Ali Khan Ture [Ali Han Ture] was declared President of the ETR...¹

In English, Russian and Chinese publications on Xinjiang’s history, there are a variety of terms referring to the two factions in the Yili regime. In Hong Kong and Taiwan, scholars called Ali Han Ture and his men “nationalists”, “the faction of nationalism” and “the faction for the protection of religion”, they described Ahmet Jan and his followers as “pro-Soviet elements”, “internationalists” and “international communist cadres”.² In mainland China, Ali Han Ture’s faction was referred to as “pan-Islamists”, “anti-Soviet elements”, “religious fanatics”, and Ahmet Jan and his followers as “revolutionaries” and “the leaders of the Three Districts Revolution”.³ Jack Chen described Ahmet Jan

1. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, pp. 178–179.

2. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian* [Seventy years’ turmoil in Xinjiang, 12 vols, 12:7073; 12:7104. Zhang Dajun: *Sishi nian dongluan Xinjiang* [Forty years’ unrest in Xinjiang]. (Hong Kong, Yazhou, 1956), pp. 176–177.

3. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 368.

and his comrades as “revolutionary leadership”, and Ali Han Ture as “conservative” and “ultra-leftist”.¹ In Forbes’s book, Ali Han Ture’s was the “Turkish-Islamic separatists”.² The Soviet publications labelled Ahmet Jan’s faction as “democratic elements”.³ In Benson’s book, the Moslems under the Yili Regime are not divided into any factions. Whatever they have been called, the pro-Soviet faction of Ahmet Jan with the Soviet assistance was able to overcome the anti-Soviet Ali Han Ture’s faction. Also in Forbes’s words:

... within the “Three Regions” a serious split was emerging between pro-Soviet and anti-Soviet Muslim rebels. Indications of this development had become apparent as soon as the Soviet Union brought pressures to bear on the rebel leadership in a successful bid to halt the INA [YNA] on the banks of the Manas River. ... By the autumn of 1946 ... within Ili those rebel leaders who sought to oppose both Chinese and Russian hegemony had been ousted from power.⁴

Forbes also said that the elimination of Ali Han Ture following the GMD-ETR Armistice was “the subordination of rebel interests to Soviet control”.⁵ Ali Han Ture, a famous scholar of Islam and well-known imam in central Asia, with a very high reputation among Moslems in Xinjiang, had played a significant role in calling for anti-Hanism and the independence of the ETR. However, why was he, such an important Islamic symbol of the movement, eliminated from the Yili regime at this time? Relating to this, Saifudin writes:

-
1. Chen, J., *The Sinkiang Story* (NY, Macmillan, 1977), pp. 239-240.
 2. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, p. 179.
 3. Sladkovskii, M. I., *Noveishaya Istoriya Kitaya, 1928-1949* (Moscow, 1984) p. 306.
 4. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, pp. 200; 201.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 201.

The fact that Ali Han Ture, as the Chairman of the Three Districts government, was not allowed to head the delegation for negotiations [with the GMD] was a warning of an evil future. For Ali Han Ture himself, if the negotiations were successful, he would lose ... the base for realizing his pan-Islamic regime, and his dream would be entirely shattered. So, he tried very hard to oppose the negotiations for peace. ... He accused Abasoff and other comrades, saying that ... [they wanted to] “sell the interests of the Uighur people”...

It was apparently impossible to continue even the nominal cooperation with Ali Han Ture ... Under these circumstances, the final split between the two sides was imperative. Ali Han Ture was regarded as a malignant tumor which had to be removed from the Three Districts government. Progressive personages criticized Ali Han Ture openly and asked for his resignation. ... One late night in June 1946, Ali Han Ture and his family left from Yining by car, and crossed over the border [to the Soviet Union]. The time for Ali Han Ture to tread on the achievements of the people's rebellion was over.¹

In this statement Saifudin, one of the leaders of the pro-Soviet Moslem faction in the Yili regime, recognized that, firstly, Ali Han Ture's dream was “to establish an Islamic regime” in northwestern China; and secondly, this dream was ruined by the achievements of “progressive personages” in the Yili regime. If Moslem nationalism was the driving force behind the Yili rebellion, then the fate of Ali Han Ture should have been tightly bound up with the fate of the movement. Why then was he, the Chairman of the ETR government, removed as “a malignant tumor” of the movement? Obviously, the Islamic faith championed by the Yili rebels was nothing but a tool in the hands of the Soviets, and the elimination of Ali Han Ture was a political necessity for the pro-Soviet Moslems in the struggle against the US-backed GMD authorities in Xinjiang. In the 1960s Burhan said:

1. Saifudin, *Tianshan xiongying*, pp. 114-115.

Supported by the Soviet Union, Ali Han Ture used slogans of religion and nationalism to initiate anti-Hanism ... by using the flag of Islam and the slogan of nationalism, [the Yili Regime] expelled the GMD from Yi-Ta-A [Yili-Tacheng-Ashan]...¹

Obviously, the “disappearance” of Ali Han Ture and the nominal presidency of Hakim Beg indicate that they, being the two most influential religious figures in Yili, were nothing but Islamic tokens for the ETR, and that the Yili regime was exclusively controlled by the Soviets through Ahmet Jan and his pro-Soviet followers.²

Osman, the head of the Yili regime’s guerrilla forces in Ashan, who disliked the rise of Soviet influence in Ashan and was apprehensive about the elimination of Ali Han Ture, decided to shift his loyalty to the GMD. With Soviet assistance, the Yili regime’s pro-Soviet faction finally defeated Osman. With the flight of Osman, the Three Districts were cleared of anti-Soviet activities and the activities of the pan-Islamic faction were contained.

Within the Seven Districts there were also disputes between anti-Soviet and pro-Soviet ethnic factions. Here the anti-Soviet factions, represented by Masud Sabri, Isa Yusuf, Mohmet Emin – figures whose Islamic and political stands were similar to Ali Han

1. Wang, “Under Soviet Shadow”, p. 156. Haji Nabi Waliyov also wrote: “The so-called ‘raising nationalist flag’, and the slogan of ‘establishing Islamic regime’ were nothing else but a political maneuver for the feudal class to cheat people and to agitate local nationalism.” Haji Nabi Waliyov, “Xiri Altay de fengyun” [Unrest in Altay], in *Xinjiang wenshi ziliao*, 1987, vol. 13, p. 44.

2. From 4 August 1949 to 29 December 1949, there were about 140 telegrams of the CCP CC relating to the power transfer from both the Yili Regime and the GMD authorities in Xinjiang to the CCP. Many of them were sent by Deng Liqun from Yining (or Dihua) to the Headquarters of the CCP in Beiping (subsequently, Beijing). It is interesting to know that none of these telegrams even mentioned Hakim Beg’s name, although he was the Chairman of the Yili government. Sources available so far show that the Soviets had never arranged any meeting between Deng Liqun and Hakim Beg, and Deng Liqun had never asked for such a meeting. Wang, “Under Soviet Shadow”, p. 157.

Ture's – were also the targets of political attacks by the pro-Soviet factions in the Yili Regime.¹

Masud Sabri, who was born in Yili, embraced pan-Turkism when he was in Turkey as a medical student. Back in Xinjiang, he joined a group of Turkish people in Yili to run a school, where the ideas of pan-Turkism were propagated. A pan-Turkist organization was formed with Masud Sabri as the key figure. When Yang Zengxin, the then governor of the province, discovered the activities of the pan-Turkist organization, he imprisoned Masud and expelled others from Xinjiang. Soon after, Masud Sabri was also expelled by Yang Zengxin from Xinjiang.²

In the eyes of the Yili leaders, “the ideas of pan-Turkism of Masud Sabri, Mehmet Emin and Isa Yusuf and the ideas of pan-Islamism of Ali Han Ture were the same things”. According to Saifudin:

The importance of their political stance was to split from China, and to create a social order based on a religious model guided by pan-Turkism. ... These pan-Turkists were also fierce anti-Communist and anti-Soviet elements.³

Masud Sabri, Mehmet Emin, Isa Yusuf and other pan-Turkists were treated by the Yili regime as “the running dogs of imperialists and the GMD reactionary authority, who were released from cages back to Xinjiang in the mid-1940s to counterattack and destroy the Three Districts [Revolution]”,⁴ Since Masud Sabri and his followers accused the pro-Soviet faction of the Yili regime of betraying the interests of Moslem people, “an urgent task of the Three Districts was to counter-attack these reactionaries”.⁵

1. Ahmet Jan and Burhan as one side, and Masud, Mehmet Emin, Isa Yusuf as another, treated each other as deadly enemies. See Burhan's letter to Ahmet Jan, the attachment to LDD, 07/09/1949.

2. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 483.

3. Saifudin, *Tianshan xiongying*, p. 117.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*, p. 116. Also see Burhan, “Fan yisilan zhuyi he...”, pp. 129-132, and LDD, 20/08/1949.

Osman, Ali Beg, Janimhan and Yolbars were another group of Moslems in the Seven Districts used by the GMD authorities in their struggle against the Yili regime. In contrast to Masud Sabri, Mehmet Emin, Isa Yusuf and their pan-Turkist followers, they did not have many foreign connections by the 1940s. As they were anti-Soviet, they had to obtain the support of the US-backed GMD, to curb Soviet encroachment.

Burhan Shahidi was a pro-Soviet Moslem representative from the Seven Districts. Formal confrontation between him and the anti-Soviet Moslem faction in the GMD-controlled Seven Districts was not as intensive as that between Ahmet Jan and Ali Han Ture in the Three Districts. He did, however, refuse to co-operate with Masud Sabri, Mehmet Emin and Isa Yusuf; neither did he support Osman and Ali Beg in their anti-Yili regime activities. Instead he was sincerely loyal to Zhang Zhizhong's pro-Soviet policy and secretly kept in contact with the Russians, the Yili regime and their followers in the Seven Districts in their anti-GMD activities.¹ Importantly, Burhan himself was a Soviet spy in Xinjiang for many years.²

Pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism could hardly survive in Xinjiang between 1934-43, when Xinjiang was exclusively under Soviet influence. Pan-Islamism in the Three Districts was initially encouraged by the Soviet Union in an attempt to create an anti-GMD Moslem regime on the Soviet-Xinjiang border. Pan-Turkists, Masud Sabri, Mehmet Emin, Isa Yusuf and others went back to Xinjiang with the assistance of the GMD which hoped to use them against the Soviet-controlled Moslem movement in the Three Districts, and to establish its own authority in Xinjiang as a whole. The pan-Islamist and pan-Turkist movements in both the Three Districts and the Seven Districts were not strong enough to pave their own way for their respective causes in Xinjiang. Help from external powers was their only hope. Formerly, the Yili rebellion

1. Burhan, *Xinjiang wushi nian*, pp. 323-329.

2. Wang, "Under Soviet Shadow", pp. 292-293.

had been a movement of Moslem national liberation. Consequently, Moslem ethnic disputes occurred in Xinjiang not only between the factions of Ali Han Ture and Ahmet Jan but also between the Yili regime and Osman's faction in the Three Districts, and between the faction of Masud, Mehmet and Isa, and that of Burhan in the Seven Districts. There were also disputes between Ahmet Jan's faction and Masud Sabri's followers in Xinjiang. These disputes, involving both religious and ethnic issues, in Xinjiang as a whole, indicated that the Yili rebellion could hardly be regarded as a genuine Moslem national liberation movement.

Disunited, without a common national political goal and supported by only a small group of activists, the Yili regime depended totally on the Soviet Union for its existence and strength, and as such was completely at the Soviet's mercy. It had never been more than a tool for the Soviet Union in the latter's international political games, and was ultimately cast away as such.

Nationalism or a Power Struggle?

Regarding Moslem nationalism of the Yili rebellion, an English source claims:

The dream of an independent Turkestan ... was also an important element in some of the resistance movements.

In 1933, anti-Chinese sentiment and the dream of the Turkic state resulted in the abortive attempt to form the first East Turkestan government. Although this disunited and faction-torn government was crushed by Sheng Shicai with Soviet assistance, former members of its government remained in Xinjiang and continued to give life to the idea of an independent Turkic state.

Toward the end of Sheng's rule, nationalistic Turki handbills began to appear ... revealing that the anti-Chinese movement now incorporated an appeal to all Moslems to unite in support of freedom and the establishment of an independent Moslem state.

Although such tracts ... do not reveal a sophisticated political platform, their appeal was clearly based on the fundamentals of nationalism ...¹

In term of religion there was no difference between the two Moslem regimes, the TIRET founded in 1933 in Kashi and the ETR established in 1944 in Yining. The creation of an independent anti-Han Moslem state was the basic political aim of both Moslem movements in Xinjiang. The aspect of Moslem nationalism, however, was just a side issue.

The TIRET in Kashi opposed not only the Han Chinese authority in Xinjiang, but also the Soviet Union, and did so with British and Japanese instigation and support. Its nationalism was disliked by the Soviet Union. The Red Army troops, in co-operation with Sheng Shicai's regime, defeated Ma Zhong-ying at Dihua. Ma Zhongying, while escaping to the south, wiped out the TIRET in Kashi. Later, when Mahmut, Ma Hushan and the remnants of the TIRET rose up again, the Soviet Union sent its troops in to smash them. Local Moslems were also brutally massacred by the Russians. Therefore, directly or indirectly, the TIRET movement was put down by the Soviet Union.²

It was a different story with the Yili rebellion of the 1940s, as Eden Naby claimed: "The concepts behind the two movements were entirely different".³ Moslem discontent and unrest caused by the misrule of Sheng Shicai and the GMD regime gave Stalin an opportunity to extend Soviet influence in Xinjiang by posing as the champion of ethnic interests in Xinjiang. Stalin used Islamic nationalism to encourage the ETR's anti-GMD movement, thereby acquiring a buffer between the Soviet Union and the US-backed GMD regime. The Soviet Union did not welcome the rise of

1. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion – the Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang 1944–1949*. (NY, East Gate, Sharpe, 1990), p. 183.

2. Burhan, *Xinjiang Weshi nian*, pp. 229–230. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 203–205. Zhang Dajun, *Sishi nian dongluan Xinjiang* pp. 57–60. For more accounts on the TIRET, c. f. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, pp. 112–127.

3. Naby, Eden, "Response to L. Benson's Comments on 'Uighur Elites in Xinjiang'", *Central Asian Survey* vol.6, no.4, (1987), p. 100.

Moslem nationalism on its border. It merely wanted to use it as a bargaining tool at the negotiation table with Chiang Kai-shek.¹ All members of the TIRET government were Moslems, pan-Islamists and pan-Turkists, whose dreams and objectives were the same as Ali Han Ture's, namely, to create an independent Moslem regime in Xinjiang. If the objectives of the Yili rebellion were the same as that of Ali Han Ture, the influential, faithful Moslem nationalist leader, then, as the Chairman of the ETR government, he should have been supported, respected and protected. In fact, he was eliminated, undoubtedly on the instruction of the Russians, who encouraged the Yili rebellion, but did not want to lose control of Moslem nationalists.

The dream of pan-Turkists and Moslem nationalists such as Masud Sabri, Mehmet Emin, Isa Yusuf, and others, was also to establish an independent Moslem regime in the Seven Districts. They were not, however, welcomed by the Yili regime.² The pro-Soviet faction of the Yili regime treated them not as their Moslem brothers, but as deadly enemies. Both Masud Sabri and Ali Han Ture wanted to establish contact with each other and to form an alliance for their Islamic cause. When Masud was accompanying Zhang Zhizhong to visit Yining in 1946, he was eager to meet Ali Han Ture or his followers. His efforts, however, ended in failure.³ A potential coalition between the pan-Islamists in the Three Districts, and the pan-Turkists in the Seven Districts was aborted. It was the Soviets who made it impossible for both Ali Han Ture and Masud to realize their "dream of an independent Turkestan".

1. See Wang, D., "The Xinjiang Question of the 1940s: the Story behind the Sino-Soviet Treaty of August 1945", *Asian Studies Review*, (1997) vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 83-105.

2. Mehmet Emin was "the wealthiest and probably the most influential of the TIRET leadership". Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, p.114. The Yili Regime, however, suggested the CCP punish him as a "political and military criminal" in 1949, when the CCP was preparing for taking over Xinjiang. LDD, 14/09/1949.

3. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian* 12:7094. Wang, "Under Soviet Shadow", p. 161.

After the signing of the Sino-Soviet treaty in 1945, the aims of the Soviet Union in East Asia (including Outer Mongolia, Manchuria) had been realized. Moslem nationalism, which had been helpful to Stalin during the early stage of the Yili rebellion, was now no longer useful. Furthermore, pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism were unacceptable to communist ideology. Given a choice, the Soviet Union simply would not support a Moslem nationalist state on its border, as it would affect the Moslem peoples in its Inner Asian republics.

Whilst Zhang Dajun, a Chinese scholar in Taiwan, claimed: "The [pan-]Turkists and the East Turkestanists (referring to 'the Soviet communist cadres' headed by Ahmet Jan) are not compatible",¹ in Soviet literature "nationalism and democracy were incompatible". Ahmet Jan Kasim, as a progressive element, was the representative of the democratic force in the Yili regime, while Ali Han Ture, as a feudal and religious personage, was the representative of the nationalists, who demanded independence from China.² This is why, not surprisingly, a Soviet source put Niyaz Haji Khoja, the President of the TIRET, and Ali Han Ture, the Chairman of the ETR, into the same category, namely those who "initiated nationalistic and religious programmes of petty bourgeois tendency".³

1. Zhang Dajun, *Sishi nian dongluan Xinjiang* p. 211.

2. Rakhimov, T. R., "Rol' Akhmatdzhana Kacymi v Istorii Osvoboditel'nogo Dvizheniya v Sin'tszyane", [Ahmet Jan Kasim's Role in the History of the Liberation Movement in Xinjiang], *Problemy Kitaya* (Moscow, 1978) p. 196. Khakimbaev, A. A., "Nekotorye Osobennosti Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'nogo Dvizheniya Narodov Sin'tszyana v 30-kh i 40-kh godakh XX veka" [Some Characters of the National-Liberation Movement of the Xinjiang Peoples in 1930s and 1940s, in *Materialy Mezhdunarodnoi Konferentsii po Problemam Istorii Kitaya v Noveishchee Vremya, Aprel' 1977*, *Problemy Kitaya* (Moscow, 1978) pp. 114-115. Kutlukov, M., "O Kharaktere i Dvi-zhushchikh Silakh Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'nogo Dvizheniya Narodov Sin'tszyana v 1944-1949 gg.", [Character and Driving Forces of the National-Liberation Movement of the Xinjiang Peoples in 1944-1949], in *Hauchnye Raboty i Soobshcheniya, Kniga 5*, (Tashkent, 1962), pp. 266-270.

3. Khakimbaev, "Nekotorye Osobennosti...", pp. 114-115.

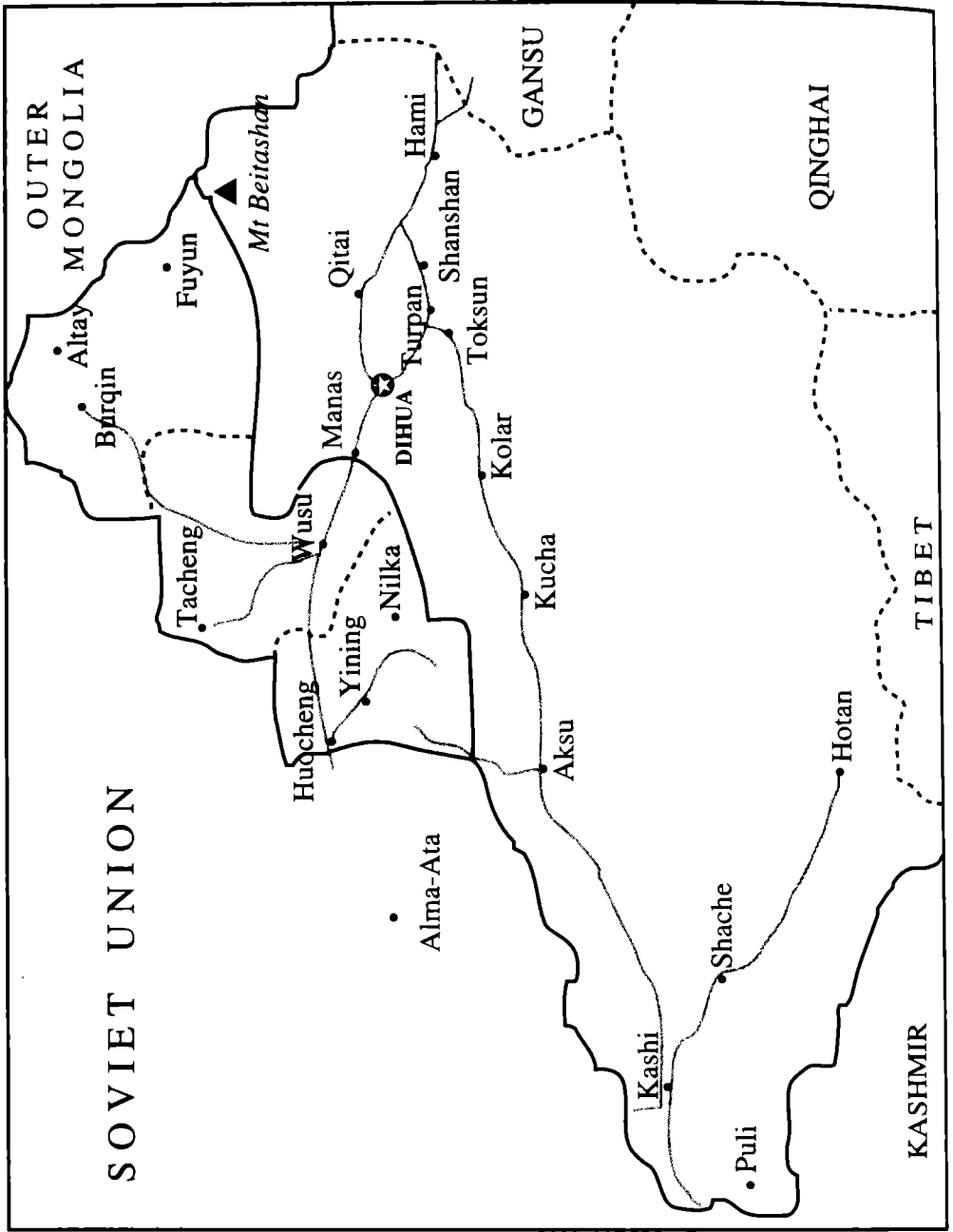
After the elimination of Ali Han Ture and the signing of the Peace Agreement with the GMD's Xinjiang authorities, the Yili regime did not, at least officially, call for independence any more, and as a result, the feelings of Moslem nationalists were kept under control. The Yili regime was not treated as a Moslem independence movement when it was being handed over by Stalin to the CCP, but as an anti-US and anti-GMD Moslem regime, and as such was accepted by the CCP as "a part of the Chinese Revolution".¹ If the TIRET in Kashi was identified as a Moslem regime of pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism, the ETR could hardly be regarded as a vital Islamic regime. While civil and military senior officers of the TIRET were all Moslems, the Yili regime had non-Moslem elements, especially within its military forces who were dominated by orthodox Russians. Just as importantly, there were also units of lamaist Mongols and shamanist Sibos and Solons in the Yili forces, whereas one fourth of the population under the Yili regime were non-Moslems. The Yili regime's military forces had four commanders-in-chief: Peter Alexandalov, Polinov, Ishag Beg and Leskin, three of whom were Russians. One could hardly believe that these non-Moslems were fighting for the Moslem cause, and it was no wonder that the term "Islamic" or "Moslem" never appeared in the title of the ETR.

In short, the Yili rebellion was, at least partly, initiated and encouraged by the Soviet Union under the flag of Moslem nationalism. It was not just a simple Moslem reaction to the misrule and the Great Hanism of Han Chinese authorities but a combination of both disputes between Moslems and their Han rulers and disputes among the Moslem factions themselves. Soviet interference in the movement, although under the cover of support for Moslem nationalism, played a significant role. The significance of these complex events illustrate the interlocking pattern of ethnic disputes, power struggles and international rivalry in this area. The victory of the pro-Soviet elements over the pan-Islamists in the Yili regime enabled the USSR more effectively to control the political situation in Xinjiang. The Soviet Union played a thoroughly hypocritical

1. Wang, "Under Soviet Shadow", p. 316.

NATIONALISM OR A POWER STRUGGLE?

role in the Yili rebellion. The Yili regime was a Moslem regime only in name. Although the anti-Soviet Moslems in the two camps shared the same religion and nationalist aspirations, they were prevented from uniting to fight for their common cause by Soviet interference. Under these circumstances, true Moslem nationalism could not be realized and the Moslem nationalists' dream for Xinjiang was, in the end, betrayed and shattered by the Soviet Union.



Map 2: The Three Districts under the Yili Regime, 1946

II.

THE TWO ADMINISTRATIONS IN XINJIANG, 1946-49

From 1944 to 1949 there were actually two independent administrations in Xinjiang: the Yili regime in the Three Districts and the GMD authorities in the Seven Districts of Xinjiang. In early 1947, when the civil war between the Soviet-backed CCP and the US-backed GMD was looming in China proper, the Yili regime launched political offensives in the Seven Districts. From August 1947, when the Yili regime's representatives left Dihua for Yining, political disturbances organised by the Yili men ceased in the Seven Districts. No more serious unrest occurred in the Seven Districts. The economic situation, however, was worsening. In the Three Districts, due to its *de facto* status of independence, the Yili regime's economy was less affected by the economic chaos in China proper, while its trade with the Soviet Union also helped its economy. In both the Three Districts and the Seven Districts, there were internal Moslem conflicts, focused on attitudes towards the Soviet Union. The two administrations could not be united until the CCP took control of Xinjiang.

The Seven Districts

From the autumn of 1944, when the Yili rebellion occurred, to the autumn of 1949, when the CCP's forces entered Xinjiang, the

Chinese central government successively appointed four governors to Xinjiang, Wu Zhongxin, (who left Xinjiang shortly after Zhang Zhizhong began his negotiations with Yili) Zhang Zhizhong, Masud Sabri and Burhan Shahidi. Although the Yili regime was nominally under their administration, none of them were able to extend their administration to the Three Districts. They were only governors of the Seven Districts of Xinjiang.

Zhang Zhizhong's Administration, October 1945–May 1947

Due to the Soviet background of the Yili rebellion, Chiang Kai-shek sent pro-Soviet Zhang Zhizhong to Dihua to deal with the Xinjiang question. According to Zhang Zhizhong, what the Soviet Union wanted was not the land itself, but a pro-Soviet local government in order to secure its border zone. Zhang Zhizhong's Xinjiang policy was externally pro-Soviet and internally pro-peace for the peoples of Xinjiang. Under this policy, American influence had to be curbed and the political system reformed in order to improve the situation of the province.

On 12 October 1945, negotiations between the GMD and the Yili regime began in Dihua. The negotiations were divided into two stages. During the first stage (17 October 1945–2 January 1946) a basic agreement on the reorganisation of the provincial government was reached, and the text of the Peace Agreement and Supplement I was signed. During the second stage (5 April 1946–6 June 1946) both sides agreed on the reorganisation and location of the YNA, and signed Supplement II of the Peace Agreement.¹

Zhang Zhizhong's objective in negotiations with the Yili regime was to make any concessions he could, provided the territorial and administrative integrity of China was guaranteed. During the negotiations, with the Soviet Union as mediator, Zhang Zhizhong made significant concessions to the Yili regime with regard to the use of native languages as official languages; freedom of foreign trade; election of government officials and reorganisation of the YNA. In

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 427–428.

negotiations on reorganising the YNA, the Yili side forwarded a proposal to limit the size of the Chinese National Army and the locations of its troops in Xinjiang. Zhang Zhizhong considered that the size and location of the Chinese National Army were questions entirely related to the sovereignty of the Chinese central government in Xinjiang and were absolutely non-negotiable. He firmly refused to consider this proposal. However, regarding the terms of the size and location of the YNA, and the appointment of a commander, Zhang Zhizhong was prepared to compromise.¹ Due to these concessions, the Peace Agreement was signed, and with it the Xinjiang provincial coalition government was established.

The Peace Agreement granted the peoples of Xinjiang political, economic and cultural equality, religious freedom, freedom to use their own languages, freedom of movement, residency, speech, assembly and publication, respect for their traditions and customs, and local autonomy. Under the agreement the people would be given the right to vote for *Bao-Jia* heads, county assemblymen and the county head. A district commission was to be recommended by the provincial government for appointment by the central government.²

Under the Peace Agreement and its two supplements, Yili representatives were to be appointed to the Xinjiang provincial government, the YNA was to be reorganised into the units of the Chinese National Army and the Xinjiang Provincial Peace Preservation Corps and the units of the Chinese National Army were to be stationed in the Three Districts.

Under the ninth article of the Peace Agreement and its Supplement I, the council of the Xinjiang provincial government would consist of twenty five members, ten of which would be appointed by the central government directly and the remaining

1. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, pp. 448-450. Also FDD 876. 12102/7100 Guanyu jieju Xinjiang jubu shibian wenti jingguo zhi youguan wenjian [Documents on the Incident in Xinjiang] (undated).

2. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 429. Zhang Zhizhong's policy in the negotiations is available in Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu* pp. 437-441.

fifteen chosen among the nominees of each district. Of these fifteen, six would come from the Three Districts and nine from the Seven Districts.¹ The list of names and positions of the members was, according to Benson, as follows:²

Xinjiang Provincial Government Council, 1946

Title	Name (Nationality)	Political affiliation
Chairman	Zhang Zhizhong (Han)	Guomindang
Vice-Chairman	Burhan Shahidi (Tatar)	Provincial appointee
Vice-Chairman	Ahmet Jan Kasimi (Uighur)	Ili
Secretary-General	Liu Mengchun (Han)	Guomindang
Vice-Secretary-General	Abdul Kerim Abbas (Uighur)	Ili
Vice-Secretary-General	Salis (Kazak)	Provincial appointee
Minister of Administration	Jelalleddin Wang Cengshan (Hui) ^a	Guomindang

1. According to Benson, there were nine Guomindang appointees, eight Yili and nine provincial appointees in the Coalition Government. Benson, L., *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 70. In fact, the central government had made only seven of the ten appointments (one of the seven never took up his position), the Three Districts appointed eight, the Seven Districts appointed ten. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi* p. 445.

2. This table appears here as in the original translation by L. Benson (Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 70) with some corrections by the author.

THE TWO ADMINISTRATIONS IN XINJIANG, 1946-49

Title	Name (Nationality)	Political affiliation
Vice-Minister	Rahim Jan Selimoglu (Uighur)	Ili
Minister of Finance	Lu Yuwen (Han)	Guomindang
Vice-Minister	Ma Tingxian (Hui) ^b	Provincial appointee
Minister of Education	Seyfettin Azizi (Uighur)	Ili
Vice-Minister	Cai Zhongxian (Han) ^c	Guomindang ^d
Minister of Reconstruction	Mehmet Emin Burgra (Uighur)	Provincial appointee
Vice-Minister	Gu Jianji (Han) ^e	Guomindang
Minister of Social Affairs	Zhao Qianfeng (Manchu) ^f	Guomindang ^g
Vice-Minister	Ardeni (Mongol)	Provincial appointee
Minister of Health	Delilhan Sugurbayoglu (Kazak)	Ili
Vice-Minister	Ma Shuqi (Hui) ^h	Provincial appointee
Mayor of Urumqi	Chu Wu (Han) ⁱ	Guomindang
Ministers without portfolio	Isa Yusuf Alptekin (Uighur)	Provincial appointee
	Guan Zeliang (Han) ^j	Guomindang

Title	Name (Nationality)	Political affiliation
Ministers without portfolio (<i>continued</i>)	Abdul Kerim Resit (Uighur)	Provincial appointee
	Zhang Dihua (Manchu) ^k	Provincial appointee
	Osman Batur (Kazak)	Ili
	Ali Han Tore, Hoja (Uighur)	Ili
	Izhak Han Mura, Haji (Kirghiz)	Ili

- a. Should be Wang Zengshan.
- b. Should be Ma Tingxiang.
- c. Should be Cai Zongxian.
- d. Cai Zongxian's "affiliation" should be "Provincial appointee" instead of "Guomindang".
- e. Should be Gu Qianji.
- f. Should be Zhao Jianfeng.
- g. Zhao Jianfeng was a "Provincial appointee".
- h. Ma Shuqi was not on the 25-man council, as Benson claimed.
- i. Should be Qu Wu.
- j. Guan Zeliang never took this position.
- k. Should be Zhong Dihua (Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang feng-bao qi-shi nian*, 12, pp. 6880-6881).

All eight Yili men in the government, except Osman (the Commissioner of the Ashan Districts) and Ali Han Ture (the Chairman of the Yili government) were determined pro-Soviet men. Among the 17 on the GMD side, only three of them (Mehmet Emin, Isa Yusuf and Salis) were firm anti-Soviet and pro-American. Wang Zengshan, Lu Yuwen, Ma Tingxiang, Cai Zongxian, Gu Qianji, Zhao Jianfeng, Ardeni, Guan Zheliang and Zhong Dihua had an ambiguous attitude to the Soviet Union and did not play much further part in politics). Burhan, Liu Mengchun, Qu Wu and Abdul Kerim Resit, plus six of the Yili regime's men in the government, were determined pro-Soviet and firm followers of Zhang Zhizhong's

pro-Soviet peace policy.¹ Thus there were eleven determined pro-Soviets opposing three firm anti-Soviet/pro-Americans in the Xinjiang coalition government. Besides Chairman Zhang Zhizhong, two Vice-Chairmen, Ahmet Jan and Burhan, Secretary-General Liu Mengchun, and Vice-Secretary-General Abasoff, the five highest posts in the Government were held by either Yili men or pro-Soviet men on the GMD side.

Quite simply, the military victory of the Soviet-supported Yili regime over the GMD and Zhang Zhizhong's pro-Soviet policy resulted in the creation of the Xinjiang provincial coalition government, which was dominated by pro-Soviet personalities and set Soviet minds at rest.

On 1 July 1946, the Xinjiang provincial coalition government was officially proclaimed. On the same day, Zhang Zhizhong delivered a speech entitled *A Public letter to the People of Xinjiang about the Peaceful Resolution of the Yining Incident* to a meeting of 30,000 people in Dihua. In this speech he acknowledged the assistance of the Soviet Union in the negotiations and emphasized his policy of the "improvement of friendship between China and the Soviet Union, support for the unification of the State, the practice of democratic politics and the maintenance of the ethnic union".² Shortly after the inauguration, *A Political Programme of the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government* was announced. In this way, Xinjiang became the only province in China at the time where the pro-Soviet policy of leaning to one side was adopted, and concessions were granted to local ethnic people.

1. Mehmet Emin, Isa Yusuf, Salis as well as Masud and Osman are labelled as "reactionary elements", "running dogs of imperialism", "anti-Communist" or "anti-Soviet" in almost all the Soviet publications, whilst none of the nine, Wang Zengshan, Lu Yuwen, Ma Tingxiang, Cai Zongxian, Gu Qianji, Zhao Jianfeng, Ardeni, Guan Zheliang and Zhong Dihua, have been classified by the Soviet scholars as such. Detailed statements on their pro-Soviet and pro-Communist inclinations are available in Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizong*, Chapter 5; and ZX and XJZ (ed.), *Xinjiang heping jiefang* (Wenjianji) [Peaceful Liberation of Xinjiang, Documents], (Xinjiang renmin, Urumqi, 1990)

2. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 446.

Zhang Zhizhong's policy led to the establishment of the Xinjiang coalition government although the anti-Soviet factions in both the Three Districts and the Seven Districts were unhappy with it. In anticipation of the looming civil war in China proper, further encroachments into Xinjiang and the possibility of even greater American and GMD influence in Xinjiang, the Yili regime, backed by the Soviet Union, launched political offensives that started with the 25 February incident in Dihua and ended in a bloodbath in the areas of Turpan, Shanshan and Tokson (Tu-Shan-To). Zhang Zhizhong himself also became the target of criticism from both pro-Soviet and pro-US-GMD Moslems, and from the hard-liners of the GMD. Faced with this situation the GMD die-hards began their counter-attacks, Zhang Zhizhong lost his confidence and resigned although thereafter he continued to use his influence in Xinjiang to ensure the continuation of his policy.

Zhang Zhizhong's ambition in Xinjiang was to create a peaceful pro-Soviet sphere. Due to his pro-Soviet peace policy and the assistance of the Soviet Union, the Yili regime cooperated with the GMD Xinjiang authorities and the coalition government was formed. This coalition, was, in fact, a temporary alliance between pro-Soviet Moslems and pro-US-GMD Moslems (the pan-Turkish and Moslem nationalists) under the leadership of the GMD authorities headed by the pro-Soviet Zhang Zhizhong. As the Cold War developed in East Asia and the Chinese Civil War spread, this alliance under Zhang Zhizhong could not last.

In spite of these difficulties, the terms of the peace agreement and the political programme were at least partially fulfilled under Zhang Zhizhong's administration. Zhang's administration was considerably different from that in the rest of China. Due to the Yili regime's political attacks, the Peace Agreement was not fully fulfilled. The main themes of Zhang Zhizhong's reforms, such as the election of local officers by the local people, the participation of local Moslems in local administrations, the retention of local militia by ethnic peoples, tax reduction and exemption, the use of ethnic languages as official languages and the pro-Soviet policy were, at

least partially, realized in the Seven Districts. No other provinces in China had this kind of administration at that time.

During the period from 1945-47, although the political situation in Xinjiang was not as stable as Zhang Zhizhong hoped, the GMD central government, while preoccupied with their war against the CCP, did not lend Xinjiang much financial assistance. Zhang Zhizhong himself had to spend much of his time and energy in dealing with the Yili regime's political attacks and the GMD hard-liners' interference in civil affairs. He had worked very hard to achieve the above results.¹

Masud's Administration, May 1947-January 1949

Masud Sabri, who was born in Yili, embraced pan-Turkism when he was in Turkey as a medical student. Back in Xinjiang, he joined a group of Turkish people in Yili to run a school. A pan-Turkist organisation was formed with Masud Sabri as the key figure. When Yang Zengxin, the then governor of the province, discovered the activities of the pan-Turkist organisation, he expelled Masud from Xinjiang. In the mid-1940s, after the dismissal of Sheng Shicai, Masud returned to Xinjiang with the GMD influence.²

Masud took office on 28 May 1947. A few days later, on 5 June, Outer Mongolia, supported by the Soviet Union, decided to teach both Masud and the GMD a lesson at Mt Beitashan.³ About a month later, the Yili regime and its followers raised a rebellion at Tu-Shan-To against Masud and the GMD. During this time Yili political attacks in the Seven Districts and the GMD hard-liners'

1. See CF China IA 893.01 SINKIANG/12-1247 Subject: Comments on the Administrative Program of the Sinkiang Provincial Government.

2. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 483.

3. From 5 June 1947 the troops of Outer Mongolia launched severe attacks on Mt Beitashan near the border between Xinjiang and Outer Mongolia, where Osman and his men were stationed. It was believed that this event was closely linked with the then situations in Xinjiang as well as in China Proper. See WZD 309/8 Waimengjun ji suji yuejie qin Xinjiang [Outer Mongolian troops and Soviet aircraft invade Xinjiang] 1947.6- 8; 309/13 Beitashan shijian (Beitashan Incident) 1947.8- 1948.3.

military interference in local affairs reached a peak. When Ahmet Jan and his men left Dihua for Yining in August, the Yili regime's political offensives in the Seven Districts ceased and the GMD's military interference in civil affairs also decreased. During the early stage of his administration (May–August 1947) Masud was not responsible for and was unable to deal with this political turmoil in the province. Later in his administration (August 1947–January 1949), the political situation became relatively stable, especially after the replacement of Song Xilian, a pro-American hardliner, by Tao Zhiyue, a follower of Zhang Zhizhong's policy, as the Commander-in-Chief of the Xinjiang Garrison. Masud then, together with Isa Yusuf, Mehmet Emin and other pan-Turkists attempted to cast off the GMD's influence and promote pan-Turkist propaganda.¹

Under Masud's administration there were some changes in the provincial government's organization. In comparison with Zhang Zhizhong's administration, Masud's minority national administration appointees were more important in the Government, although there were just as many Han Chinese appointees as in Zhang's office. The top four posts – the Governor, the two Vice-Governors and the Secretary-General – were all Uighurs. Ahmet Jan Kasim, however, did not return from Yining to take up his post. Among the Moslem appointees, Isa Yusuf and Mehmet Emin were more active than others. Together with Masud, they took advantage of the Yili regime's withdrawal from the Seven Districts and Zhang Zhizhong's resignation, and sped up their pan-Turkist propaganda.

Mehmet Emin Burgra was a native of Hotan, where his father was the Emir, a local prince. In 1933 he immersed himself deeply in the movement of the Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan in Kashi. When the movement had been completely wiped out by the Sheng Shicai-Soviet alliance, he made his way to India and ended up in Chongqing, where he became a member of the Chinese

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp.495–496. For Masud's policy in Xinjiang, see GXD 061/173 Masud deng shangqing yu Xinjiang gaodu zizhi zhi bi aoshi 1945.9.21.

National Assembly. He founded a publishing house in Chongqing with Isa Yusuf and edited magazines devoted to Xinjiang affairs. Both Emin and Isa were known as ardent nationalists who wanted autonomy for Xinjiang. Zhang Zhizhong later invited Emin and Isa back to Xinjiang with Masud in October, 1945.¹

Although all three were anti-Soviet and pan-Turkist, Emin and Isa did not get along very well with Masud. The Yili regime's hostility towards Masud, however, united them with him.² With Emin as his deputy and Isa as his Secretary-General, Masud appointed a number of pan-Turkists as district commissioners, county heads, and major school headmasters.³ Unlike their Islamic brothers such as Ali Han Ture, the pan-Turkists in the Seven Districts antagonized the Han GMD rulers more with their culture than with political slogans and flags at the early stage of the Yili rebellion. Since Turkey, their backer, was weak and unable to support them, the pan-Turkists in Xinjiang, in order to realize their pan-Turkist ideal, had to rely on the US and the GMD. The GMD authorities, however, did not allow them to be independent and the pro-Soviet Moslems in the Three Districts treated them as political enemies.⁴ So, they propagated their pan-Turkist cultural ideas rather than politics, while at the same time opposing the Yili regime politically. In terms of Moslem nationalism, pan-Islamists of the Yili regime in its early stage and pan-Turkists, like Masud, Emin and Isa in the Seven Districts had much in common. However, due to the pan-Turkists' anti-Soviet stand and their close relations with the West, Masud and his followers were certainly not accepted by the pro-Soviet leaders of the Yili Regime. This was why Ahmet Jan and his men opposed the GMD diehards and Masud with equal fervour.⁵

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 196-199; 484.

2. Burhan S., *Xinjiang wushi nian*, p. 320. LDD 23/08/1949.

3. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 495-496.

4. LDD, 14/09/1949.

5. See Wang, "Under Soviet Shadow", pp. 214-216; 249.

Whilst trying to gain freedom in the name of pan-Turkist nationalism, Masud and his followers regarded the Soviet Union and the Yili regime as obstacles to their aspiration:

One of the first moves of Masud's administration was to remove all Russians and all leftists from government posts, replacing them with democratically orientated Moslems wherever possible.¹

The Uighur version of *The Xinjiang Daily* had been brought under the Yili regime's control by Ahmet Jan. Isa noted that the Uighur version used to be in "reactionary hands" but was now back in the hands of the former editor, Polat Turfani Bey. The pan-Turkists established their own newspaper *Yalkyn* ["Flame" or "Light"] on 1 July 1947. One of the policies of the newspaper, was, according to Paxton, the then American consul in Dihua, "to launch a campaign against the powerful and evil influence of Soviet propaganda".² Isa also sought US and British aid to persuade the Chinese to allow "real self-government" and to prevent the Soviet Union from taking over Xinjiang.³ In 1947, the Society for the Defence of Islam was organized in Dihua by the pan-Turkists and pan-Islamists. According to a Russian source, the Society was under the leadership of Song Xilian, "an agent of the American imperialists", for the purpose of opposing "the democratic force" as well as the CCP and the Soviet Union.⁴

Since the end of Sheng Shicai's regime, Xinjiang had also been closely linked with China proper economically. So it was not surprising that economic chaos in China proper also caused rapid economic deterioration in Xinjiang. Under the Masud administration, when the GMD central regime was about to retreat to Taiwan, Xinjiang's economy worsened. Inflation soared. In the month of

1. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, pp. 165-166.

2. CF China IA 893.911/10-2047 Subject: Report on Sinkiang Newspaper, Enclosure 1, Extracts of History of Newspapers in Sinkiang Province, p. 3.

3. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 164.

4. Mingulov, N. N., "Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noye...", p. 87.

November 1947 prices doubled. Finance in the province had to be maintained by printing banknotes.

In early 1949, Masud was removed from the post of governor and replaced by Burhan. The major reason for this change was not due to economic chaos or “scandals”,¹ but to a political necessity related to the Soviet Union.

Burhan's Administration, January-September 1949

Burhan Shahidi was born in 1894 in Russia. In 1912, as an employee of a Russian tradesman, he was sent to Dihua. In 1914 he became a Chinese citizen. During Jin Shuren's regime of 1928-33, Burhan was sent to Germany to purchase machines. In the summer of 1930, he entered the University of Berlin to learn economics. In 1937, he went to the Soviet Union to take up the post of Vice-Consul of the Chinese Consulate in Zaisan. In the following year, he was arrested by Sheng Shicai, and labelled as “a running dog of imperialism”. In November 1944, he was released and appointed as a commissioner of the Dihua District. When the Xinjiang provincial coalition government was formed, he was nominated by Zhang Zhizhong as one of his two deputies.²

According to a CCP source, Burhan “was involved in revolutionary work” in the Soviet Union from the 1930s and his “working relations” with the Soviet Union lasted until 1949.³

In the language of the CCP, the term “involvement in the revolutionary work” has the following meanings: (a) engaging in activities of organizations, civil or military, attached to the CCP, and carrying out any duty or task given by the CCP after admission to the CCP as a member; (b) being engaged in certain organizations and carrying out the tasks of the CCP while not being a member of the Party. In the case of Burhan, although no highly reliable sources are so far available it was widely believed in Xinjiang that

1. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, pp. 167-170; 171.

2. For Burhan's biography, c. f. Burhan S., *Xinjiang wushi nian*.

3. *People's Daily*, 28/08/1989; 30/08/1989.

Burhan had both Soviet citizenship and membership of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU). According to a Soviet spy working for the Soviet Consulate-General in Dihua, Burhan and he were in the same “study group” which met regularly at the Soviet Consulate-General in Dihua in the 1930s. The group studied Marxism-Leninism there and “reported their work” to the Soviet consulate.¹ So, whether Burhan was a CPSU member or not, there is no doubt that he was carrying out duties entrusted to him by the Soviets and that he kept the Soviet government informed of activities in Sheng Shicai’s and the GMD’s regimes. In other words, he worked as a spy or a secret agent for the Soviet Union in Xinjiang. Due to his special connections with the Soviet Union, Burhan must undoubtedly have been welcomed by the Yili regime.

Zhang Zhizhong’s nomination of Burhan as one of the two Vice-Chairmen of the Xinjiang coalition government was partly because Zhang Zhizhong believed in Burhan’s loyalty to his pro-Soviet peace policy and partly because the Yili regime requested it.

Together with Ahmet Jan, Burhan strongly opposed the appointment of Masud as the Chairman of the Xinjiang coalition government. As soon as the Nanjing government announced the appointment of Masud Sabri, Ahmet Jan paid a visit to Zhang Zhizhong, opposing the appointment and demanding Burhan’s nomination. Soon after, Zhang Zhizhong decided to make further concessions to Ahmet Jan.

Under Zhang Zhizhong’s arrangement and with the permission of the Soviets, Burhan took up his governorship in January 1949.² As a pro-Soviet man, Burhan was very active in renewing economic ties with the Soviet Union. In consultation with Zhang Zhizhong, Burhan’s administration began negotiations with the Soviet Union on trade and economic cooperation in the spring of 1949. A mineral agreement was also under consideration. However, the

1. Wang, “Under Soviet Shadow”, p. 292.

2. For the details about this appointment, see *ibid.*, pp. 295–297.

central government did not approve of these agreements due to American objections to them.¹

While the appointment of pro-Soviet Burhan as the Governor was warmly welcomed by the Yili regime (Ahmet Jan and Burhan secretly kept in touch with each other through the Soviet consulates in Xinjiang)², pro-US-UK pan-Turkists Masud, Emin and Isa reacted to Burhan's governorship with fury. Emin, a vice-governor of Burhan's administration, regarded Burhan as a "traitor to our nationality." Even before the announcement of Burhan's appointment, Emin's secretary, under instruction from Emin wrote a threatening anonymous letter to Burhan, saying: "You are a communist ... Wait and see, your dead body will be found behind the Soviet Consulate!"³ Immediately after Burhan took up his post, the pan-Turkists launched an attack on Burhan's new government through their newspaper *Yalkyn*. In response to this, Burhan, perhaps under instruction from the Soviet Union or on the request of Ahmet Jan, issued an order to ban *Yalkyn*.⁴

Although not a strong communist-internationalist, Burhan, together with Ahmet Jan, who was educated in the Soviet Union since his childhood, enjoyed Soviet support. In the eyes of the pan-Turkists, however, they were communists and traitors to the Turkish nationality. This was why the anti-communist pan-Turkists sided with the GMD rulers rather than with the pro-Soviet Moslems with communist leanings.

Although Burhan's governorship was short, with Zhang Zhizhong's pro-Soviet policy and Burhan's pro-Soviet stand, Xinjiang was prepared for a peaceful takeover by the CCP in September 1949. Burhan himself played a significant role in this.⁵

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 497-499.

2. Burhan, *Xinjiang Wushi nian*, p. 329.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 332-333; 328.

4. Mingulov, "Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noye...", p. 95. Also see Forbes, A. D. W., *Warlords and Muslims*, p. 217. Burhan, *Xinjiang Wushi nian*, p. 331.

5. See Wang, D., "Sulian yu 1949-nian Xinjiang de heping jiefang", [The Soviet Union and the Peaceful Liberation of Xinjiang in 1949] *Renwen Xuebao*, vol. 3, no. 20, pp. 75-116.

The Three Districts

In 1871, using the opportunity of Yakub Beg's invasion of Xinjiang, Tsarist Russians established their administration in Yili by force. Under the Sino-Russian Yili Treaty of 1881, the Yili area as a whole, with the exception of the land on the western bank of the Hulgus River, was returned to China. From then on, the Yili area was regarded as a Soviet sphere of influence. During 1945-49, Yili, together with Tacheng and Ashan, was brought under the firm control of the Soviet Union through the Yili regime, that is, with the exception of a time in 1947, when the Kazaks, under the leadership of Osman and with assistance from the GMD, rose up in Ashan against the Soviet control.

The Nature of the Islamic Religion and Ethnic Relations

An English source claimed:

... Islam provided the basis for unity within the ETR ... The fundamental importance of Islam in the ETR is seen in both the leadership and the governmental organization. First, the two leaders of the ETR, Ali Han Tore and Asim Bey Hoja, were both Islamic scholars, known throughout the three districts for their scholarship and their dedication to Islam. Second, the majority of members in the new government were also Moslems and included several men who carried the title of Hoja (teacher), Haji (pilgrim), or Ahong (religious leader)...

The importance of Islam can also be seen in the symbols of government: the flag of the new republic incorporated the Moslem crescent and star. The people of the area demonstrated their solidarity with the Islamic-led government by wearing badges bearing the same Islamic symbol ... ¹

Islam and the Islamic flag were used by the real rulers of the Yili regime to attract the support of Moslems. Under the Islamic flag, people with the same Moslem background, such as Masud, Emin and Isa in the Seven Districts and Ali Han Ture, Osman and their followers in the Three Districts, were in fact treated by the real rulers of the Yili regime as deadly enemies because of their different

1. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 145

political stance. The pan-Turkist Masud, Emin and Isa were regarded as implacable foes because of their pro-US-UK and pro-Turkey stand. Ali Han Ture, the Chairman of the Yili government, was eliminated by pro-Soviet Moslem leaders of the Yili regime because of his anti-Soviet attitude. Under the same Islamic flag, anti-Soviet Osman, Ali Beg, Janimhan, Salis and their Kazak followers in Ashan from the same Moslem brotherhood were squeezed out by the pro-Soviet Moslems. As Yasin Mudabardi, the Secretary of Shuidin County government under the Yili regime, wrote:

In Xinjiang, where economy and culture were backward, it was not surprising that religion was used [in the Revolution] ... The flag of religion had played an active and positive role ... The slogan for independence and the Holy war was a means of achieving strategic objectives of the Revolution.¹

Sources in both Chinese (the CCP and the GMD) and Turkish (the Yili regime) demonstrate that the Yili regime did not enjoy any internal “unity” or “solidarity”.

Both Uighurs and Kazaks are Moslem peoples. The Kazaks outnumbered the Uighurs in the ETR. (English sources claim that the Kazaks made up between 53 and 60 per cent of the population in the Yili regime, while a Chinese source states that only 35 per cent of the residents in Yili were Uighurs. According to Benson, 23 per cent of the population under the Yili regime were Uighurs.² The Kazaks were the main fighting force against the GMD at the early stage of the Yili Rebellion.³ However, the Yili government was monopolized by the Uighurs.⁴ The Kazaks complained: “It was we who

1. Yasin Hudabardi, “Guanyu sanqu geming” [About the Three Districts Revolution] *Xinjiang wenshi ziliao xuanji* [A Selection of Xinjiang Historical and Literary Materials], vol.16 (1986), pp. 75; 77.

2. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 136. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims* p. 203. Zhang Chengzhi, Fan Hua and Zhang Shouli, “Yi-ta sanqu shangyie jianjie” [Commerce Developments in the Three Districts], *Xinjiang difang zhi* [Local Gazettes of Xinjiang] no. 1 (1988), p. 22.

3. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 146.

4. According to Benson’s tables of the ETR’s government, there were 14 Uighurs, 2 Kirgizs, 1 Uzbek, 5 Russians and 12 whose ethnic identity was unknown in the government. *ibid*, pp. 138-139.

were fighting on the front, but it was the Uighurs who were appointed to offices in government.”¹ During negotiations with the GMD, the Yili government was reorganized and many arguments occurred between the groups. The Kazaks even declared threateningly: “If necessary the Ashan and Tacheng Districts will become independent and organize their own state.”²

It was clear that one of the reasons for Osman going over to the GMD was the dispute between the Uighurs and the Kazaks within the Yili regime. After the defeat of Osman, Delilhan replaced him as the Commissioner of Ashan. Both Delilhan and Osman were Moslem Kazaks, one pro-Soviet and the other anti-Soviet. The differences between them were not religious but political. It was also not surprising that during the 25 February incident in Dihua, the GMD’s hard-liners so effortlessly organised the Kazaks for the counter-demonstration to the Uighurs’ demonstration which was initiated by the Yili men. In addition to the Kazaks in Ashan, there were Tajiks and Kirgiz during the very early stages of the Yili rebellion. Both were Islamic nationalities who rose in rebellion against the GMD in Puli in the Kashi District in southern Xinjiang. Ishag Beg was sent by the organizers of the Yili Rebellion to command the fighting in Puli. After the signing of the Peace Agreement, however, the Yili regime did not support the Tajik and Kirghiz people in Puli when the GMD authorities cruelly put down their struggle.³

There was also a severe struggle among the Uighurs within the Yili regime, between pro-Soviet Moslems headed by Ahmet Jan and anti-Soviet Moslems led by Ali Han Ture. Exile Turkish sources claimed that Ali Han was removed from the scene “because he refused to go along with expanding Soviet influence in the ETR”,⁴ and an Uighur source of the Yili regime states that Ali Han Ture was

1. Chen Li, *Yining shibian jilue* [A Concise Record of the Yining Incident] (Wenhai, Taibei, 1977) p. 80.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

3. Wang, “Under the Soviet Shadow”, p. 253.

4. Benson, “Osman Batur: The Kazak’s Golden Legend”, in Benson and Svanberg, (ed.), *The Kazaks of China: Essays on an Ethnic Minority* (Uppsala, Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1988) pp. 170–171.

overthrown by the pro-Soviet Moslems in a coup.¹ In Saifudin's (the top leader of the Yili regime after August 1949) opinion, "this struggle was far more meaningful and more significant than the struggle against the GMD reactionaries".²

The basic aims of the Yili rebellion in its early stage were to overthrow the Han Chinese rulers and to win independence for Xinjiang Moslems. It was not, however, Ali Han Ture, but Ahmet Jan, who betrayed these aims. While Ali Han Ture was still calling for an independent Moslem state in Yining in 1946, Ahmet Jan went to Dihua as an officer under the GMD and withdrew the demand for independence. It cannot possibly be said that after the transfer of power from Ali Han Ture to Ahmet Jan, the Islamic character of the Yili regime remained unchanged.

After his conversations with Ahmet Jan, Deng Liqun, the CCP's special representative to Yining who arrived in Yining via Moscow in August 1949, reported to the Central Committee of the CCP in Beijing, thus:

[in Ahmet Jan's words] ... A combination of the economic and political backwardness and the force of [Islam] religion restricted the peoples' ideas, creating a dignity for religion as well as its Imams in our society ... At the early stage of the Revolution, although we knew that these men were not loyal to the Revolution, in order to unite the masses ... our youth [leaders] had to let these disloyal elements lead the movement ... Therefore, it was why, at the early stage of the Revolution, the feudal forces played an important role in the government, and Imams became the chiefs of the government ... That was why, at that stage, the national movement seemed to have acquired a religious nature and color. Under the serious circumstances ... we felt so weak that we were not able to fight the internal feudal power and the GMD at the same time ... If we started a

1. Yusup M., "Yingdang zunzhong san-qu geming de k-guan lishi shiji" [The Facts of the Three Districts Revolution should be respected], *Xinjiang shehui kexue yanjiu* (Xinjiang Social Sciences Research) no. 19 (1983), p. 12.

2. Yusup M., "Yingdang zunzhong", pp. 44-46.

serious struggle against the internal feudal forces right then, the Americans, British and the GMD would have taken full advantage of our internal dispute.¹

Ahmet Jan also claimed in 1949:

We did not classify who were our friends and who were our enemies, but treated all Han Chinese as our enemies. Therefore we wrongly fought against our friends [the ordinary Chinese people], and wrongly supported the scum of our own nationality [meaning Ali Han Ture and his followers] who were more dangerous than any GMD officers.²

If Ali Han Ture, the Chairman of the Yili government, with his prestige as a religious scholar and leader and his well-known stance as a Turkish nationalist, was identified by Ahmet Jan Kasim, a one time top leader of the Yili regime, as “a scum of Moslem nationality who was more dangerous than any GMD officers”, how could the Yili rebellion be regarded as a truly Moslem nationalist movement? Not surprisingly, in Soviet literature Ahmet Jan is highly spoken of as:

... an underground internationalist and patriot; a guardian of the Great October Socialist Revolution, [and] the first propagandist of Leninism in Xinjiang.³

The pan-Turkists within the Three Districts meanwhile were labelled as “the fifth column” of the American imperialists.⁴ Furthermore, Abasoff, one of the Yili regime leaders, who was in charge of ideology and propaganda, divided this movement into two categories: “a revolutionary nationalist movement” and “a reactionary nationalist

1. LDD, 21/08/1949.

2. Ibid., 24/08/1949.

3. Rakhimov, T. R., “Rol’ Akhmatdzhana Kacymi v Istorii Osvoboditel’nogo Dvizheniya v Sin’tszyane’ [The Role of Ahmet Jan in History of the Movement for Freedom in Xinjiang], *Materialy Mezhdunarodnoi Konferentsii po Problemam Istorii Kitaya v Noveishchee Vremya, April’ 1977*, [Material for the International Conference of Contemporary Chinese History, April, 1977] (Moscow, 1978), p. 197.

4. Yakovlev, A. G., “K Voprosu...”, p. 176.

movement”.¹ Ali Han Ture, Masud Sabri, Mehmet Emin and Isa Yusuf as well as Osman and his followers all belonged to the “reactionary nationalist movement”. The definition between the two kinds of movements was not of a religious nature but due to a difference in their politics.²

It seems reasonable to conclude that, while Moslem independence could be considered as the driving force for the Yili rebellion during its early stage, the Soviet Union later brought the movement under the control of the young Moslems who had basic leftist ideas, although they were not regarded by either the CCP or the CPSU as strong communists.

The Soviet Union was behind the Yili rebellion. The young Moslems with basic leftist ideas were used by the Soviet Union as a tool to counter US-GMD influence. When Soviet objectives in the Yalta Agreements had been attained with the signing of the Sino-Soviet treaty of 1945 (and, thereafter, the Peace Agreement between the Yili regime and the GMD in Xinjiang), pan-Islamic ideas were no longer useful to the Soviet Union. In fact, the anti-Soviet and pro-American Moslems threatened the interests of the Soviet Union. In 1949, warning the CCP about the danger of pro-American pan-Turkist activities in Xinjiang, the Soviet Union suggested to the CCP that they use the leftists of the Yili regime to eliminate the pan-Turkish influence in Xinjiang.³ To Stalin, the Islamic aspects of the Yili Regime along with the Moslems’ aspiration to independence were political tools only to be used for furthering Soviet interests.

1. LDD, 24/08/1949. Telegram of Wang Zhen and Xu Liqing to Peng Dehuai and Zhang Zongxun, 25/10/1949, in ZX and XJZ, *Xinjiang heping jiefang*, pp. 102-103.

2. This was the reason why on the list of 13 political and war criminals presented to the CCP by the Yili Regime on 14 September 1949 there was only one Han Chinese (Ye Cheng), 12 of 13 were Moslems. LDD, 14/09/1949.

3. Wang, “Sulian yu 1949-nian Xinjiang...”, pp. 106-110.

The Yili Regime's Administration

The Yili regime did not have a unified administrative structure. According to Ahmet Jan's report to Deng Liqun:

Administratively, there is no unified organization here. Each of the three districts, Yili, Tacheng and Ashan, has its own district administration, which deals with its own daily activities ... Each district has its independent financial budget.¹

Soviet personnel were involved in the Yili rebellion and the establishment of the ETR, and a mission of Soviet advisers exercised real control over the Yili regime. After the declaration of the Xinjiang provincial coalition government the Soviet Union still played a very important role in the Yili regime's administration. An English source claims:

Civilian advisers who are reported to have arrived from the USSR to aid the ETR in carrying out its operations allegedly included the following individuals: Muhsin (USSR Turk), counselor to Ali Han Tore; Gorki Mihalovic (Russian), finance adviser; Cafer Kari (USSR Turk), religious adviser; Abdullayoff (USSR Turk), education adviser; Ali (unidentified), interior affairs; and Vladimir Istepanovic (Russian), overall political adviser.²

Apart from these Soviet advisers, there were also a number of persons with dual citizenship appointed to various posts in the Yili government. By using the ambiguous state of the local people's citizenship, the Soviet Union successfully brought the Yili regime under its firm control. According to a CCP source, by the late 1950s most of the Soviet citizens who held office under the Yili regime had returned to the Soviet Union.³

1. LDD, 26/08/1949.

2. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 139.

3. UJB, "Yi Ta shijian" [The Yining-Tacheng Incident] in *Renmin jundui zai Xinjiang* (Urumqi, 1986), p. 158. Also see Wang, D. "Soviet Citizenship in Xinjiang", *Asian Studies Review*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 87-97.

The Military Force of the Yili Regime

Regarding the YNA's organization and equipment in 1949, Deng Liqun reported from Yining to the Central Committee of the CCP in Beijing:

The YNA has eight regiments (5 cavalry, 3 infantry, plus a cavalry battalion), which are stationed in Yili, Tacheng and Ashan Districts ... There are 900-1,200 men in each cavalry regiment and 1,500-1,600 men in each infantry regiment ... The total number of fighters in the YNA is 14,000 (officers and logistic personnel included). The YNA also has 5,522 fighting horses (and 521 horses for transportation), 184 pistols, 9,088 rifles, 405 light machine guns, 68 heavy machine guns...¹

In this report, the number of fighters in the YNA was 14,000. If we include the non-fighting personnel, the total number must have been about 16,000. In 1949, its military expenses were 5,662,797 *som* (one *som* was equivalent to 9,000 yuan in August, 1949), which was 68.3 per cent of the total income of Yili in 1949.² It was obviously a huge burden for the local Moslems.

The YNA was under the successive command of Ishag Beg, a Soviet Moslem and probably a Soviet general, then Bolinov and Leskin, two Russians from the Soviet Union who were trained in Russian-style military methods and organization. In terms of military organization, the Yili regime's army appears to have followed Soviet forms. In addition to these men, there were also Soviet military advisers. The command system was controlled by the Soviets, and Soviet officials were attached to the YNA's fighting units, placed in commanding positions. It was probable that most Soviet military officials returned to the Soviet Union after the coalition government was formed, but came again in 1947 when Osman launched his attack on Ashan. Some of them stayed in the Three Districts until the 1950s.³

1. LDD, 20/08/1949.

2. LDD, 26/08/1949.

3. For detailed information about the Soviet military involvement in the Yili Rebellion, see Wang, D., "The Soviet Union and the Establishment of the Eastern Turkestan Republic in Xinjiang", (1996) *Journal of Institute of Modern History*, Academia Sinica, vol. 25, pp. 337-378.

The Yili Regime's Economy

Being separated from the Seven Districts economically as well as politically, and having benefited by their trade with the Soviet Union, the Three Districts were not so adversely affected by inflation. Although the economy of the Three Districts was more stable than that of the Seven Districts, it did not mean that the Yili regime enjoyed a booming economy.¹

The need to maintain a big army and to fight against both external and internal enemies meant that the Yili government had many financial difficulties. The main sources of the government's income were: taxation; the issue of paper money and government bonds; financial aid of the provincial government; and the confiscation of Han Chinese property.

Although taxation was contrary to Islamic law,² the Yili regime still levied taxes on its Moslem subjects. The no. 291 resolution of the Yili government of 30 May 1945 stated:

To follow the regulations of the former Han Chinese government, we will continue to levy taxes and impose different requisitions on people.³

While the Soviet ruble, *xinbi* (provincial currency) and *fabi* (the currency issued by the central government) were circulated in the Three Districts, the Yili government issued the "circulation certificate" as its own currency.⁴

1. Benson wrote: "In fact, the ETR gained a high reputation as a model Islamic state,... and whose people enjoyed economic stability and prosperity..." Benson, "Osman Batur", p. 171.

2. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 148.

3. Wang, "Under the Soviet Shadow", p. 259.

4. "File: Dong tuerqisitan gongheguo guanli xia de sange qu 1946-nian 6-yue 1-ri yihou de shouzhi qingkuang" [Report on Account of Receipts and Payments since 1st June 1946 of the Three Districts under the ETR], in Xinjinag shaoshuminzu shehui lishi diaochazu [Group for Investigation on Social History of Minority Nationalities in Xinjiang] (ed.), *Sanqu geming ziliao huibian zhi-5* (Urumqi, 1959), pp. 22-24. Zhou Dongjiao, *Xinjiang shinian* [Ten Years in Xinjiang] (Lanzhou, 1946) in mimeograph, p. 237.

Other sources of the Yili regime's income were loans from the people: government bonds and public debt. According to Chen Li and Zhou Dongjiao, two scholars in Xinjiang in the 1940s, and CCP sources, the Yili regime issued 100 million yuan's worth of "victory bonds" and 300 million worth of "state army bonds".¹ Yili regime statistics for June 1, 1946 showed that the total amount of its debt was 1,060 million yuan, which was 59.2 per cent of its total income.²

In an attempt to solve its financial difficulties, the Yili regime pinned its hopes on the provincial government. After the establishment of the provincial coalition government, the Yili regime's representatives went to Dihua to discuss financial matters. At first the GMD authorities promised to pay the Yili regime's administrative costs, military expenses and the bank reserve for the issue of the "circulation certificates", but not the public debt. The Yili regime forwarded a financial budget of 6,425 million yuan. Due to the Yili regime's refusal to reorganize the YNA and to report the YNA's organization, the GMD authorities did not give full financial aid. The provincial government paid 1,095 million yuan only. Owing to a shortfall in the budget, each department of the Yili government received only half of its funds.³

The confiscation of both GMD government and Han Chinese private property was another major source of the Yili Regime's income. On 12 November, 1945, the Confiscated Property Management Committee was founded under the Ministry of Finance of the Yili government. Under this committee there was a Confiscated Property Section which was in charge of confiscated goods and materials of the GMD government and Han Chinese private businesses. In order to support the war against the GMD, the Yili government formed an economic committee in February 1945 to take charge of war looting and confiscated war property. At the 9th meeting of the Yili's government, an order was issued:

1. Chen Li, *Yining shibian jilue*, p. 60. Zhou Dongjiao, *Xinjiang shinian*, p. 234. Zhang Chengzhi, and others, "Yi-ta,-a sanqu shangyie...", p. 22.

2. "File: Dong tuerqisitan gongheguo guanli...", p. 22.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 27-28.

To confiscate for the present government all property of the Han Chinese officials, and of the people who are against the present government.¹

Later on the Yili government organized the Development Company, a key administrative body of the Yili regime's economy. It was based on the Confiscated Property Section of the Confiscated Property Management Committee of the Ministry of Finance.²

Soviet Economic Privileges under the Yili Regime

Due to the distance between Xinjiang and China proper, trade with the Soviet Union was vital to the economy of Xinjiang. One of the first acts of the Yili regime after its establishment was to resume trade relations with the Soviet Union. In spite of the financial difficulties, the Three Districts had benefited from trade with the USSR. Its inflation rate was lower than that of the Seven Districts, although it was far from stable.

In terms of the economic relations between the USSR and the Yili regime, however, the USSR enjoyed many privileges and the Yili regime received much less in return from this relationship.

As mentioned earlier, the Development Company was the Yili government's only business company. There were 10 branches in Yili and a number of manufacturers of tobacco, soap, wine, flour, leather, etc. It was not only in charge of all industries and businesses in the Three Districts but was also responsible for trade with the USSR. Under the Development Company an organization called *Terekyat* was founded to handle exports to the USSR. The Development Company was an attachment to the Economy Committee of the government. The Economy Committee was under the control of the Soviets. The General Manager of the committee was a Soviet citizen (in 1949, Isa Tura, a Soviet Uzbek, was the General Manager). A large proportion of the managers of the Development Company

1. Chen Li, *Yining shibian jilue*, p. 60. Also see Zhang Chengzhi et al., "Yi-ta, a sanqu shangyie...", pp. 22-25.

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 25-27.

were Soviets. Most of them were chief accountants, accountants and managers of departments.¹ In fact, the Soviet business accounting system was practised in Russian until 1952. From 1950 Soviet employees began to return to the USSR and by 1955, 140 of them had left. In the early 1950s a committee was sent by the Xinjiang authorities to check the management of the company. Many problems were discovered. Under poor management many items were entered into a financial account without any certificates or receipts, but just with a signature of the manager or on his verbal instruction.²

Due to the separation of the Yili regime from other parts of Xinjiang, the supply of manufactured goods was chiefly imported from the Soviet Union. Major imported items were cotton cloth, sugar, textile fabrics, matches and other daily necessities. In return, the Development Company exported local products such as husbandry products, grain, food, oil, etc.³ Due to the devaluation of paper money, the *som* was used as a unit for quoting prices and settling accounts in the trade with the USSR. For example, one *som* was equal to 90 per cent of the value of exchanging one kilo of mutton for two metres of Soviet cloth.⁴ Since it was a barter trade between the Yili regime and the USSR, no deficit occurred.⁵ The prices for husbandry products for export to the Soviet Union were generally lower than market prices. The company's own fur technicians were not allowed to grade the quality of fur. Soviet fur technicians were sent to do the grading before the products were packed and transported to the Soviet Union. The Soviet regulations for grading products were followed.⁶ Under such a system it was hardly a trade based on equality and mutual benefit.

1. *Ibid.*, pp. 25; 28.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 28.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

4. LDD, 26/08/1949.

5. Li Sheng, "Minguo shiqi Xinjiang tong sulian jingji maoyi guanxi" [Xinjiang-Soviet Economic Trade Relations during the period of the Republic of China], in Xinjiang Daxue (ed.), *Xinjiang daisu jingmao wendi yanjiu* [Studies on Economics and Trade between Xinjiang and the Soviet Union] (Urumqi, 1987), p. 284.

6. Zhang Chengzhi *et al.*, "Yi-ta,-a sanqu shangyie...", p. 27.

Although the Development Company was under the Yili regime's administration, in name at least, the mining industry (probably coal and petrol excluded) in the Three Districts was probably almost entirely out of the Yili regime's control. Under the Yili regime's administration from 1945 to 1949, the Soviet Union enjoyed an almost exclusive right to mineral exploitation, especially exploration for non-ferrous metals (including uranium) in the Three Districts.

The Soviets' mining activities were focused in Wenquan in the Yili District and Fuyun in the Ashan District. The Soviets came to Wenquan to exploit tungsten ore as early as 1938. In 1943, when the Soviet Union was "shown the door" by Sheng Shicai, Soviet geological teams had to withdraw from Xinjiang and with them, their machinery. The full staff of the tungsten mine in Wenquan was about 3,000 in 1941. In 1945, shortly after the establishment of the ETR, Soviet geological teams came back to Wenquan. In 1946, 10,000 local workers (Uighurs, Kazaks and Mongols) were employed. In the following year the number increased to 20,000, a 100-per-cent increase on the previous year and a seven-fold increase from 1941. Through the use of up-to-date machinery the production of tungsten ore rapidly increased. The total production in 1945-47 reached more than 1,600 tons which was a thirty-two-fold increase on the output of 1941-43 (about 50 tons).¹

It seems that the Soviet Union did not exploit the gold deposits under the Yili regime's administration. The gold mines in Ashan were closed down. All mining machinery in these gold mines had been moved to the tungsten ore mines and other mineral deposits which were much more valuable than gold. Apart from tungsten ore, which was vital to the Soviet iron and steel industry, the Russians were also interested in radioactive deposits. Samples of

1. Files of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Undated telegram of 1948 of the Northwestern Headquarters of the National Government to the Minister of Defence in Nanjing, in Qin Xiaoyi, ed., *Zhonghua minguo zhongyao shiliao chubian* [Historical Material of the Republic of China] vol. 7, part 2, (Zhongguo Guomindang Dangshi Weiyuanhui, Taipei, 1981), p. 804.

five different mineral ores were smuggled to Dihua. The Northwest Headquarters sent a report with these samples to Nanjing.¹

Ashan is also rich in uranium deposits. It was recorded in a CCP source that the Soviet Union exploited a uranium mine there.² Not surprisingly, the Americans in Xinjiang had made many efforts to try to find out whether uranium was mined by the Soviets or not.

It is doubtful that there was any agreement between the Yili regime and the USSR which allowed the Russians to operate any mining enterprises in the Yili regime. In July 1946, when Osman sent his men to stop the Russians from operating the tungsten mine in Ashan, the Soviets declared that they had a ten-year agreement with the Chinese government.³ At this time, Osman had not yet gone over to the GMD. He, as the Commissioner of the Yili regime in Ashan and a member of the Xinjiang provincial government, should have been informed of any agreement between the Yili regime and the USSR on mining industries in Ashan if such an agreement existed. Osman approached Delilhan, the other senior officer of the Yili regime in Ashan, and asked him who had permitted the Russians to run mining industries in Ashan. Delihan did not know of any agreement either.⁴ Osman then sent a representative, Halati Bayi, to Dihua to enquire about agreements with the USSR. Osman's report caught the attention of Chiang Kai-shek who, on 13 September, ordered Wang Shijie, the Minister for Foreign Affairs,

1. Report of the Local Court of the Qitai County on the Soviet's Mining Activities in Koktokay, quoted in Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishinian* 12:7227; 12:7229. CF China IA 893.00/7-647.

2. Deng Liqun, "Xinjiang heping jiefang qianhou" [Before and after the Peaceful Liberation of Xinjiang], *Jindaishi Yanjiu* no. 5 (1989), p. 149.

3. Telegram of Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Shijie, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 13/09/1946, quoted in Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishinian*, 12:7222. Haji Nabi Waliyov, "Xiri Altay de fengyun" [Cloud over Altay], *Xinjiang wenshi ziliao* [A Selection of Xinjiang Historical and Literary Materials], vol. 13, pp. 41-42.

4. *Ibid.* It was mostly unlikely that the Soviets ran mining industry in Ashan under any agreement with the Yili Regime, since Ahmet Jan did not mention mining industry at all in his report to the CCP on economy of the Yili Regime. LDD, 26/08/1949.

to investigate the matter.¹ On 7 November, Wang Shijie reported to Chiang that, according to Liu Zerong, the Special Representative of Foreign Affairs in Xinjiang, Sheng Shicai, probably had a mining agreement with the USSR, but the details were unknown and that:

... if there was any sort of agreement [between Sheng and the USSR], we should declare it null and void since such an agreement has never been approved by the central government.²

The so-called “ten-year agreement” mentioned by the Soviets to Osman, was probably the secret agreement between Sheng Shicai and the USSR signed on 26 November, 1940. Under international law, the agreement could not have been legal since it had never been approved by the central Chinese government. Moreover, Sheng Shicai himself had also declared it null and void in 1942.³ Interestingly, even the Soviet scholars did not include mining products on the list of import-export goods between the Soviet Union and Xinjiang from 1946–49.⁴

The Soviets came voluntarily to the Three Districts to operate mining industries, enjoying exclusive rights of exploration and exploitation of mines there. Soviet mining engineers and technicians arrived in the Three Districts with their own military forces. In the Koktokay mining area there were 120 guards who built a fort, armed with rifles, light machine guns, two cannons and a radio transmitter-receiver.⁵ Under the illegal Sheng Shicai–Soviet secret agreement of 1940, the Soviet Union was required to, firstly, “pay the government of Sinkiang five per cent of the tin and its ancillary useful minerals” (under article 7), and secondly, to “con-

1. Telegram of Chiang Kai-shek to Wang Shijie, Minister of Foreign Affairs, 13/09/1946, quoted in Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12:7222.

2. Telegram of Wang Shijie to Chiang Kai-shek, 07/11/1946, quoted in Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishinian*, 12:7223.

3. *Ibid.*, 12:7223–7224.

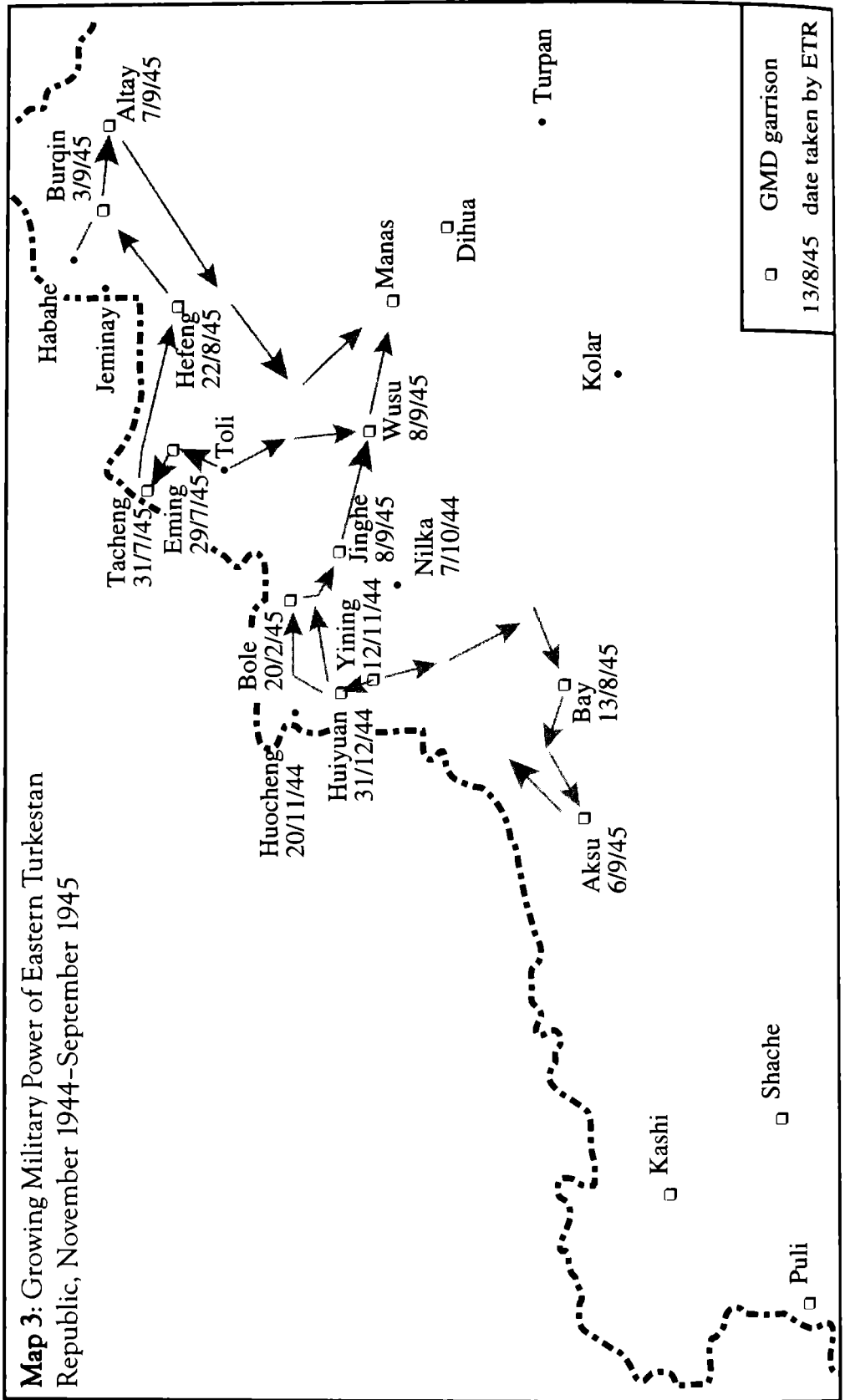
4. See e. g. Sladkovskii, M. I., *Istoriya Torgovo-Ekonomicheskikh Otnosheniy SSSR s Kitayem 1917–1974* [A History of Trade-Economic Relations between the USSR and China 1917–1974], (Izdatel'stvo Nauka, Moskva, 1977), p. 187.

tribute annually to the government of Sinkiang a sum equivalent to two per cent of the price of the products" (under article 8).¹ However, the Soviets exploited tungsten and radioactive minerals entirely independently. There is no evidence to show that the Soviets paid "5 per cent of the tin and its ancillary" or "2 per cent of the sum of the products" to the Yili regime authorities. The products of the Soviet mining enterprises in the Three Districts were sent directly to the USSR by trucks.² In return, apart from some weapons for the Yili Regime paid in the form of local products (mining products probably included), local Moslems under the Yili regime had not received any compensation. It was not surprising that the Soviets were angry with Osman's shift to the GMD and encouraged Outer Mongolia to teach the GMD and Osman a lesson in Beitashan.

5. Telegram of the Special Representative of Foreign Affairs in Xinjiang to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 1947, quoted in Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishinian*, 12:7224. Report of the Local Court of the Qitai County on Soviet Mining Activities in Koktokay, quoted in *ibid.*, 12:7227-7228.

1. The full text of "Agreement of Concessions signed by the the representatives of the government of U.S.S.R. and Governor of Sinkiang [Sheng Shicai]" in English version is available in Whiting, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* Appendix B, pp. 280-286.

2. Wang, "Under Soviet Shadow", p. 266.



III.

XINJIANG PROVINCIAL COALITION GOVERNMENT 1946-47

In the course of negotiations with the Yili Regime, Zhang Zhizhong - under his pro-Soviet and peace policy - made significant concessions to, and reached an agreement with the Yili Regime. Consequently, the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government was established. According to the agreement, the Three Districts under the Yili Regime and the Seven Districts were to be integrated as one under the Coalition.

As discussed earlier in this study, however, Xinjiang's events of 1940s were closely associated with the then international situation as well as the domestic affairs in China as a whole. With civil war looming in China Proper, the Soviet Union was not happy with the extension of US influence into Xinjiang. Under these circumstances, the Yili Regime refused to give up its *de facto* independence in the Three Districts, and, instead, launched continuous political offensives in the Seven Districts.

The International and Domestic Situation

Xinjiang, together with two Moslem puppet regimes in northern Iran (the Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan and the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad), formed the Soviet Inner Asian bulwark

against the extension of US influence to the Soviet frontier.¹ The independence of Outer Mongolia had already been guaranteed under the Sino-Soviet Treaty of August 1945. While keeping Outer Mongolia firmly under Soviet control, Stalin endeavoured to drive American influence out of both Manchuria and Xinjiang. In Xinjiang, the *de facto* independent status of the Yili Regime had already offered Stalin an advantage in counter-balancing the expansion of American influence in Xinjiang. Neither the confrontation between the Yili Regime and the GMD in Xinjiang, nor the struggle between the CCP and the GMD in Manchuria and China Proper were purely domestic conflicts of China. Soviet-US rivalry played an important part in both.

Xinjiang was, and still is, a province of China. The phenomenon of Xinjiang was an epitome of the political situation in China as a whole. In the Cold War, the United States intended to use the GMD as a counterbalance to Soviet influence in Manchuria, Xinjiang and other parts of China. To counter the expansion of American influence, the Soviet Union encouraged the Yili Rebellion in Xinjiang and assisted the CCP in China Proper and Manchuria. Under such circumstances both the GMD and the CCP were inevitably drawn towards their respective camps. Therefore, it was no surprise that Zhang Zhizhong's pro-Soviet and non-anti-American peace policy was not practicable in either China Proper or Xinjiang. Consequently the fate of the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government was sealed.

The Yili Regime's Political Offensives, 1946-47

Due to distance it was not easy for the United States to extend its full influence in Xinjiang. Although Soviet-US rivalry in Xinjiang had never been as intensive as it was in Manchuria, it did not mean that Xinjiang was free from the Soviet-US rivalry in the Cold War. The Yili Regime's political offensive after the establish-

1. A detailed account on the two republics in Iran is available in Forbes, A. D. W., *Warlords and Muslims* pp. 261-263, Appendix IV.

ment of the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition constituted a part of the Soviets' countermeasure to the American expansion in Xinjiang.

After 1946, when Paxton, an anti-Soviet and anti-Communist personality in the American foreign service, took his post in the American Consulate in Dihua, the United States intensified its anti-Soviet activities in Xinjiang.¹

Whilst a number of Western journalists and American diplomats were flocking to Beitashan when the Beitashan Incident occurred, the pro-US GMD government lodged an official protest to the Soviet Union on the Soviet invasion of Xinjiang territory and launched a nation-wide anti-Soviet propaganda campaign.²

Pravda followed suit with a "rumor from Shanghai" according to which the United States had instigated the clash in Sinkiang. The American Consul in Urumchi, it reported, had visited the border area upon instructions from General Eisenhower two months before the fighting began.³

In October 1948, upon his return to Dihua from Moscow, Savilieff, the Soviet Consul-General argued with Tao Zhiyue, the GMD's Commander-in-Chief in Xinjiang:

At present, it's very urgent to settle the problems of Xinjiang's internal affairs. I believe in General Zhang Zhizhong's determination to solve these problems. It seems, however, that it would not be good to delay, as a third party may take advantage of it to interfere which may cause more difficulties in settling the problems.⁴

1. See Song Xiliang, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu* [The Eagle-Hawk General - Autobiography of Song Xilian] (Beijing, Zhongguo wenshi, 1986) pp. 199-210. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu* pp. 530-531. Deng Liqun, "Xinjiang heping jiefang qianhou", pp. 143; 145-146. CF China IA 893.00/5-2549, Subject: Comments by Diplomatic and Military Officials in China on Proposals for U. S. Aid to West and Northwest China.

2. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, p. 532.

3. Dallin, D. J., *Soviet Russia and the Far East* (New Haven, Yale, 1948) p. 367.

4. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, p. 555.

Obviously, the “third party” referred to was none other the United States.

Although the Soviet Union was pleased with Zhang Zhizhong’s pro-Soviet policy, it was clearer to the Soviets that because of the circumstances of the world-wide Cold War and the US-supported GMD’s struggle against the CCP in China Proper, Zhang Zhizhong’s pro-Soviet policy alone would not be able to save Soviet privileges in Xinjiang or to keep American influence out of the Soviet backyard. In this case, it was absolutely necessary for the Soviet Union not only to preserve the Yili Regime’s *de facto* independence, but also to intensify the Yili Regime’s anti-GMD political offensives under the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government, in order to ward off American encroachments on Xinjiang and to maintain Xinjiang as a buffer between the two Powers. In the shadow of the Soviet-US rivalry in China the pro-Soviet Moslem leaders in Yili launched full-scale political offensives against the pan-Turkist Moslems headed by Masud, and the pro-GMD Moslem nationalists, like Osman and Yolbas as well as the GMD authorities in Xinjiang. These political offensives led to the collapse of the Coalition Government.

The *De Facto* Independence Status of The Yili Regime

In a letter of September 1945 to the Chinese central government, the Soviet Union announced that the Moslem rebels in Yining had no intention of separating from China. During the negotiations with the GMD, the Yili Regime’s representatives also abandoned their demand for independence. Ahmet Jan himself, the leader of the Yili Regime, declared many times that the Three Districts were a part of Xinjiang as well as of China.

In fact, from November 1944, when the ETR was declared, to 1949, when the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) entered Xinjiang, there were two separate regimes – the Three Districts of the Yili Regime and the Seven Districts of the GMD – independent of each other and in confrontation with each other for five years. The

Yili Regime successfully extended its influence in the GMD ruled area, while the GMD was never able to extend its own administrative power or to send a soldier to the Three Districts ruled by the Yili Regime.¹

With regard to the troops, the Yili Regime intended to expel the GMD troops from Xinjiang. On the question of election of local officers, Yili's pro-Soviet Moslems planned to replace pan-Turkists and other pro-GMD Moslems with their own men. It was Ahmet Jan, who successfully extended "the Three Districts Revolution" to the rest of Xinjiang.

The Eastern Turkestan Youth League (the ETYL)

The first action of the Yili Regime's representatives, shortly after they took up their posts in the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government, was to establish their organizations and use their official positions in Dihua to launch propaganda offensives in the Seven Districts.

Ahmet Jan, using his power as Vice-Governor of the Coalition Government, put his trusted followers in key positions in both the Coalition Government in Dihua and regional administrations in the Seven Districts. Under the arrangements of Ahmet Jan, Abdul Kerim Mahsum took up the post of Commissioner in Kashi, and Abdul Rehman was nominated as the Head of Turpan County.² With the appointments of these two, both pro-Soviet and Yili Regime supporters, the Yili Regime was able to organize its political offensives in the south as well as in the east of Xinjiang. Ahmet Jan also reorganized the Uighur Cultural Society controlled by the Yili Regime into an official organization against the GMD, whilst the Eastern Turkestan Youth League (ETYL) was founded in the Three Districts in late 1945.³ The Uighur Cultural Society and the Eastern Turkestan Revolutionary Youth League were

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 453-454.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 458.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 460.

the main organizations of the Yili Regime in directing the political offensives against the GMD regime in the Seven Districts.

The 25 February Incident in Dihua, the anti-government demonstrations in southern Xinjiang, the Osman and Beitashan Incidents and the *Tu-Shan-To* Incident which occurred one after another in the spring and summer of 1947, were the major causes of the collapse of the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government. With the exception of the Osman and Beitashan Incidents, the ETYL played a dominant role in these incidents.

The 25 February Incident

The 25 February Incident of 1947 in Dihua was the first major dispute between the Yili Regime and the GMD since the formation of the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government. Shortly after the establishment of the Coalition Government the Yili Regime, taking the opportunity of the election of local officers, launched its political offensive in the Seven Districts. An official source states:

The Three Districts aimed ... to force the GMD authorities to hand over the posts of commissioners of the districts of Hotan, Shache, Hami and Dihua under the GMD's control to the pro-Three Districts elements. If this objective were realized ... eight [of the ten] Districts [in Xinjiang] would have been brought under the control of the Three Districts ... then, people of these districts would be encouraged to oppose the local [GMD] garrisons. In this case, [the GMD] troops would have found it difficult to maintain their presence and would have to withdraw from Xinjiang.¹

At this stage, the posts of commissioners of the four districts were held by Nurbeg (Hotan), Yolbas (Hami), Hadwan (Dihua) and Zhou Fanggang (Shache). Later on, Osman, the Commissioner of the Ashan District, sided with the GMD. All of these, together with Salis, the Vice-Secretary-General of the Coalition Government,

1. Ibid., pp. 466-467.

and Janimhan, the Treasurer of the Government, were pro-GMD Moslem nationalists (Zhou Fanggang was a Han).¹ The removal of these pro-GMD as well as the pan-Turkist Moslems headed by Masud Sabri from their posts in the Coalition Government, and the forced withdrawal of the GMD troops from Xinjiang were the two major goals of the Yili Regime's political drive under the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government. The Yili Regime's offensives were concentrated on the Dihua District, containing Dihua City, Turpan, Shanshan and Toksun counties, and on the Kashi District.

The 25 February Incident therefore revealed the two major goals of the Yili Regime's political offensives.

In February the Provincial Coalition Government set up a committee to discuss the implementation of the Peace Agreement, and a mass meeting chaired by Abdul Ahet Mahsum, a Yili Regime follower, was held by the Uighur Cultural Society on 20 February.² This was followed by a demonstration in the streets and a petition to the Provincial Coalition Government. On 21 February, Ahmet Jan came back to Dihua from the National Assembly in Nanjing and immediately conferred with the Soviet Consulate in Dihua until late that night.³ On the same day, under the leadership of the Uighur Cultural Society, more than five thousand people gathered for another demonstration. The demonstrators presented a 50-point petition to Liu Mengchun, the Secretary-General of the Coalition Government, demanding a reply within 72 hours. According to a source in Urumqi, the main points of the petition were as follows:

- The withdrawal of GMD troops to China Proper;
- A local people's military force to be organized in Aksu and Kashi;

1. Burhan, *Xinjiang wushi nian* [Fifty Years in Xinjiang], (Beijing, Wenshi ziliao, 1984).p. 307.

2. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 467.

3. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian* [Seventy-year's Turmoil in Xinjiang], (Taipei, Lanxi, 1980). 12:7326.

- Military authorities should stop interfering in local affairs;
- The Commissioner of each district should be selected from among local people;
- Hadwan, the Commissioner of the Dihua District ... Yolbars, the Commissioner of the Hami District; Zhou Fanggang, the Commissioner of the Shache District, and Nurbeg, the Commissioner of the Hotan District and others should be dismissed.¹

According to an English writer, the main concern of this petition was “for full, immediate implementation of the agreement”.² It seemed unlikely that the Uighur Cultural Society’s petition did demand a “FULL and IMMEDIATE implementation” of the Peace Agreement. If the Society had done so, under the Agreement first of all, it was not the GMD who would have withdrawn its troops from Xinjiang, but the Yili Regime who would have allowed the GMD’s troops to enter the Three Districts; secondly, the Yili Regime, instead of opposing other Moslem members of the Government, should have been integrating and uniting itself with the Coalition Government, which was based on the principles of the Peace Agreement.

The key points of the petition by the Uighur Cultural Society concerned two matters: the withdrawal of the GMD troops from Xinjiang and the removal of all pro-GMD Moslem and non-Moslem district commissioners and other officers in the Provincial Coalition Government. The two key points were also the main ideas behind the Yili Regime’s political offensives in Kashi, Turpan and other areas of the Seven (GMD-controlled) Districts. The Yili Regime’s political demands, such as withdrawal of the central government’s troops from Xinjiang, had been firmly refused by Zhang Zhizhong during the negotiations between the Yili Regime and the GMD, since – in Zhang’s eyes – these de-

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 467–468. Also see Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12:7326–7327.

2. Benson, L., *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 108.

mands would have affected Chinese sovereignty over Xinjiang. It was due to the Yili Regime's withdrawal of these proposals that the Peace Agreement was reached. It was definitely not a full and immediate implementation of the Peace Agreement if the Yili Regime stuck to its demand on the withdrawal of the GMD troops from Xinjiang.

Yolbars, the leader of the Moslem rebellion in Hami in 1931, fled to Nanjing under Sheng Shicai's persecution, as did Masud, and returned to Xinjiang after the establishment of the GMD's influence in the mid-1940s. Both Salis and Janimhan were Kazaks and allies of Osman. Hadwan was also a pro-GMD Kazak. The reason for the Yili Regime's opposition to other pro-GMD Moslems was their anti-Soviet and pro-US-GMD stand. In accordance with this, not surprisingly, Yolbars, Hadwan and Janimhan, together with Osman and Masud, were frequently classified as anti-Soviet elements and "running dogs of the US imperialists" by Soviet literature.¹ If they, or most of them, were removed from their posts in the Coalition Government and replaced by Yili's men, the political situation in Xinjiang as a whole would certainly tip in favour of the Soviet Union in the Soviet-US rivalry. Later on, the Yili Regime also demanded the dismissal of Osman and Masud during the unrest in south Xinjiang and the Tu-Shan-To area.

It was Liu Mengchun, the Secretary-General of the Provincial Coalition Government, who met the petitioners gathering in front of the Government building from about 2.00 pm until late that evening. Liu Mengchun was not allowed to leave. It was clear that he was unable to respond positively or negatively to the serious demands. Finally, Ahmet Jan and Burhan decided to call an urgent meeting of the Provincial Coalition Government the next day to discuss the petition. Following the instructions of Ahmet Jan and Burhan, Liu Mengchun informed the petitioners

1. Mingulov, "Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noye..."p. 84. Yakovlev, "K Voprosu...", pp. 177-178.

about this coming meeting. It worked well: the petitioners were happy with this arrangement and went home.¹

Next day at an urgent meeting, chaired by Ahmet Jan, Burhan, a pro-Soviet Moslem, delivered a speech, arguing in favour of meeting the demands of the petitioners. He was followed by Abasoff, who presented an eight-point proposal for the removal of pro-GMD district commissioners. Some government members opposed it. The meeting was deadlocked. It remained so until the afternoon, when, on the motion of Ahmet Jan, a representative of the petitioners was invited to give a speech. The representative fiercely criticized the GMD's misrule and military interference in civil affairs. When the representative left, Ahmet Jan suggested the removal of Nurbeg and Zhou Fanggang first. With no objections, his motion was passed.² At this stage, if Nurbeg and Zhou Fanggang had been replaced by two pro-Soviet and pro-Yili-Regime Moslems as commissioners of the Hotan and Shache Districts, three of the five districts in southern Xinjiang (the pro-Soviet and pro-Yili-Regime Abdul Kerim Mahsum had already been appointed as the Commissioner of the Kashi District) would have been brought under the control of the Yili Regime. It was obvious that so far, the pro-Soviet Moslems had won the first round in persuading the Coalition Government to remove the pro-GMD Moslems.

The news of the removal of the pro-GMD Nurbeg and Zhou Fanggang shocked Han Chinese in Dihua, who were worried about a possible repetition of the Yining Incident and a subsequent anti-Han massacre in Dihua. The Yili Regime's demands for the removal of the pro-GMD and anti-Soviet Moslems, Hadwan, Salis, Yolbars and for the punishment of Osman also caused unrest amongst some Uighurs and Kazaks in Dihua.³ On 24 and 25 February, the GMD hard-liners organized counter-demonstrations which ended in bloodshed.

1. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 226.

2. Burhan, *Xinjiang Wushi nian*, p. 307.

3. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 228.

The Unrest in Southern Xinjiang

The Yili Regime's struggle for more political power was reflected in the election of local officers. The Electoral Act was adopted by the members of the Provincial Coalition Government, including Ahmet Jan and other Yili representatives. The Yili Regime, however, planned to do things its own way. In Dihua, Turpan, Kuqa and Kashi, handbills and propaganda pamphlets were widely distributed, calling for the unification of all members of the Eastern Turkestan Youth League to take "revolutionary" action in the election.¹ The Yili Regime's struggle was emphasized in the Kashi and Turpan areas.

Shortly after the proclamation of the Provincial Coalition Government, Ahmet Jan, together with Burhan, proposed the appointment of Abdul Kerim Mahsum, a pro-Soviet and pro-Yili-Regime Moslem, as the Commissioner of the Kashi District. Zhang Zhizhong adopted this nomination. After this appointment, Ahmet Jan sent a group of his men to Kashi to organize and agitate the local people. Ahmet Jan's men's activities were so effective that within a few months several thousand young people joined the organization of the ETYL. They frequently demonstrated with slogans, such as "Withdraw the central government troops from Xinjiang!"; "Establish ethnic militia forces!"; "Establish the Eastern Turkestan Republic!". Small-scale disputes with garrisons were frequently created by the ETYL as well.²

After the 25 February Incident in Dihua, Yili's men in Kashi showed an active and positive response to the petitioners organized by Uighur Cultural Society in Dihua. On 4 March, members of the Soviet Consulate attended a meeting held in Abdul Kerim Mahsum's private residence. According to a telegram from the local garrison to the Headquarters in Dihua, one thousand students demonstrated in the streets of Kashi on 9 March. On 24 March a crowd of a thousand gathered in front of the barracks and in the street, shouting abuse and singing *The International*.³

1. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12:7150.

2. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 255.

3. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12: 7372.

At the same time, Abdul Kerim Mahsum, the Commissioner of the Kashi District, telegraphed instructions to the Yili Regime's followers in Hotan and Shache to make an active response to the demonstrations in Kashi.¹

In order to assess the situation in south Xinjiang and to stop the military authorities from interfering in civil affairs, Zhang Zhizhong, along with Ahmet Jan, Masud and Liu Zerong, left Dihua for Aksu on 16 April by plane for a tour of south Xinjiang. On 22 April, Zhang Zhizhong attended a mass meeting in Kashi, at which several young Uighur people delivered sharp speeches arguing for the withdrawal of GMD troops from Xinjiang.²

One of them called: "We must initiate another revolution and more bloodshed. Otherwise the problems will not be solved!" People at the meeting shouted furiously: "Zhang Zhizhong! Zhang Zhizhong!" On the evening of 7 May, when Zhang Zhizhong returned from his visit to Hotan and Kashi, about six thousand people surrounded the Commissioner's Office where Zhang Zhizhong was staying, yelling "Down with the GMD regime!"; "Down with Zhang Zhizhong!"; "Kill Zhang Zhizhong!". Shocked and angry, Zhang Zhizhong flew back to Dihua early next morning.³

The Tu-Shan-To Bloodshed Incident

In May, Masud was appointed Zhang Zhizhong's successor as the Governor of Xinjiang. In July in Turpan, Toksun and Shan-shan, Yili organized military action to oppose both the GMD and pan-Turkist Masud. The disputes in the Seven Districts between the Yili Regime and the GMD ended with the Tu-Shan-To Bloodshed in July and the collapse of the Coalition Government.

Why and how did it occur? According to Saifudin, one of the leaders of the Yili Regime, and Kutlukov, a Soviet scholar, the

1. Ibid.

2. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 475.

3. Ibid. Also Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12:7382. For Zhang Zhizhong's own account of this tour, see Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, p. 493-499.

event began with a dispute between the users and the owners of the confiscated properties.¹ When the Coalition Government decided to recover the so-called “rebels’ properties” confiscated by the Sheng Shicai regime, the GMD local garrison supplied the Han and Hui owners with arms. Abdul Rahman, the Head of Turpan County and a progressive Uighur, intended to resolve the dispute peacefully, but “the GMD military and civil officials of renown had already set up their trap for him”. Then the dispute became “a people’s uprising in fact as well as in name”.²

Saifudin did not mention what “trap” had been laid by the GMD officers, nor how and when they carried out their plot. Saudanov, one of the military leaders of the Yili Regime, however, gave a different interpretation of the Tu-Shan-To rebellion. He wrote:

Abdul Rahman, the Head of Turpan County, was ... an active supporter of the Three District Revolution ... In the dangerous and difficult situation, these comrades [Abdul Rahman and his followers] still continued their revolutionary activities ... they secretly organized small underground guerrilla forces which operated on the GMD’s transportation line between north Xinjiang and south Xinjiang...

... One day in July 1947 ... Abdul Rahman fled from a county town at night, and then he organized and led the rebellion of guerrilla forces in Turpan, Shanshan and Toksun counties.

On 8 July, armed people in Shanshan first attacked the GMD’s police stations and killed the policemen...³

1. Saifudin, *Tianshan xiongying*, p. 140. Kutlukov, M., “Natsional’no-Osvoboditel’noe Dvizhenie 1944-1949 gg. v Sin’tsyane kak Sostavnaya Chast’ Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Revolyutsii”, [The National-Liberation Movement of 1944-1949 in Xinjiang as a Part of the People’s Revolution in China], in *Sbornik Pabot Aspirantov, Otdelenie Obshchestvennykh Nauk, AN UzSSR, Bypusk 2* (Tashkent, 1958) p. 289.

2. Saifudin, *Tianshan xiongying*, pp. 140-144.

3. Saudanov, Z., *Wujun de geming licheng* [The Revolutionary Course of the Fifth Army]. (Beijing, Jiefangjun, 1989) pp. 66-67.

Thus, Saudanov's statement indicates that the Tu-Shan-To rebellion was organized and led by Abdul Rahman Muhiti, the Head of Turpan County, and the purpose of the rebellion was to remove Masud and to drive the GMD troops out of Xinjiang. According to a Soviet secret agent in Dihua, Nawajan, one of the leaders of the rebellion, confessed under arrest by the GMD military authorities after the crackdown that Ahmet Jan had sent him there to organize the rebellion.¹

The crucial step leading to the rebellion was the appointment of a pro-Yili-Regime person as the Head of Turpan County. No sooner had the New Provincial Coalition Government been established than Ahmet Jan, taking advantage of Zhang Zhizhong's inclination to please the Yili Regime, nominated pro-Yili Abdul Rahman for the post.²

Shortly after taking up his post, Abdul Rahman began to organize the Eastern Turkestan Youth League which was based in the towns of Erbao and Sanbao. Ahmet Jan frequently sent armed men from Dihua to this area to support them. Their policy was to expel the GMD troops from Xinjiang and to cut off their food supply.³

According to Song Xilian, however, the rebellion of July 1947 was not a premeditated uprising of the Yili Regime.⁴ Since Masud Sabri took up his governorship on 28 May, the Beitashan Incident occurred on 5 June and the GMD military authorities had to move some troops from the Dihua area to Qitai, the Yili Regime considered the time had come for them to act.⁵ From mid-June, guerrilla forces waylaid GMD military trucks on the road and attacked police stations. Both civil (passengers on highways) and military (GMD soldiers and policemen) casualties were reported.

1. Wang, D., "Under Soviet Shadow", p. 215.

2. This appointment had caused much concern to Song Xilian. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 254.

3. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 459.

4. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 254.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 259.

The Yili Regime sent its force headed by Hamiti to Alaguo, about sixty kilometres west of Toksun County. On 12 July Abdul Rahman and Baudon, Vice-Head of Turpan County, secretly left Turpan for Sanbao, where they met Namenjan, Director of the Uighur Cultural Society of Dihua. With Namenjan's men, they reorganized the forces in Turpan and Shanshan into troops of a thousand with twenty machine guns and five-six hundred rifles.¹

At 4.00 am the following morning they launched an attack on Shengjinkuo.² If the Yili Regime's plan had been successful, the GMD's troops in Xinjiang would have been divided into three: in the northern, southern and eastern parts of Xinjiang. This time, Zhang Zhizhong had no choice but to order a counter-attack against the rebels.³

The above-mentioned sources showed that the Tu-Shan-To rebellion was almost certainly a result of the Yili Regime's political offensive in the Seven Districts, although the rebellion was not scheduled for July 1947. The purpose of the rebellion was to force the GMD to take its troops out of Xinjiang and to dismiss Masud from his post.

Osman and the Beitashan Incident

It was Osman who led the first rebellion against the Chinese Xinjiang authorities, long before the ETR movement entered the scene. The Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia rescued him from that venture; when he was facing an impasse, he changed his anti-Soviet Union and anti-Sheng Shicai stand and allied himself with the Soviet Union. His men became the main military force in the Yili Regime's fight against the GMD authorities in Ashan.

Why did Osman shift his allegiance from the Yili Regime to the GMD after the formation of the Provincial Coalition Government? According to Chinese (both the CCP and the GMD), Turkish (the

1. Ibid., pp. 259-261.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., pp. 261-263. Also see XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 493-494.

Yili Regime) and English sources, it was due to the Yili Regime's elimination of Ali Han Ture, the Chairman of the Yili government which was a result of Soviet interference in the Rebellion. One of the authoritative publications in Xinjiang, says:

Osman was a capricious anti-Soviet and counter-revolutionary bandit ... In December 1945 [sic], when ... Ali Han Ture was eliminated ... he was deeply concerned that his turn might come soon. Besides, due to the support of Yining, Delilhan's [the pro-Soviet Kazak leader in Ashan] forces were getting more and more powerful. Therefore ... in July, 1946 after the formation of the Provincial Coalition Government ... he decided to split from the Three Districts and go over to the GMD.¹

Song Xilian, to whom Osman himself explained in the winter of 1947 in Qitai why he went over to the GMD, recorded Osman's words in his memoirs:

In 1944, when the Yili Incident broke out I came to terms secretly with Ali Han ... and then I decided to take part in the Incident ... Soon after Ali Han discovered that some of the key leaders of the Yining Incident were either Soviets or people with the Soviet citizenship ... who were controlled by the Soviet Consulate in Yili ... he and other Kazak leaders were arrested. Ahmet Jan and his men knew my connections with Ali Han ... They knew I was not obedient to them. So they tried to expel me and to replace me with Delilhan. Therefore I asked the central government for help...²

In Forbes, an English scholar's, opinion, Osman's breaking away from Yili was closely associated with "the subordination of rebel interests to Soviet control".³ One Turkic source states that the purpose of Osman making an agreement with the GMD was "to force the three districts to expel all Russians".⁴

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 478.

2. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 241. Similar statement is available in Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, p. 536.

3. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims* pp. 201; 203.

4. Benson, L., "Osman Batur: The Kazak's Golden Legend", p. 175.

This clearly suggests that Osman, the leader of the Kazak rebels in Ashan and a Moslem nationalist, was not strong enough to oppose Sheng Shicai's rule and, therefore, had to rely on external backing from the Soviets and the Outer Mongolians. He and Ali Han Ture were too weak on their own to stand up to Ahmet Jan and his Soviet-backed Moslem leaders in Yili. In the ensuing struggle among the Moslem factions in the Yili Regime (the pro-Soviet Moslems, the pan-Islamists and Osman's nationalist Moslems), the pro-Soviet Moslems had the upper hand. Ali Han Ture, an anti-Hanist who was unwilling to seek the GMD's support, had no alternative but to face elimination by the pro-Soviet Moslems. For Osman, however, the GMD was preferable to the Soviet Union. Therefore he went over to the GMD.

Shortly after the proclamation of the Provincial Coalition Government, Osman sent his own representative to Dihua to see Zhang Zhizhong. Zhang Zhizhong invited both Ahmet Jan and Burhan to meet Osman's representative, who presented Osman's letter, asking for aid and the sending of GMD troops to Ashan to be stationed at the frontier. It should be pointed out that under the Peace Agreement the GMD had to station troops along the border of the Three Districts with the Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia. After this meeting with Zhang Zhizhong, who was accompanied by Ahmet Jan, the representative also asked for a personal interview with Zhang Zhizhong. Zhang sent Liu Mengchun to see him, to whom he confessed that Osman was opposing the Soviets, who were exploiting mineral deposits in Ashan, and planning to expel them by force. Osman hoped that the GMD authorities would help him by sending troops to Ashan. A few days later, the second representative of Osman arrived at Dihua, asking, besides for weapons and the sending of troops to Ashan, for the installation of a radio transmitter receiver in Ashan.¹

The GMD military authorities, especially Song Xilian, actively responded to Osman's request for assistance and cooperation by

1. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, pp. 239-241. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, pp. 535-536.

sending him and Ali Beg weapons, ammunition, grain, equipment and a radio receiver-transmitter. With these aids, Osman and Ali Beg began to fight against both the Yili Regime and the Soviets in Ashan.¹ On August 1947, the southern part of the Ashan District was taken over by Osman. In mid-September, the Ashan District as a whole fell into Osman's hands, and then Osman moved his forces towards Tacheng. If Osman had been successful in taking over Tacheng, the fate of the Yili Regime would have been sealed. However, at this crucial time, the Soviet Union came to its rescue again. With the assistance of the Soviets and the Russian General of the YNA Leskin, Delilhan launched a counter-attack against Osman. By October 1947, Osman's influence was eliminated from the Ashan area.² Since the establishment of the Yili Regime, the Ashan District as a whole had never been brought under the firm control of the Yili Regime. This time, after the defeat of Osman in 1947, Delilhan replaced Osman as the Commissioner of the District. From then on the Ashan District was firmly in the hands of the Yili Regime.

The Beitashan Incident occurred at a time when the full-scale civil war in China Proper was around the corner and the Yili Regime and Osman's forces were fiercely fighting in Ashan. Located on Chinese soil, Beitashan is a mountain, fifteen kilometres long and ten kilometres wide, and about two hundred kilometres away from Qitai County, northeast of Dihua City.³

In mid-April 1947, Osman was defeated by the Soviet-Yili forces in north Ashan and withdrew his men to the Dashituo and Urunbruk areas, about twenty kilometers away in the west of Beitashan. From here Osman continued to send his men to north Ashan to fight against the Yili Regime's forces.⁴

1. Saudanov, *Wujun de geming licheng*, p. 69.

2. Saudanov, 'Xinjiang sanqu geming youguan qingkuang de huiyi' [Memoire on the Three Districts Revolution in Xinjiang], *Xinjiang wenshi ziliao* vol.16 (1986), p. 48; Saudanov, *Wujun de geming licheng*, p. 70.

3. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 489. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, pp. 245-246; 232-236.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 243; 246.

However, on 2 June, more than three months after the GMD stationed its troops at Beitashan, Outer Mongolia protested about a Chinese invasion of its soil. Two representatives of Outer Mongolia's frontier troops came to Beitashan and declared to the Chinese officer that this area belonged to the Mongolian People's Republic and that Ma Xizhen must withdraw his troops within seventy-two hours. At dawn on 5 June, Outer Mongolian troops launched a fierce attack on Ma Xizhen's position. Five aeroplanes with symbols of five-pointed red stars raided the position. During the next few days, fierce fighting ensued at Beitashan with Osman's forces also involved.¹

The Beitashan Incident provided the GMD government a basis for an anti-Soviet and anti-Communist campaign. It was widely reported in the major newspapers of the Government that the Soviet Union and Outer Mongolia had invaded China.² While Chinese authorities were launching an anti-Soviet campaign, the Soviet Union and the Mongolian People's Republic were denouncing the Chinese invasion of the Mongolian People's Republic's territory.

Since Outer Mongolia declared itself independent in 1924, there had not been a serious military dispute like the Beitashan Incident on the 1,000-kilometre Chinese-Outer Mongolian border, even though it was not well-demarcated.³ Besides, early in the 1940's when Osman began his anti-Sheng Shicai movement, the Soviet Union had provided Osman's forces through Outer Mongolia with large amounts of arms, equipment, and ammunition, as well as personnel and training. Outer Mongolia became the supply base for Osman's forces. For the purposes of either escaping from Sheng Shicai's persecution, or receiving military training and material aid from Outer Mongolia, Osman's men had frequently been in and out of Outer Mongolia. Osman himself had been to Outer

1. Ibid., pp. 246-247. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 490.

2. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 252. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, p. 532.

3. Except the fighting between the Soviet Union and Japan in the 1930's over the border with Manzhouguo.

Mongolia many times. Choibalsan, the top leader of Outer Mongolia, had received him on Outer Mongolian soil, at least once. However, Outer Mongolia had never once mentioned these border crossings to the Chinese authorities. Why then did the border dispute occur at Beitashan in June 1947, after Osman had gone over to the GMD and withdrawn his troops to the Beitashan area?

Osman's change over to the GMD occurred in a very tense atmosphere. After the establishment of the Yili Regime, the Soviets renewed and intensified their mineral exploitation activities on a much larger scale in the Three Districts, particularly in Ashan. Amidst the Soviet-US Cold War, the Americans were very much aware of what the Soviets were doing in Xinjiang, especially in the Three Districts. One of the key issues of the Soviet-US confrontation during the early stage of the Cold War was the nuclear race. Therefore, one of the major tasks for the Americans was to find out whether the Soviets had exploited the uranium deposits in Xinjiang, and whether or not the Soviets had atomic tests in Soviet Central Asia. Osman's shift to the GMD side offered a good opportunity for the Americans to gather intelligence on Soviet activities in Ashan.¹

Together with the GMD's hard-liners, the Americans also promised to provide assistance to Osman in his struggle against the Soviet Union and the Yili Regime. Osman, encouraged by the US and the GMD, sent his men to Ashan to spread propaganda.²

Osman's propaganda had the effect of lowering the spirit of some Kazaks in east Ashan under the Yili Regime, and they left their homeland for the GMD-ruled areas. Therefore, the Soviet Union had reason to treat Osman and Masud Sabri as "running dogs" of the US and the GMD reactionaries who had "touched an exposed nerve in Moscow".³

1. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, pp. 207-210.

2. Saudanov, *Wujun de geming licheng*, pp. 68-69.

3. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, pp. 212; 214-215.

Osman's change of allegiance to the GMD had obviously given the Chinese authorities a good opportunity to reassert China's sovereignty in the Three Districts, according to the 11-point Peace Agreement. The Chinese authorities, however, being fully occupied with the CCP in Manchuria and China proper in the Civil War, were not able to take any effective action to help Osman's fight against Yili. They adopted a traditional practice towards warlords. Instead of requiring Osman to put his forces under the direction of the central government, the Chinese authorities continued to treat them as a semi-independent army.

Last but not least, in order to understand the purpose of the Yili Regime's political offensives of 1946-47 in the Seven Districts, it would be helpful to investigate some Soviet scholars' research on the attitude of the Soviets in Dihua towards the events. On 24 February 1947 the Soviet Consul-General in Dihua made the following comments on the current events, in Paxton's report:

Chinese have only made paper promises without keeping them even on political terms ... Chinese have used "reactionary" native elements to strengthen their continued control ... some of these reactionaries were members of provincial government ... [The Soviet Consul-General] estimated that this situation [the tension occurred in February 1947] would continue until greater part of Central Government troops were withdrawn from province.¹

According to Kutlukov, it was in July 1946 when the second stage of the Yili Rebellion began. At this stage the struggle between democracy and anti-democracy forces was going on.² All Soviet scholars categorize Osman, Ali Beg, Masud, Isa, Emin and other anti-Soviet and anti-Communist Moslems, supported by the GMD and Americans, as anti-democracy forces. According to Mingulov, another Soviet scholar, the reactionaries' open struggle against

1. Paxton continued: "He [the Soviet Consul General] neglected... to explain why Central Government should not station troops where it pleased in own territory..." CF China IA 893.00/3-347.

2. Kutlukov, "O Kharaktere..." pp. 268-269.

democracy started in January 1947, and reactionaries and nationalists, such as Masud and Osman, received support from the USA and served the USA. The American official representatives in Xinjiang (for instance, the Vice-Consul MacKiernan) were the direct leaders and organizers of the reactionaries' activities in the province.¹ In Kutlukov's words: "A plot for so-called 'Beitashan Incident' of 5 June 1947 ... was hatched by Paxton and GMD's General Song Xilian."² "To follow the order of the American advisors", Chiang Kai-shek appointed Masud as the Chairman of the Provincial Government.³ "Concrete plans were prepared [by the Americans] to make Xinjiang as an anti-Soviet base."⁴ It was not surprising that the Yili Regime, to meet the needs of the Soviet Union, launched constant offensives against the American "running dogs", such as Masud and Osman, as well as the GMD in the Seven Districts.

The GMD's Response to the Yili Regime's Offensives

Zhang Zhizhong's Attitude

After the establishment of the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government, Zhang Zhizhong still tried very hard to continue his pro-Soviet peace policy. He treated the Yili Regime's political offensives with patience, tolerance, understanding and conciliation, and attempted to meet as many of the Yili Regime's demands as he could.

After the establishment of the Provincial Coalition Government Zhang Zhizhong tolerated the massacre of the Han Chinese

1. Mingulov, "Narody Sin'tszyana v Bop'be za Ustanovlenie Harodnoi Demokratii 1944-1949 gg.", [The Xinjiang Peoples in Struggle for Establishment of People's Democracy, 1944-1949], (Abstract of Dissertation in Moscow National University, 1956), p. 8.

2. Kutlukov, "Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noe...", p. 291.

3. Ibid., p. 287. Also see Yakovlev, "K Voprosu...", p. 173.

4. Kutlukov, p. 290.

in Tacheng and the murder by the Yili Regime of Tuyuze, an election supervisor of the Provincial Government in Ermin.¹

Zhang Zhizhong was away from Xinjiang, when the 25 February Incident occurred. He did not return until mid-March. He was furious with the action of the GMD military authorities² and he called a meeting with senior officers of both military and civil authorities on 31 March where he told them that the military interference in civil affairs was absolutely wrong.³

During his visit to south Xinjiang, Zhang Zhizhong was worried and unhappy with the behaviour of many of the military commanders who supported the conservatives against the radicals. In all the places he visited, Zhang Zhizhong always exhorted the local military authorities to stay away from controversies.⁴ Zhang Zhizhong's attitude towards the dispute between Osman and the Yining within the Three Districts was frank and open.⁵ However, in the face of the Yili Regime's political move against him in Kashi, Zhang Zhizhong began to contemplate resignation.

In early July, with the Yili Regime's assistance, its followers began their attack on the local garrison in the Tu-Shan-To area, killing people and stealing weapons and grain. Song Xilian together with other commanders in the Tu-Shan-To area sought Zhang Zhizhong's order to counter-attack. In the beginning Zhang Zhizhong did not agree with them. In his mind such an action would split the Yili Regime from the Provincial Coalition Government, and the fragile peace in Xinjiang would be lost. Zhang Zhizhong therefore instructed them to wait and see with patience and tolerance.⁶ The task given by Chiang Kai-shek to Zhang

1. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12: 7402-7403; 12: 7159-7150. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, pp. 537-539. Also CF China IA 893.00/2-2847.

2. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12:7337.

3. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, p. 508-509.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 499. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12:7176.

5. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, pp. 535-537. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishinian*, 12:7309-7310.

6. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 260.

Zhizhong was to stabilize Xinjiang, and he was worried that the use of force would lead to war.¹

Zhang Zhizhong's tolerance and concessions to the Yili Regime, however, had their limits. Guided by the key principle of "no harm to the Chinese sovereignty in Xinjiang",² he did as much as he could to meet the demands of the Yili Regime and to tolerate the Regime's offensives. Eventually, when the actions of the Yili Regime and its followers affected Chinese sovereignty in Xinjiang in their political offensives, his patience and tolerance came to an end.³

Demanding the withdrawal of the central government's troops from Xinjiang and the removal of the pro-central government's Moslem officers was not only a breach of the Peace Agreement but also a violation of the central government's sovereignty over Xinjiang. The Yili Regime's push was gathering momentum and placed Zhang Zhizhong, whose ultimate goal in this mission was to maintain China's sovereignty in Xinjiang, in a difficult dilemma, and almost caused him to lose confidence in his pro-Soviet and pro-Yili policy. Zhang Zhizhong forgave the Yili Regime for the bloodbaths in Tacheng and Ermin, and did not blame the Uighur Cultural Society for the 25 February Incident, which violated the terms of the Peace Agreement. However, confronted by the Yili Regime's relentless offensives and the pressure from the GMD hard-liners, he agreed to organize a counter-propaganda campaign in response to the Yili Regime's political assaults. After his visit to Kashi, where he himself was also ill-treated and insulted by the Yili Regime's followers, he too lost his patience.⁴

During the Tu-Shan-To rebellion, when the Yili Regime Moslems were attacking the GMD garrison and the GMD army commanders sought permission to counter-attack, Zhang Zhizhong ran out of patience and gave his order to put down the rebellion.

1. Ibid., p. 261.

2. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, p. 442.

3. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12:7398-7399.

4. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, pp. 256-257.

Military Interference in Civil Affairs

The military interference in civil affairs and the appointment of Masud Sabri were two major reasons for the Yili Regime withdrawing its representatives from Dihua, and led to the collapse of the Provincial Coalition Government in August 1947. Both the Yili Regime and the GMD understood the significance of military power. Some political aspects of the Agreement had been put into practice in the Seven Districts after the Provincial Coalition Government was formed.¹ The military terms of the Agreement, however, had never been implemented.

One of the main obstacles to the implementation of the military aspects of the Agreement (Supplement II) was the Yili Regime's refusal to reorganize its YNA. While still enjoying military privileges in the Three Districts, the Yili Regime accused the GMD authorities of violating the Peace Agreement. The main points of the accusation were contained in a letter dated 16 October 1947 from the Yili Regime, which was passed on by the Soviet Consulate-General to Zhang Zhizhong. According to an English source:

It listed six major Chinese violations of the Peace Agreement:

- (1) The Chinese had not fulfilled their promise to reduce the number of central government troops in the province but, on the contrary, had increased the numbers from 20,000-25,000 in 1944 to 90,000 in 1947.
- (2) No Peace Preservation Corps had been formed in Kashgar or Aksu.
- (3) Turki troops were not being treated the same as the Nationalist troops, as stipulated in the agreement; the Turki forces had received neither food nor ammunition.

1. For example, the participation of the Yili Regime in the administration of the Provincial Government, the election of local officers; the use of ethnic languages in schools and offices, the ratio of minority nationalities in government employment, etc., had all been implemented.

(4) The commander of the central government troops in Xinjiang incited and aided Osman Batur to attack the Altai area; and despite Osman's illegal actions, he and his supporters in the provincial government continued to hold their posts.

(5) The Chinese army, the police, and the San Min Zhu Yi Youth Corps interfered with elected officials [sic] [the election of officials?], and arrests, beatings, imprisonments, and other oppressions carried out against the people on a large scale had become common.

(6) Promises to abolish the secret police and to reorganize the local police had not been fulfilled.¹

The validity of points (3) and (6) would be hard to prove, since firstly, none of the promises to abolish the secret police and to reorganize the local police were found in either the Peace Agreement or the Political Programme of the Provincial Coalition Government; and secondly, under Supplement II, it was the obligation of the GMD authorities to provide the YNA with food and ammunition only when the latter had reported the size of its recognized troops and equipment to the GMD authorities, but the Yili Regime did neither. *Under these circumstances, how could the GMD authorities provide the Yili Regime with provisions?* The Yili Regime did forward their demands on the abolition of the secret police and reorganization of the local police to Zhang Zhizhong during the negotiations on the Peace Agreement. Zhang Zhizhong, however, immediately refused categorically to discuss their requirements, since in his eyes, these demands were in violation of Chinese sovereignty over Xinjiang. The Peace Agreement was reached partly because, as advised by the Soviets, the Yili Regime had withdrawn its demands.²

Relating to point (2) of the Yili Regime's letter of 16 October, 1947, Article 4 of Supplement II of the Peace Agreement stated that after the reorganization of the YNA and the appointment of the Commander of the new forces of the Three Districts:

1. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, pp. 132-133.

2. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, pp. 437; 448-450.

... the Provincial Government will permit him [the Commander of the reorganized forces of the Three Districts] to take part in consultation on the reorganization of the Peace Preservation Corp troops in Kashi and Aksu...¹

After the establishment of the Provincial Coalition Government a "Military Implementation Committee" was announced.² One of the resolutions of the Committee stated: "The reorganization of the military forces of the Three Districts will be carried out simultaneously with the reorganization of the Peace Preservation Corps troops in Kashi and Aksu."³

Since then the GMD authorities had hurried the Yili Regime to reorganize its forces and to report the numbers and the locations of the YNA. However, Ishag Beg, the Commander-in-Chief of the YNA

had, in fact, complied with the order ... but that compilation of a list of troops and their deployment had been delayed due to his own almost constant travel. Furthermore ... the constant increase in the numbers of new recruits made it difficult for him to give final figures.⁴

If the Yili Regime neither provided the number of its troops nor reduced the number of its forces (and instead had increased them), the non-reorganization of the Peace Preservation Corps in Kashi and Aksu could not have been the GMD's responsibility.

Points (1), (4) and (5) of the Yili Regime's letter related to questions about the increase of the GMD's troops in Xinjiang; the GMD's support to Osman and the military interference in civil affairs respectively.

In relation to the number of GMD troops in Xinjiang, the Yili Regime complained:

1. Ibid., p. 452.

2. CF China IA 893.00/2-2147.

3. Zhou Dongjiao, *Xinjiang shinian*, p. 311. CF China IA 893.00/2-2147.

4. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 107.

The Chinese had not fulfilled their promise to reduce the number of central government troops in the province but, on the contrary had increased the numbers from 20,000–25,000 in 1944 to 90,000 in 1947.¹

On this accusation, so far, none of the available sources show that any of the senior officers of the GMD authorities had made any promise to reduce the number of their troops in Xinjiang. No such promise can be found in either the Peace Agreement with the two supplements, or the Political Programme, or public speeches or government documents. On the contrary, during negotiations for the Peace Agreement, Zhang Zhizhong frequently repeated angrily to the Yili Regime representatives that it was the Chinese central government's sovereign right to station troops on its soil. He categorically refused to discuss any subjects which would affect this sovereignty. It was only by the Yili Regime's acquiescence on this issue that the Peace Agreement was reached.

Secondly, the total number of GMD troops in Xinjiang in 1944 was not 20,000–25,000, as the Yili Regime claimed. The number of Sheng Shicai's troops was 12,000. When Sheng Shicai left Xinjiang, he did not take any soldiers with him. He left his troops with the GMD military authorities. The GMD authorities subsequently moved their own troops to Xinjiang as early as 1943. Therefore, by the spring of 1944, about six months before the Yining Uprising, the GMD had moved at least four divisions into Xinjiang.² According to Zhang Dajun, a scholar in Taiwan, in October 1944, the total number of the central government's troops (Sheng Shicai's troops included) in Xinjiang was more than 50,000.³ After the Yining Uprising, the GMD authorities had moved more troops to Xinjiang. If the Yili Regime's estimate of the 90,000 GMD troops in 1947 was correct, the increase in the number of the GMD troops in Xinjiang from 1944 to 1947 would have been 40,000, not 70,000 as claimed by the Yili Regime.

1. Ibid., p. 132.

2. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 327–328.

3. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12:6163.

Estimates of the Yili Regime's total military forces vary. One Chinese source shows the total number of the YNA as 25,000, plus 1,800 guerrilla forces in April 1945,¹ while a Yili Regime source and an English source have recorded that there were 30,000-40,000 men in the YNA in October 1945 when the YNA ordered its cease-fire at the Manas River.² Osman's forces in Ashan nominally under the Yili Regime are not included in the above figure.

According to Supplement II of the Peace Agreement, the Yili Regime had to reduce its forces to 10,000-12,000, but the Yili Regime had never done so. After the formation of the Provincial Coalition Government, the Yili Regime never reported to the Coalition Government on the number of its troops. The known estimates in English, Chinese (the GMD as well as the CCP) and Turkish (the Yili Regime) sources vary from 12,000 to 69,000.³ In 1989 a publication in Urumqi claimed that: "In autumn 1946, according to the relevant terms of the agreement, the YNA ... reduced its number from thirteen regiments of 30,000 men to six regiments of 12,000 men."⁴

Hitherto unrevealed official sources of the CCP, however, give different figures. One of them states that:

Under the Agreement, the YNA was not allowed to have more than 12,000 troops. But due to needs in its continuing struggle ... apart from the troops stipulated above there were reserve troops. The actual number of troops was more than had been declared publicly.⁵

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 370.

2. Saudanov, *Wujun de geming licheng*, p. 54. Zhou Dongjiao, *Xinjiang shinian*, p. 23. For English sources, cf. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 229, footnote 74.

3. As discussed in the following paragraphs.

4. Saudanov, *Wujun de geming licheng*, p. 58.

5. Wang, "Under Soviet Shadow", p. 231.

What was the number of the YNA troops in 1947? According to Song Xilian, it was “over 69,000”.¹ One Yili Regime source claims that by the end of 1947 the total number of the YNA was 30,000 plus a number of guerrilla forces.² *The People’s Daily*, the organ of the CCP, declared on 25 November 1947 that it was between 40,000 and 50,000.³ A GMD source placed the total number of the YNA troops at 30,000 in 1947, and 33,000 in 1949.⁴

Therefore, based on the above-mentioned sources, one may conclude that (1) the total number of YNA troops in 1947 was probably about 30,000;⁵ (2) the ratio of the number of GMD troops to the YNA troops was about 3 to 1 (90,000:30,000); (3) the number of guerrilla forces was not included in the 30,000 YNA troops, while the GMD’s local self-defence forces formed a part of its total of 90,000.

The ratios of population and land under the Yili Regime’s control to Xinjiang’s population and land as a whole were 16 and 20 per cent respectively.⁶ The ratios of population, land and military forces between the Seven Districts and the Three Districts, therefore, were roughly: 6:1; 4:1; and 3:1 respectively.

It was a great burden for 600,000 people to support an army of 30,000 as well as the guerrilla forces. Taipov, then assistant Commander-in-Chief of the YNA wrote: “The ETR did not have

1. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 229, footnote 74. In Stuart’s report on July 1947: “General Sung [Song] believes that ILI [YILI] troop effectives number more that 60,000 men ...” CF China IA 893.00/7-2547.

2. Li Taiyu, “Zaixibei biansai gaojuqi minzu jiefang daqi de Xinjiang sanqu geming”, [The Three Districts Revolution as a Flag of National Liberation at the North-West Frontier of China], *Xinjiang Shehuikexue Yanjiu* no. 18 (1985), p. 18.

3. Zhu Yanggui *et al.*, “Guanyu Xinjiang sanqu geming de jige wenti’ [Some Comments on the Xinjiang Three Districts Revelation], *Xinjiang Daxue Xuebao* no. 1 (1988), p. 13.

4. Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian*, 12:7360.

5. It is probable that in the late 1946, the number of the YNA was less than 30,000. In 1947, when Osman launched his attack on Ashan, the Yili Regime recruited its former men.

6. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 136.

well-developed economy to fully support its Army.”¹ According to Ahmet Jan, military expenses absorbed 68.3 per cent of Yili’s yearly income in 1949.²

In short, it was most probable that Yili’s accusation of the GMD’s increase of troops was a pretext used by the Yili Regime for non-implementation of the Peace Agreement in order to prevent the stationing of GMD troops to guard the border of the Three Districts, and so to maintain its *de facto* independence. The Soviets were, of course, not happy to see a large number of US-backed GMD troops in Xinjiang. In accordance with Yili’s claim, not surprisingly, “the Soviet Consul [in Dihua] had objected to the possible use of more than 30,000 of [the GMD’s] troops” in Xinjiang.³ and it was necessary for the Soviets to strengthen the YNA to balance the expanding US-GMD influence.

Relating to the GMD’s aid to Osman, the Yili Regime complained to Zhang Zhizhong [point (4) of the letter of 16 October 1947] that “... despite Osman’s illegal action, he and his supporters in the Provisional Government continued to hold their posts.”⁴

According to Article 9 of the Peace Agreement and Supplement I, Osman was nominated by the Yili Regime and appointed by the Chinese central government as a member of the Xinjiang Provincial Government. Osman’s dismissal and the appointment of Delilhan as the Commissioner of the Ashan District were the Yili Regime’s own actions, and had not been approved by either the central government or the Provincial Government. Under the Peace Agreement, even though the Yili Regime had a right to nominate a commissioner for any district within the Three Districts,

1. Taipov, Z. T., *V Bor'be za Svobodu* [In the Struggle for Freedom], (Moscow, Glavnaya Redaktsiya Vostochnoi Literaturi Izdatel'stvo Nauka, 1974), p. 116.

2. LDD, 26/08/1949.

3. US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers 1944*, (Washington DC, United States Government Printing Office, 1972), Marshal Mission Files, Lot 54-D270, vol. ix, 1946, p. 202.

4. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 133.

Osman's position as a member of the Xinjiang Provincial Government and the Commissioner of the Ashan District would still be "legal", until the central government and the Coalition Government approved his dismissal. To the Yili Regime, Osman's departure and his military attack on Ashan disqualified him from holding government positions.

As has been discussed previously, Osman's split from the Yili Regime was not caused by the GMD's assistance to him but by the Soviets' encroachments in Ashan. The initial shift of Osman from the Yili Regime to the GMD was totally his own decision.¹ Although it seems clear that the Americans actively and positively responded to Osman's requests, there is no evidence to suggest that the GMD authorities had sent any troops to Ashan to support Osman, or any military officers to command Osman's forces; or had given any assistance with his campaign plans. As Song Xilian claimed, it was entirely Osman's own action to fight in Ashan.² Under the Peace Agreement the GMD military authorities had the right to move their troops into the Three Districts and to station them along the border. Osman's rising against the Yili Regime made it possible for the GMD authorities, as the central government of China, to do so. However, the GMD military authorities did not send their troops into Ashan, since both Zhang Zhizhong and Song Xilian understood that any movement of troops into Ashan, a part of the Three Districts, would bring about a full-scale military response from the Yili Regime, and the Soviets would certainly step in to rescue the Yili Regime. In this case the fragile peace in Xinjiang would be broken and Chiang Kai-shek, who was deeply engaged with the CCP in the Civil War, would not be at all pleased by this turn of events.

1. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, pp. 239-242.

2. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 481. Paxton reported to Washington on 23 September 1947: "Chinese replied that his [Osman's] troops have not been, consequently are not, under its control ... Sung [Song] admits that Osman's advance was aided by Chinese material but insists no Chinese troops were sent and declares that present drive was disapproved by Chinese." CF China IA 893.00/9-2347.

The Yili Regime's accusation of the GMD's military interference in civil affairs was not unfounded, however. Arrests, beatings, imprisonments and other forms of oppression against the people were common, particularly after the demonstrations of February 1947 in Dihua and the rebellion in the Tu-Shan-To area. The more the Yili Regime applied its political pressure, the more the GMD authorities interfered in local affairs. This was particularly true in Dihua, in Tu-Shan-To and in Kashi.

To confront the activities of the Eastern Turkestan Youth League in the Seven Districts, the GMD authorities organized the San Min Zhu Yi Youth League. The preparation for its establishment began in 1946 and it was not officially formed until April 1947, nearly two months after the 25 February Incident in Dihua and much later than the establishment of the ETYL.¹

In Dihua

In February 1947, fear spread amongst the Han and Hui people as well as some of the Kazaks in Dihua, when, under pressure from the petitioners organized by the Uighur Cultural Society, an urgent meeting of the Provincial Coalition Government adopted Ahmet Jan's motion on the removal of Zhou Fanggang, the Commissioner of the Shache District, and Nurbeg, the Commissioner of the Hotan District.²

On 22 February, Song Xilian, as the Chief of the GMD's military in Xinjiang, called an urgent meeting. At the meeting the participants felt that they could not tolerate the Yili Regime's continuing pressure and that no more concessions should be made to the Yili Regime, otherwise the GMD's power in the Seven Districts would be eroded. The GMD military authorities and the San Min Zhu Yi Youth League decided to organize a counter-demonstration

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 461-462.

2. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, pp. 227-228. CF China IA 893.00/2-2847.

by both Han-Chinese and pro-GMD Moslems, consisting mostly of Kazak and Hui people.¹

On the morning of 24 February, a crowd of 3,000–4,000 Hui and Kazaks gathered together under the leadership of the Hui Cultural Society and the Kazak Cultural Society for a demonstration. They presented their petition to the Provincial Coalition Government.² The next morning more than 10,000 people, most of them Han Chinese, including Han refugees from the Yili Regime, members of the San Min Zhu Yi Youth League, plain-clothes officials and officers, proceeded in an orderly manner to the Provincial Coalition Government.³ A dozen of the demonstrators, as representatives, presented a petition to Ahmet Jan. Then Ahmet Jan delivered a speech for an hour. Discontented with his speech, people were in a state of agitation, especially the Han refugees from the Yili Regime and the surviving family members of the anti-Han Massacres under the Yili Regime, who began shouting at Ahmet Jan. Ahmet Jan could not continue and had to go into the Government Building.⁴ During the commotion a dozen people went to Burhan's car and sat down near it. Burhan's chauffeur, an Uighur, furiously ordered them to go away and hit one of them. The angry mob then tried to get hold of him. Hopelessly outnumbered, the chauffeur fled to the reception room of the Government Building and began shooting with a pistol through a window; two people were injured. At the same time, one of the demonstrators rushed to a police station, got a hand grenade and threw it through the window into the reception

1. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 228.

2. Ahmet Jan was shocked by the number of Kazaks involved. *ibid.*. Also see XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 469. In Paxton's telegram to the American Embassy in Nanjing: "This afternoon two parades, one Kazak, the other Han Muslim, each of several hundred people made twenty odd counter-demands. Demonstration presumably engineered by Chinese to show that Turki demands lacked unanimous support." CF China IA 893.00/2-2847.

3. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 229.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 229–230.

room. Burhan's chauffeur was killed instantly.¹ Shortly after this killing, in the square in front of the Government Building, several dozen Kazaks, followers of Hadwan, who was an anti-Soviet and the Commissioner of the Dihua District, came to blows with a group of Uighurs who were supporters of Ahmet Jan. One Uighur was killed and several were injured during the fighting, which did not cease until the police came.²

At this stage Song Xilian, fearing that the situation would get out of hand, declared martial law in the city. Assemblies and demonstrations were banned, house-to-house searches took place, and private properties and individuals were inspected by the army and police. A list of military measures proclaimed under martial law repeatedly appeared in *The Xinjiang Daily* from 2 March to 5 March. The city was put under tight military control and martial law was not lifted until 5 March.³

To understand the interference of the GMD military authorities in this particular event, it is essential to know what the main concerns of the Kazak and Han Chinese petitioners were during their demonstrations of 24 and 25 February.

The main content of the petition was not recorded in the Yili Regime's publications, but Saifudin mentioned slogans of the demonstrators in his book *Tianshan xiong ying* such as: "Support the central government!", "Oppose the Privileges of the Three Districts!", "Down with Ahmet Jan!", "Down with Abasoff!", and "Go Away, You Men from the Three Districts!"⁴

According to GMD sources (Zhang Dajun and Song Xilian), the main points of the petition of 25 February were: to eliminate local privileges; to station GMD troops at the frontier of the Three Districts; to reorganize the local military forces in the Three Districts; to punish the murderers of innocent people during the Yining Incident; to oppose the Eastern Turkestan Movement which

1. Ibid., p. 230; and CF China IA 893.00/3-547; 3-647.

2. Song Xilian, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu*, p. 231.

3. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 470-471.

4. Saifudin, *Tianshan xiongying*, p. 132.

intended to separate Xinjiang from China; to strengthen the unity of nationalities and to oppose racial discrimination; to punish elements who intended to destroy the social orders; to stop Uighur demonstrations; equality among all nationalities; to remove Ahmet Jan; etc. The Kazaks also argued in support of Hadwan, Salis and Osman, saying that the Government did not support them, the Kazaks themselves would look after them in the future.¹

In comparison with the petition of the 22 February Uighur demonstration, organized by the Yili Regime in all fairness, the demands of the Kazaks, Hui and Han Chinese, during their demonstrations of 24 and 25 February - apart from some furious shouting of "Down with!" and "Go Away!" - were quite within the terms of the Peace Agreement.

Since the 25 February Incident was a direct result of the Yili Regime's political pressure in the Seven Districts, we may conclude that: (1) The Yili Regime-controlled Uighur Cultural Society was the main cause of the Incident. (2) The major demands of the Uighur petition of 22 February (especially the withdrawal of GMD troops from Xinjiang) went far beyond the Peace Agreement. (3) It seems that although Song Xilian was the organizer of the counter-demonstration of 24 and 25 February, it was unlikely that he anticipated the bloodbath which resulted from the unfortunate behaviour of Burhan's chauffeur. (4) Although martial law had brought the situation under control, house searches, arrests and imprisonment by military authorities caused fear among the people, and complicated the situation for them. (5) Apart from the disputes between the Yili Regime and the GMD authorities, the Yining Incident was no less than a manifestation of the basic disputes between the pro-Soviet and the pro-GMD Moslem factions.

In Southern Xinjiang

The most blatant military interference occurred in south Xinjiang. Confronting the Yili Regime and its followers, the local military

1. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, p. 469.

garrison interfered in civil government by supporting pro-GMD officials, irrespective of their religion or personal character. Relying on their military power, commanders of the local garrisons supported these pro-GMD and anti-Yili Regime officials, both Moslems and non-Moslems, without any scruples.

The nomination by Ahmet Jan of pro-Soviet and pro-Yili Regime Abdul Mahsum as the Commissioner of the Kashi District was strongly opposed by the local conservative Moslems. They protested in a telegram to Zhang Zhizhong who, realizing that it was the army commander of the Kashi garrison, Yang Deliang, who was behind the local conservative Moslem opposition, sent Song Xilian, then his chief-of-staff, to Kashi to supervise the inauguration ceremony of Abdul Mahsum.¹ But the activities of the ETYL caused the conservative Moslems to organize a counter-attack. With the assistance of Yang Deliang and Zhang Fengyi, another garrison commander of Kashi, an anti-Soviet organization headed by Sufi Haji, himself an Uzbek, was founded for the purpose of disrupting Abdul Mahsum's administration at Kashi.² During his tour of southern Xinjiang, Burhan, in his capacity as vice-Governor of the Province, dismissed Huang Jiwu, the corrupt Head of Shule County. After the dismissal, Huang Jiwu refused to hand over the seal of the county government and moved to the Headquarters of the GMD local garrison. Shielded by Zhang Fengyi, Huang Jiwu continued to bully local people.³ Many complaints against the military garrison's misbehaviour, including corruption, discrimination and other forms of harassment of the people, were sent to the Provincial Government. Local commanders, however, continued to disregard all rules and regulations of the Provincial Government.⁴

1. Burhan, *Xinjiang wushi nian*, p. 298.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 299.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 299-300.

4. *Ibid.*, pp. 300-301.

In Tu-Shan-To

A large-scale bloodbath as well as arrests and imprisonments by the GMD occurred at Tu-Shan-To, where the Yili Regime carried out not only political activities against Masud, but also military attacks on the GMD troops. Some sources claim that the Tu-Shan-To rebellion was suppressed by Song Xilian. In actual fact, the order for cracking down on the rebels was issued by no-one else but Zhang Zhizhong himself.

Since the Yili Regime had mistaken Zhang Zhizhong's tolerance and patience as a weakness of the GMD government, and had taken military actions against the GMD and Masud in Tu-Shan-To, thereby violating the Peace Agreement as well as Chinese sovereignty in Xinjiang, Zhang Zhizhong issued an order to suppress the rebels.¹

Heavy casualties were reported from the Shengjiinkuo battle, according to Yu Zhanbang, who was then secretary of Zhang Zhizhong. Only about half of the rebels survived the battle. The bodies of the dead and injured were everywhere on the battle field. It was a gruesome scene. After reading a report on the fighting, Zhang Zhizhong was filled with great sorrow and sadness. He ordered both the military and civil authorities not to take any further retaliation against the rebels and that all troops should be confined to their barracks. However, the Xinjiang Station of the Military Investigation Bureau, a major secret agency of the GMD's central authority took this opportunity to execute and torture many people. Since the secret agency system of the GMD central government was not under the control of Zhang Zhizhong, he could do little about the vindictive acts of the secret service men.²

After the suppression of the rebellion, order in Xinjiang was restored. Zhang Zhizhong tried to lay the responsibility for the rebellion on a handful of rebels only, and not on the Yili Regime. He treated Ahmet Jan as he had before, hoping to keep the Three

1. Yu Zhanbang, "Zhang Zhizhong sidu Tianshan", [Zhang Zhizhong's Four Trips to Xinjiang] *Renwu* no.6 (1989), pp. 163-165.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 165.

Districts together within the Provincial Coalition. Ahmet Jan and his men, however, felt uneasy and much embarrassed. Ultimately they left Dihua for Yining.¹

In spite of the big differences between pro-Soviet Zhang Zhizhong and pro-US Song Xilian, to both of them, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Chinese central government in Xinjiang were paramount. This was the reason why Zhang Zhizhong, who was pro-Yili Regime and opposed military interference in civil affairs, joined Song Xilian in adopting the “iron fist” policy to put down the rebellion. While the GMD’s military interference in civil affairs violated the Peace Agreement, the Yili Regime’s anti-government political offensives, and armed rebellion seriously challenged Chinese sovereignty in Xinjiang. After all, who wanted to be held responsible for the collapse of the Coalition Government? The Yili Regime put Zhang Zhizhong in an impossible situation.

Zhang Zhizhong’s Resignation

Whereas an English source states that Zhang Zhizhong was removed by the central government from his post of Governor of the province,² Zhang Zhizhong himself claimed that he resigned from the post and nominated Masud Sabri as his successor. According to Zhang Zhizhong, one of the reasons for his resignation was that his one year experience as governor indicated that he always bore the brunt of the struggles among minority nationalities. The Yili Regime and the pro-Yili elements criticized him for supporting conservative pro-GMD Moslems while the pro-GMD Moslems accused him of shielding the Yili Regime and the pro-Yili Moslems. Zhang Zhizhong supported the conservatives because the conservatives supported the central government, but he could not agree with their anti-Soviet stand. In contrast to the pro-GMD conservative Moslems, the Yili Regime

1. Ibid. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, p. 548.

2. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, pp. 118-119.

and pro-Soviet Moslems in the Seven Districts favoured Zhang Zhizhong's pro-Soviet stand. However, Zhang Zhizhong was not happy with their disloyalty to China. He intended to be neutral in the Moslems' factional disputes.¹

In an official publication in Urumqi, Burhan and Song Xilian claimed that Zhang Zhizhong was not removed but resigned from his post, and the direct cause for Zhang Zhizhong's resignation was his sorrowful experience in Kashi in late April and early May.²

By the time he returned to the capital of the province, his attitude had totally changed. He could not bear his embarrassments in Kashi. On or around 10 May he wired his resignation to Chiang Kai-shek.³

Obviously, it was the Yili Regime's hostile political activities and the related disputes between the Moslem factions which caused Zhang Zhizhong to lose confidence in his ability to steady Xinjiang's political situation, and, ultimately, his resignation from the governorship. In short, his resignation was an outcome of the power struggles between the pro-Soviet Moslems on the one side, and pan-Turkist Moslems and pro-GMD Moslem nationalists on the other.

The Appointment of Masud Sabri

The appointment of Masud Sabri by the central government as governor of Xinjiang led, directly and indirectly, to the Beitashan Incident, to the Tu-Shan-To bloodbath and, thereafter, to the collapse of the Xinjiang Coalition Government. The reason for the Yili Regime's opposition to him that he was the representative figure of the pan-Turkist movement in Xinjiang and was treated by the Soviet Union as "a running dog of imperialism".

1. Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu*, pp. 539-540. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 484-485.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 484. Burhan, *Xinjing wushi nian*, pp. 319-320.

3. *Xinjiang jianshi* vol. 3 states: "The turning point for Zhang Zhizhong's attitude to the Three Districts from tolerance to severity was on 22 April and 5 May when he came under two organized attacks in Kashi." (p. 475).

On the reason behind the Yili Regime's opposition to Masud's appointment, an English source says that the main cause of concern among the Turki nationalities in Xinjiang was his "precise experience in the Chinese government and his many years away from his own people". Furthermore, due to his "poor health at the age of sixty", the Yili Regime "was worried that Masud, 'frail and tired', would be easily manipulated by the local Chinese militarists".¹ Zhang Zhizhong, however, thought that the Yili Regime opposed Masud's appointment because Masud was an anti-Soviet pan-Turkist. Sources from both the CCP and the Yili Regime as well as the Soviet Union support Zhang Zhizhong's point of view. They all criticize Masud as a tool of the GMD and as a "running dog or agent of imperialism".² Kutlukov even claimed that Chiang Kai-shek, following an order of the American advisers, appointed Masud as Governor of Xinjiang.³

Shortly after the appointment of Masud, Ahmet Jan and Zhang Zhizhong had a five-hour talk. There is no record of Ahmet Jan's concerns at this talk. The following passage, however, indicated that Ahmet Jan did complain to Zhang Zhizhong about Masud's anti-Soviet stand. Zhang Zhizhong said to Ahmet Jan:

It is not the central government who nominated Mr Masud as the Governor. Instead it is totally my own idea. The central government approved the nomination due to my firm support for this nomination ... I nominated him not because of his anti-Soviet stand ... Masud has not engaged himself in any anti-Soviet activities before ... I have not noticed and have not heard that he was an anti-Soviet ... In the last year of his work

1. Benson, *The Ili Rebellion*, p. 120.

2. XSL, *Xinjiang jianshi*, pp. 483-484. Saifudin, *Tianshan xiongying*, pp. 116; 139. Mingulov, "Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noye...", pp. 86-87. Mingulov, "Narody Sin'tszyana v Bor'be...", p. 9. Yakovlev, "K Voprosu...", pp. 170; 172-174.

3. Kutlukov, "Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noe...", pp. 287-288. Also see Yakovlev, "K Voprosu...", p. 173.

[in Xinjiang] no evidence about his anti-Soviet attitude could be found in either his speeches or his activities.¹

The appointment of Masud then became the new focus of the dispute between the Yili Regime and the GMD. According to Saifudin, Ahmet Jan labelled Masud as “a typical representative of reactionary ideas and a running dog of imperialism...”² In the words of the Soviet Consul in Yining: “Masud and his followers are ultra-reactionaries.”³ Being anathema to the Kremlin, Masud was denounced by a Soviet source as “a double-dyed nationalist and pan-Turkist, an agent of imperialist intelligence, who had served Germany, Britain, Japan and the United States seriatim”.⁴

According to an English source, Masud was rejected by the Yili Regime due to “his experience in the Chinese government”. But Burhan’s appointment to the governorship immediately after a year’s association with Chiang Kai-shek in Nanjing was warmly welcomed by the Yili Regime. This shows that association with China’s central government could not have been an important issue. The crux of the matter was the incumbent attitude towards the Soviet Union and the US. While Masud was treated as an anti-Soviet, pan-Turkist and “a running dog of imperialism”, Burhan was a Soviet agent as well as the Yili Regime’s own man. It was not surprising that in his letter to Ahmet Jan, Burhan wrote: “Amina [Mohmet Emin’s wife] ... labelled us (you and me) as non-Xinjiang men. She said: ‘They [Ahmet Jan and Burhan] came from outside, and they serve for the outsiders ...’ Masud insulted me in his official letter: ‘You are the ‘glorious’ leader of the anti-[Moslem]-nationalist movement, you must be eliminated, and we must eliminate you ...’”⁵

1. In defending himself for the nomination of Masud, Zhang Zhizhong said: “I am completely ignorant of Masud’s anti-Soviet stand.” Anonymous: “Ahmet Jan he Zhang Zhizhong tanhua jilu”, in *Xinjinag shaoshuminzu shehui lishi diaochazu* [Group for Investigation on Social History of Minority Nationalities in Xinjiang] (ed.), *Sanqu geming ziliao huibian zhi-6* (Urumqi, 1959), pp. 5-10.

2. Saifudin, *Tianshan xiongying*, pp. 138-139.

3. LDD, 13/09/1949.

4. Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims*, p. 210.

5. See the attachment to LDD, 07/09/1949.

The Yili Regime made certain that the appointment of Masud led to nothing else but the collapse of the Xinjiang Provincial Coalition Government. The replacement of Masud by Burhan was no less a victory of the Soviet Union over the US in the Cold War in China. It was a victorious fruit of Yili's political offensive against both pan-Turkism and the GMD.

SUMMARY

In the Seven Districts under the GMD's control, inflation was out of control, corruption and bribery were common and the people were suffering. Politically, however, there were more local minority nationalities involved in the administration of these districts than in any other province of China. In spite of the Yili regime's political attacks, Xinjiang was still able to enjoy relative peace compared with the rest of China (Tibet excluded). Apart from the brief unrest in Tu-Shan-To in 1947, there was no war in the Seven Districts. Xinjiang was the only province, apart from Tibet, which was free from the turmoils of the civil war of 1946-49.

The two regimes in Xinjiang, however, did not come together as an integral whole under the Peace Agreement. Both L. Benson's book and some of the CCP's official publications claim that the Three Districts argued for the full implementation of the agreement. In actual fact, the full implementation of the Peace Agreement would have caused the Yili regime (later the USSR) to lose all their privileges, the YNA would have been reorganized under the GMD military authorities and the GMD troops would have been allowed to enter the Three Districts. The Yili regime would have become part of the GMD regime. Its status of *de facto* independence would have ended, and then the buffer between the USSR and the US would have disappeared along with its sphere of USSR influence in Xinjiang. Even Zhang Zhizhong's pro-Soviet policy would not have been able to avert it. The refusal to fulfill the Peace Agreement and the Yili regime's political offensives in the Seven Districts

presented the Soviet Union with optimal opportunities to retain its influence in the Three Districts, thereby virtually ensuring that Xinjiang continued to be behind the “Iron Curtain” in Asia.

In conclusion, whilst being a part of China in name, the Three Districts enjoyed a status of *de facto* independence with their own government, flag, military forces and economic system, as “a state within a state”. Here pan-Islamism and Moslem nationalism were used by the Soviets to create a Moslem regime, the ETR. The Moslem leaders were expelled from the regime when they acted against the interests of the Soviets. The Soviet Union enjoyed exclusive spheres of influence, politically, militarily and economically. However, under the Sino-Soviet Treaty of 1945, the Soviet Union could not treat the Yili regime as an independent state. It was more a semi-colony of the Soviet Union, especially in the economic sphere.

REFERENCES

- Anonymous: "File: Dong tuerqisitan gongheguo guanli xia de sange qu 1946-nian 6-yue 1-ri yihou de shouzhi qing-kuang" [Report on Account of Receipts and Payments since 1st June 1946 of the Three Districts under the ETR], in Xinjinag shaoshuminzu shehui lishi diaochazu [Group for Investigation on Social History of Minority Nationalities in Xinjiang] (ed.), *Sanqu geming ziliao huibian zhi-5* (Urumqi, 1959), pp. 22-28.
- "Ahmet Jan he Zhang Zhizhong tanhua jilu", in Xinjinag shaoshuminzu shehui lishi diaochazu [Group for Investigation on Social History of Minority Nationalities in Xinjiang] (ed.), *Sanqu geming ziliao huibian zhi-6* (Urumqi, 1959), pp. 5-10.
- Beloff, M., *Soviet Policy in the Far East 1945-1951* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1953).
- Benson, L., *The Ili Rebellion - the Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang 1944-1949* (NY, East Gate, Sharpe, 1990).
- "Osman Batur: The Kazak's Golden Legend", in Benson and Svanberg, (ed.), *The Kazaks of China: Essays on an Ethnic Minority* (Uppsala, Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1988), pp. 141-188.
- "Comments on 'Uighur Elites'", *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 6, no. 4 (1987), pp. 93-99.
- Benson, L. and I. Svanberg (ed.), *The Kazaks of China. Essays on an Ethnic Minority*, (Uppsala, Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1988).

- Bogoslovskii, V. A. and , A. A. Moskalev, *Natsional'nyi Vopros v Kitae 1911-1949* [Ethnic Question in China, 1911-1949], (Moscow, Izdatel'stvo Nauka, Glavnaya Redaktsiya Vostochnoi Literatura, 1984).
- Burhan S., "Fan yisilan zhuyi he fan tuerqi zhuyi zai Xinjiang de xingmie" [Pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism in Xinjiang], in Burhan S., *Burhan xuanji* (Beijing, Wenshi ziliao, 1989), pp. 108-115.
- *Xinjiang wushi nian* [Fifty Years in Xinjiang], (Beijing, Wenshi ziliao, 1984).
- Central Files China Internal Affairs 1945-1959 (cited as CF China IA), State Department, Confidential U.S. State Department, microfilmed files held in the Library of Congress (in 75 reels) (Washington DC, the USA).
- Chen Li, *Yining shibian jilue* [A Concise Record of the Yining Incident] (Taipei, Wenhai, 1977).
- Chen, J., *The Sinkiang Story* (NY, Macmillan, 1977).
- Cheng Tien-feng, *A History of Sino-Russian Relations* (Connecticut, Westport, (1975).
- Clubb, O. E., *China and Russia: The "Great Game"*. (NY, Columbia, 1971).
- Dallin, D. J., *Soviet Russia and the Far East* (New Haven, Yale, 1948)
- Deng Liqun, "Xinjiang heping jiefang qianhou: zhongsu guanxi zhi yiye" [Peaceful Liberation of Xinjiang: Episode of the Sino-Soviet Relations], in *Jindaishi Yanjiu*, no. 5 (1989), pp. 143-149.
- Fawubu Diaochaju Dang'an (cited as F DD) (Archives, Bureau of Investigation, Department of Justice) (Taipei, Taiwan)
- 'Files of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Undated telegram of 1948 of the Northwestern Headquarters of the National Government to the Minister of Defence in Nanjing", in Qin Xiaoyi, ed., *Zhonghua minguo zhongyao shiliao chubian* [Historical Material of the Republic of China], vol.7, part 2, (Taipei, Zhongguo Guomindang Dangshi Weiyuanhui, 1981), p. 804.
- Forbes, A. D. W. *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia: A Political History of Republic Sinkiang, 1911-1949* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1986).

REFERENCES

- Guofangbu Shizhengbianyiju Dang'an, Guojun Dang'an (cited as G SD GD) [Archives, Historical and Political Compilation and Translation Bureau, Department of Defense, Archives, National Military] (Taipei, Taiwan).
- Guoshiguan Xingzhengyuan Dang'an (cited as GXD) (Archives, the Administrative Yuan, Academia Historica) (Taipei, Taiwan).
- Haji Nabi Waliyov, "Xiri Altay de fengyun" [Unrest in Altay], *Xinjiang wenshi ziliao*, vol. 13 (1987), pp. 1-45.
- Hajieff, "Sanqu geming zhong Tacheng de dixia huodong yu wuzhuang douzheng" [The Underground Activities in Tacheng during the Three Districts Revolutions], *Yili wenshi ziliao*, vol. 4 (1988), pp. 25-54.
- Hasiotis, A. C. Jr. *Soviet Political, Economic and Military Involvement in Sinkiang from 1928 to 1949* (NY, Garland, 1987).
- Ji Dachun, "Sulian yu Xinjiang sanqu geming" [The Soviet Union and the Three Districts Revolution], *Zhongguo binjiang shidi yanjiu baogao*, no. 5 (1990), pp. 1-11.
- "Sanqu geming yu sulian guanxi wendi" [Questions on the Soviet involvement in the Three Districts Revolution], *Zhongguo bianjiang shidi yanjiu daobao*, no. 4 (1988), pp. 31-33.
- Jiang Junzhang, "Song Ziwen mosike tan-pan zhui-ji" [The Negotiations of Song Ziwen in Moscow], *Zhuanji wen-xue*, vol. 54, no. 2 (1989) pp. 53-56.
- Jiang Yongjing, "Song Ziwen shidalin zhongsu tiaoyue tan-pan jishi" [Negotiations between Song Ziwen and Stalin on the Sino-Soviet Treaty], *Zhuanji wenxue* vol. 53, no. 4: pp. 76-82; no. 5: pp. 79-86; no. 6: pp. 72-80; vol. 54, no. 1 (1988-1989): pp. 120-128.
- Khakimbaev A. A., "Nekotorye Osobennosti Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'nogo Dvizheniya Narodov Sin'tszyana v 30-kh i 40-kh godakh XX veka" [Some Characters of the National-Liberation Movement of the Xinjiang Peoples in 1930s and 1940s], in *Materialy Mezhdunarodnoi Kon-ferentsii po Problemam Istorii Kitaya v Noveishchee Vremya, April' 1977, Problemy Kitaya* (Moscow, 1978), pp. 113-118.

- Kotov, K. F., *Mestnaya Natsional'nya Avtonomiya v Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Respublike – Na Primere Sin'tszyansko–Uigurskoi Avtonomoi Oblasti*, [Autonomy of Local Nationalities in the Chinese People's Republic, as an Example of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region], (Moscow, Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo Yuridicheskoi Literaturi, 1959).
- *Novyi Sin'tsyzan* [New Xinjiang] (Alma-Ata, Kazakhskoe Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo, 1955).
- Kutlukov, M., “Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noe Dvizhenie 1944–1949 gg. v Sin'tsyzane kak Sostavnaya Chast' Kitaiskoi Narodnoi Revolyutsii”, [The National-Liberation Movement of 1944–1949 in Xinjiang as a Part of the People's Revolution in China], in *Sbornik Rabot Aspirantov, Otdelenie Obshchestvennykh Nauk, AN UzbSSR, Bypusk 2* (Tashkent, 1958), pp. 261–304.
- “Demokraticeskoe Dvizhenie Narodov Yuzhnogo Sin'tsyzana (Kashgariya) v Period 1945–1947 gg.”, [The Democratic Movement of the Peoples in Southern Xin-jiang (Kashi) during 1945–1947], in *Hauchnye Raboty i Soobshcheniya, Kniga I* (Tashkent, 1960), pp. 103–114.
- “O Kharaktere i Dvizhushchikh Silakh Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'nogo Dvizheniya Narodov Sin'tsyzana v 1944–1949 gg.”, [Character and Driving Forces of the National-Liberation Movement of the Xinjiang Peoples in 1944–1949], in *Hauchnye Raboty i Soobshcheniya, Kniga 5* (Tashkent, 1962), pp. 255–271.
- Lattimore, O., *Pivot of Asia: Sinkiang and the Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1950).
- Liqun Diantai Dianwen (cited as LDD) [Telegrams from Liqun's Radio Station in Yining and Dihua to the Central Committee of the CCP in Beiping (subsequently Beijing)], August 1949–December 1949 (Urumqi, Xinjiang).
- Li Sheng, “Minguo shiqi Xinjiang tong sulian jingji maoyi guanxi” [Xinjiang-Soviet Economic Trade Relations during the period of the Republic of China], in Xinjiang Daxue (ed.), *Xinjiang daisu jingmao wendi yanjiu* [Studies on Economics and Trade between Xinjiang and the Soviet Union] (Urumqi, 1987), pp. 262–283.

REFERENCES

- Li Shixun, "Wei zuguo tongyi he mingzu jiefang er zhan: Ishag Beg Monhakiev lieshi zhuan' [Biography of Ishag Beg Monhakiev], *Xinjiang lieshi zhuan tongxun*, vols: 2-3 (1989), pp. 25-41.
- Liang Chin-tung, "The Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance of 1945: The Inside Story", in Sih, Paul K. T., (ed.), *Nationalist China During the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1945* (Hicksville, NY, Exposition Press, Inc. 1977), pp. 373-397.
- Li Taiyu, "Zaixibei biansai gaojuqi minzu jiefang daqi de Xinjiang sanqu geming", [The Three Districts Revolution as a Flag of National Liberation at the North-West Frontier of China] *Xinjiang Shehuikexue Yanjiu*, no.18 (1985), pp. 6-24.
- Macnair, M. F. and D. F. Lach, *Modern Far Eastern International Relations*, (Toronto, D. Van Nostrand, 1955).
- Meng Xiandian, "Zhongguo gongchandang de zhongzheng zuisui zhe: Abdul Kerim Abasoff lieshi zhuan' [Biography of Abdul Kerim Abasoff], *Xinjiang lieshi zhuan tongxun* vols: 2-3 (1989) pp. 42-61.
- Mingulov, N. N., "Narody Sin'tszyana v Bop'be za Ustanovlenie Harodnoi Demokratii 1944-1949 gg.", [The Xinjiang Peoples in Struggle for Establishment of People's Democracy, 1944-1949], (Abstract of Dissertation in Moscow National University, 1956).
- "Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noe Dvizhenie Narodov Sin-'tszyana kak Sostavnaya Chast' Obshchekitaiskoi Revolyutsii (1944-1949 gody)", [The National-Liberation Movement of the Peoples in Xinjiang in 1944-1949 as a Part of the People's Revolution in China], in *Trudi: Instituta Istorii, Arkheologii i Etnografii*, Tom 15 (Alma-Ata, 1962), pp. 68-102.
- Moseley, G., *A Sino-Soviet Cultural Frontier: The Ili-Kazakh Autonomous Chou* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966).
- Naby, E., "Response to L. Benson's Comments on "Uighur Elites in Xinjiang", *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 6, no. 4 (1987), pp. 99-101.
- Qin Xiaoyi (ed.) *Zhonghua minguo zhongyao shiliao chubian* [A Collection of Important Historical Materials of the Republic of China], vol. 3: *Zhanshi waijiao* [Foreign Affairs during the War], part 3: *Zhongsu guanxi* [The Sino-Soviet Relations] (Taipei, Dangshi weiyuanhui, 1981).

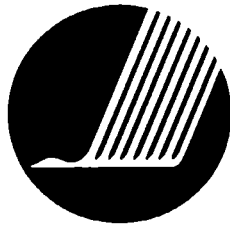
- Rakhimov, T. R. "Mesto Bostochno-Turkestanskoi Respubliki (VTR) v Natsional'no-Osvoboditel'noi Bor'be Narodov Kitaya" [Role of the Eastern Turkestan Republic (ETR) in the National Liberation Struggle of the Peoples in China], A paper presented at 2-ya Nauchnaya Konferentsiya po Problemam Istorii Kitaya v Noveishchee Vremya (Moscow, 1977), pp. 68-70.
- "Rol' Akhmatdzhana Kacymi v Istorii Osvoboditel'nogo Dvizheniya v Sin'tszyane", [Ahmet Jan Kasim's Role in the History of the Liberation Movement in Xinjiang], in *Problemy Kitaya*, (Moscow, 1978), pp. 194-197.
- Saifudin, A., "Ji'nian Xinjiang sanqu geming 45 zhounian" [The 45th Anniversary of the Three Districts Revolution in Xinjiang], in *People's Daily* 06/11/1989.
- *Tianshan xiongying* [A Tianshan Eagle] (Zhongguo wenshi, Beijing, 1987)
- Saudanov, Z., *Wujun de geming licheng* [The Revolutionary Course of the Fifth Army] (Beijing, Jiefangjun, 1989).
- "Xinjiang sanqu geming youguan qingkuang de huiyi" [Memoir on the Three Districts Revolution in Xinjiang], *Xinjiang wenshi ziliao*, vol.16 (1986), pp. 8-69.
- Saviskii, A. P. "Sin'tszyan kak Platsdarm Inostrannoi Interventsii v Srednei Azii", [Xinjiang as a Base for Foreign Invasion into Central Asia], Abstract of Dissertation in the Academy of Science, the Uzbekstan SSR) (AN UzbSSR, Tashkent, 1955).
- Sherwood, R. E. *The White House Papers of Harry L. Hopkins* (Washington D. C., 1949).
- Sladkovskii, M. I., *Noveishaya Istoriya Kitaya, 1928-1949* (Moscow, 1984).
- *Istoriya Torgovo-Ekonomicheskikh Otnosheniy SSSR s Kitayem 1917-1974* [A History of Trade-Economic Relations between the USSR and China 1917-1974], (Izdatel'stvo Nauka, Moskva, 1977).
- Song Xiliang, *Yingquan jiangjun Song Xilian zishu* [The Eagle-Hawk General - Autobiography of Song Xilian] (Beijing, Zhongguo wenshi, 1986).

REFERENCES

- Taipov, Z. T., *V Bor'be za Svobodu* [In the Struggle for Freedom], (Moscow, Glavnaya Redaktsiya Vostochnoi Literaturi Izdatel'stvo Nauka, 1974).
- Tao Zhiyue, *Tao Zhiyue zishu* [Autobiography of Tao Zhiyue], (Changsha, Hunan renmin, 1989).
- Urumqi Junqu Bianxiezuo [Editorial Group of Urumqi Military Region] (cited as UJB), "Yi Ta shijian" [the Yining-Tacheng Incident] in *Renmin jundui zai Xinjiang* (Urumqi, 1986).
- US Department of State, *Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers 1944*, vol. vi, *China*; 1945, vol. vii; 1946, vol. ix, *the Far East China* (Washington DC, United States Government Printing Office, 1972).
- *United States Relations with China, with Special Reference to the Period 1944-1949* (Washington DC, Office of Public Affairs, Department of State, 1949).
- Waijiaobu Dang'an Ziliaochu (Archives, Department of Foreign Affairs) (cited as WDZ) (Taipei, Taiwan).
- Wang, D., "Sulian yu 1949-nian Xinjiang de heping jiefang", [The Soviet Union and the Peaceful Liberation of Xinjiang in 1949], *Renwen Xuebao*, vol. 3, no. 20, (1996), pp. 75-116.
- "The USSR and the Establishment of the Eastern Turkestan Republic in Xinjiang", *Journal of Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica*, vol. 25 (1996), pp. 337-378.
- "Soviet Citizenship in Xinjiang", *Asian Studies Review*, vol. 19, no. 3 (1996), pp. 87-97.
- "Under the Soviet Shadow: The Yili Rebellion of 1944-1949 in Xinjiang - a Revolution, Nationalism or a Power Struggle?", Ph.D thesis, University of Tasmania, Australia, 1993.
- Whiting, A. S. and Sheng Shih-ts'ai, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* (Michigan, East Lansing, 1958).
- Xie Min, "Sanqu geming de zhuoyue lingdao ren, Ahmet Jan Kasim lieshi zhuan" [Biography of Ahmet Jan Kasim], *Xinjiang lieshi zhuan tongxun*, vols: 2-3 (1989), pp. 1-24.
- Xinjiang shehui kexue yuan Lishi suo (cited as XSL), *Xinjiang jianshi* [A Concise History of Xinjiang], vol. 3 (Urumqi, Xinjiang renmin, 1987).

- Xinjiang weiwuer zizhiq Minzhengting (cited as XM) (ed.) *Xinjiang lieshi zhuan* [Biographies of Martyrs in Xinjiang], vol. 4 (Urumqi, Xinjiang renmin, 1989).
- Yakovlev, A. G., “K Voprosy o Natsional’no-Osvoboditel’nom Dvizhenii Norodov Sin’tzyana v 1944–1949”, [Question on the National Liberation Movement of the Peoples in Xinjiang in 1944–1945], in *Uchenie Zapiski Instituta Voctokovedeniia Kitaiskii Spornik*, vol. xi, (1955), pp. 155–188.
- Yasin Hudabardi, “Guanyu sanqu geming’ [About the Three Districts Revolution] *Xinjiang wenshi ziliao xuanji* [A Selection of Xinjiang Historical and Literary Materials], vol. 16 (1986), pp. 70–94.
- Yu Zhanbang, “Zhang Zhizhong sidu Tianshan”, [Zhang Zhizhong’s Four Trips to Xinjiang], *Renwu*, no. 6 (1989), pp. 154–172.
- Yusup M., “Yingdang zunzhong sanqu geming de keguan lishi shiji’ [The Facts of the Three Districts Revolution should be respected], *Xinjiang shehui kexue yanjiu* [Xin-jiang Social Sciences Research], no. 19 (1983), pp. 11–14.
- Zhang Chengzhi, Fan Hua and Zhang Shouli, “Yi-ta-a sanqu shangye jianjie’ [Commerce Developments in the Three Districts], *Xinjiang difang zhi* [Local Gazettes of Xinjiang], no. 1 (1988), pp. 22–28.
- Zhang Dajun, *Xinjiang fengbao qishi nian* [Seventy Years’ Turmoil in Xinjiang], 12 vols. (Taipei, Lanxi, 1980).
- *Sishi nian dongluan Xinjiang* [Forty Years’ Unrest in Xijiang] (Hong Kong, Yazhou, 1956).
- Zhang Zhizhong, *Zhang Zhizhong huiyilu* [Memoirs of Zhang Zhizhong] (Beijing, Wen-shi zi-liao, 1985).
- Zhonggong Xinjiang weiwuer zizhiq weiyuanhui and Xinjiang Junqu Zhengzhibu (cited as ZX and XJZ) (ed.) *Xinjiang heping jiefang* [The Peaceful Liberation of Xinjiang] (Urumqi, Xinjiang renmin, 1990).
- Zhou Dongjiao, *Xinjiang shinian* [Ten Years in Xinjiang] (Lanzhou, 1946) in mimeograph.
- Zhu Yanggui et al., “Guanyu Xinjiang sanqu geming de jige wenti”, [Some Comments on the Xinjiang Three Districts Revolution] *Xinjiang Daxue Xuebao*, no. 1 (1988), pp. 9–14.

The Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) is funded by the governments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden via the Nordic Council of Ministers, and works to encourage and support Asian Studies in the Nordic countries. In so doing, NIAS has published well over one hundred books in the last three decades.



Nordic Council of Ministers

CLOUDS OVER TIANSHAN

Essays on Social Disturbance in Xinjiang in the 1940s

David D. Wang

The 1940s saw the outbreak of the so-called Yili rebellion, which led to the collapse of Chinese state authority over a wide area of Xinjiang in the chaotic years of the later 1940s. Much of the story of this rebellion has been told before but what is especially interesting here is Wang's demonstration that the rebellion was not an internal Chinese matter; rather it was very much an international affair. Here he looks not just at the ethnic and religious dimensions, which of course had many international ramifications. But what is not generally recognised is that, politically, there were three external actors in the affair: the Chinese Nationalist government, the Chinese communists and (especially) the Soviets. The dynamics between these three actors, as World War II came to an end and the Chinese civil war gathered pace, had a major impact on the course of events in Xinjiang between 1944 and 1949. The scanty details of Uighur unrest emerging from Xinjiang in early 1997 suggest that the ethnic, religious and political dynamics behind the events of the 1940s are similar to those behind today's events.

NIAS Reports, 36

ISBN 87-87062-62-3

ISBN 87-87062-62-3



9 788787 062626



NIAS