



HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN
XINJIANG, CHINA, 1978-2007

BY

ROY ANTHONY ROGERS

A dissertation submitted in fulfilment of the requirement
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of (Political
Science)

Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and
Human Sciences
International Islamic University
Malaysia

AUGUST 2012

ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the human rights conditions in Xinjiang, China from 1978 till 2007. The thesis examines both the internal and external factors that have influenced China's policies on the human rights conditions in Xinjiang. The timeframe ranging between 1978 and 2007 highlights three different administrations. Therefore, the aim is to analyse the changes in the human rights condition in Xinjiang under three different administrations and the factors that have caused the changes. The human rights conditions in Xinjiang have never been consistent. The people in Xinjiang have experienced a rather 'turbulent' journey since the economic reforms began in China in 1978. The findings from this study suggest that the human rights conditions in Xinjiang have undergone several stages. First is the 'repressive' stage, which occurred during the Cultural Revolution prior to 1978. Second is the 'reform and liberalisation' stage that was initiated by Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s which improved the human rights conditions. However, this was followed by the 'decline' stage, where human rights and security conditions in Xinjiang started to deteriorate. In the mid-1990s, the Chinese government introduced the 'Strike Hard' policy and intensified its crackdowns in the province. The fourth and final stage is the 'regressive' stage. In the aftermath of the September 11th attacks in the United States, the Chinese government has made use of the incident to increase crackdowns in Xinjiang. During this stage, the Chinese government reverted to harsh policies. It should be pointed out that although these policies may not be as extreme as the policies adopted during the Cultural Revolution, they still impinged on the freedom and rights of the Uyghurs. This study therefore enhances the information on the 'ups and downs' regarding the human rights conditions in Xinjiang between 1978 and 2007. The findings also suggest that draconian policies such as the 'Strike Hard' are counterproductive because they worsen the human rights conditions and only further increase the hostility of the Uyghurs towards the Han Chinese. Unless the Chinese government genuinely adopts a fair and just policy towards its national minorities, peace will not be attained in Xinjiang. It also analyses the role of Uyghur diaspora to internationalise the human rights issues in Xinjiang and China's reaction towards the international pressures. Finally, it also provides recommendations to the Chinese government, the various Uyghur diaspora groups and the United States to improve the human rights conditions in Xinjiang.

خلاصة البحث

تقوم هذه الأطروحة بتحليل أوضاع حقوق الإنسان في مقاطعة سينشيانغ بالصين، من عام 1978 إلى 2007م. وتكشف الدراسة العوامل الداخلية والخارجية التي أثرت على السياسة الصينية في أوضاع حقوق الإنسان بالمقاطعة. ويأتي تأطير الزمن من 1978 إلى 2007 لتغطي ثلاث إدارت مختلفة، حيث يهدف هذا التأطير إلى تحليل التغيرات التي وقعت في أوضاع حقوق الإنسان بالمقاطعة تحت تلك الإدارات المختلفة، والعوامل التي سببت تلك التغيرات. ولم تكن أوضاع حقوق الإنسان في سينشيانغ مستتية، حيث واجهت العديد من "الاضطرابات" منذ الإصلاحات الاقتصادية في الصين عام 1978. وخلصت نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن أوضاع حقوق الإنسان في المقاطعة مرت بالعديد من المراحل. أولاً، المرحلة "القمعية" والتي حدثت أثناء الثورة الثقافية قبل 1978. ثانياً، مرحلة "الإصلاح والتحرير" والتي بادرها دينغ شياوبونغ في الثمانينيات حيث دفعت بأوضاع حقوق الإنسان إلى الأفضل. ثالثاً، مرحلة "الانحطاط" حيث بدأت أوضاع حقوق الإنسان والحالة الأمنية في سينشيانغ بالتدهور، ففي منتصف التسعينيات انتهجت السلطات الصينية سياسة "الضربة الموجعة" وتكثيف الهجمات على المقاطعة. رابعاً، مرحلة "الانكفاء" حيث استغلت السلطات أحداث 11 سبتمبر لتصعيد الهجمات على سينشيانغ، وفي هذه المرحلة طبقت السلطات أقصى سياساتها. ويجب أن نوضح بأن تلك السياسات لاتعد أقصى من السياسات التي طبقت في الثورة الثقافية، حيث يمارس الأيجور الديمقراطية وحقوقهم الإنسانية. لذلك تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى إحياء المعلومات بشكل "تصاعدي وتنازلي" بما يخص أوضاع حقوق الإنسان في سينشيانغ من 1978 إلى 2007. وأوصت النتائج بأن السياسات الوحشية مثل "الضربة الموجعة" أدت إلى نتائج عكسية، لأن ذلك يشوه من أوضاع حقوق الإنسان، ويساعد على تصعيد عنف الأيجور نحو الهان الصيني، مالم تتبنى السلطات الصينية سياسة العدالة والإنصاف تجاه الأقليات في الدولة، والتي تساعد على نشر الأمان في مقاطعة سينشيانغ. وتقوم الدراسة أيضاً بتحليل دور الأيجور المشتتين لتفعيل قضية حقوق الإنسان في المقاطعة دولياً، وإظهار ردة فعل الصينيين تجاه الضغوطات الدولية. وأخيراً، تقدم هذه الدراسة توصيات للسلطات الصينية، ومجموعات الأيجور المشتتين، والولايات المتحدة، لتحسين أوضاع حقوق الإنسان في سينشيانغ.

APPROVAL PAGE

The dissertation of Roy Anthony Rogers has been approved by the following:

Ishtiaq Hossain
Supervisor

Tunku Mohar B. Tunku Mohd Mokhtar
Internal Examiner

Joern Dosch
External Examiner

Najibah Bt. Mohd Zin
Chairperson

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

Roy Anthony Rogers

Signature Date

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

**DECLARATION OF COPYRIGHT AND AFFIRMATION
OF FAIR USE OF UNPUBLISHED RESEARCH**

Copyright © 2012 by Roy Anthony Rogers. All rights reserved.

HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN XINJIANG, CHINA, 1978-2007

No part of this unpublished research may be reproduced, stored in a retrieved system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission of the copyright holder except as provided below.

1. Any material contained in or derived from this unpublished research may only be used by others in their writing with due acknowledgement.
2. IIUM or its library will have the right to make and transmit copies (print or electronic) for institutional and academic purposes.
3. The IIUM library will have the right to make, store in a retrieval system and supply copies of this unpublished research if requested by other universities and research libraries.

Affirmed by Roy Anthony Rogers.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

To my wife, Elsie, children, Xavier, Pio and Filumena.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Praise be to God, the Almighty for enabling me complete this study. I would like to extend my greatest gratitude to my supervisor Associate Professor Dr. Ishtiaq Hossain for his guidance throughout the process of research and writing. Special thanks to all the members of Department of Political Sciences, especially Professor Dr. Abdul Rashid Moten, Professor Dr. El Fatih Abdullahi AbdelSalam, Associate Professor Dr. Wahabuddin Ra'ees, Professor Syed Serajul Islam, Associate Professor Dr. Mohammad Noore Alam Siddiquee, Dr. Tunku Mohar Tunku Mohd. Mokhtar and Norlia Omar. I am particularly grateful to Professor Emeritus Dr. Colin MacKerras, Professor Dr. Donald McMillen, Professor Dr. Linda Benson, Professor Dr. Huang Mab, Associate Professor Chang Jiunn-yih, Dr. Arthur Ding, Dr. Chen Chih-Chieh, Dr. Rosey Wang Ma, Henryk Szadziwski, Mehmet Tohti and Anu Akultala for their willingness to share their expertise and knowledge on the topic. I would also like to express my gratitude to my Dean at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya Professor Datuk Dr. Mohd Ridzuan Othman, former Deans, Professor Dato' Dr. Mohammad Raduan Mohd Arif, Professor Dr. Khairul Maini Osman Salleh, the Dean of Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences, Dr. Badri Najib Zubir, Dr. Hafiz Zakariya, Deputy Dean for Postgraduate and Research. I wish to express my appreciation to the Head of Department of International and Strategic Studies, Wan Sharina Jaffri, former Heads of Department K.S. Balakrishnan, Associate Professor Dr. Jatswan Singh, Associate Professor Ruhanas Harun and Professor Datuk Mohamad Abu Bakar. I am also indebted to the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia and University of Malaya for granting me the study leave that enabled me to fully focus on my research and writing. I wish to express my gratitude to Taiwan Fellowship, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of China for providing me with the opportunity to conduct research in Taiwan. I also extend special and most grateful appreciation to the National Central Library of Taiwan, Institute of International Relations, National Chengchi University, Taipei, Taiwan. Special acknowledgement is due to the research Cluster of Humanities and Ethics, University of Malaya for giving me the opportunity to conduct my field trip in Xinjiang. I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Library of International Islamic University of Malaysia, the Main Library of University Malaya, Tun Sri Lanang Library, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Library of Institute of Strategic and International Studies, Kuala Lumpur and the Kajang Municipal Library. Thanks also to Dr. Yen Chen-shen, Keng Li-chun, Chen Chun-ju, Dr. Maimunah Abdul Kadir, Shamsul Paris, Nazatul Sharin Mokhtar, Riaz Urrahman Sadayan, Siti Rozana, Thomas Korruth, Mahmud Ishtiaq, Jeffery Chang, Jesse Wang, Fung Mei, Peter Chang, Carol Tai, Larry Tan SJ, Abdul Ahad, Mahmutjan Abdurehim. Finally I would like to thank my wife, Elsie Balagulan Gamil Rogers and children, Xavier Mariano, Josef Pio and Maria Filumena for giving me the precious moments I draw on for comfort and inspiration. I am also extremely thankful to my parents Peter and Betty Rogers and my sister, Selina Marie Rogers for their encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Abstract in Arabic	iii
Approval Page	iv
Declaration	v
Copyright Page	vi
Dedication	vii
Acknowledgments	viii
List of Tables	xi
List of Figures	xii
List of Abbreviations	xiii

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION..... 1

CHAPTER 2: SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF XINJIANG..... 40

2.1 Introduction	40
2.2 Location	41
2.3 Ethnicity of Xinjiang	43
2.4 Contemporary Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang	45
2.5 Xinjiang (East Turkestan) Prior to the Chinese Takeover in the mid-18 Century	50
2.4.1 Islamic Character and its Origins in East Turkestan	53
2.6 Chinese Administration in Xinjiang Prior to People’s Republic of China (mid-18 Century-1949)	56
2.6.1 The Ching Dynasty Administration in Xinjiang (1756-1911) and the Khojas Rebellion	56
2.6.2 Xinjiang under the Republic of China (ROC) and the rise of Turkic Nationalism (1911-1949)	58
2.7 The Policy of Appeasement by the Chinese Communist Party: Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), 1949-1957	62
2.8 Forced Assimilation and the Cultural Revolution (1960s-1978)	68
2.8.1 Policies of Education and Language Reforms (since the 1960s). 71	
2.8.2 Religious Subjugation in Xinjiang (1960s-1980s)	73
2.9 Conclusion	74

CHAPTER 3: INTERNAL FACTORS IN INFLUENCING HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN XINJIANG..... 81

3.1 Introduction	81
3.2 Chinese Communist Party (CCP)’s Perspective on Human Rights	82
3.3 The Chinese Communist Party (CCP)’s Policy and	

Economic Development in Xinjiang since 1978	90
3.4 Political Violence in Xinjiang and the Uyghurs Separatism	112
3.5 Beijing’s Response to the Political Violence and the ‘Strike Hard’ Policy in Xinjiang	130
3.6 Conclusion	137
CHAPTER 4: EXTERNAL FACTORS IN INFLUENCING HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS IN XINJIANG.....	139
4.1 Introduction	128
4.2 Disintegration of the Soviet Union and Political Repression in Xinjiang during the 1990s	143
4.3 ‘Boomerang Throw’ and Activation of Network.....	146
4.4 The Development of Transnational Human Rights Network on Xinjiang	152
4.4.1 Uyghur Human Rights Solidarity Groups.....	154
4.4.2 Non-Uyghur Human Rights Solidarity Groups.....	164
4.4.3 The Role of Inter-Governmental Organisations (IGOs)	168
4.4.4 The Role of Like-Minded States: United States and Turkey	173
4.5 The ‘September 11 Attack’ and Global War on Terror	180
4.6 China’s Reaction towards the International Pressures: Denial and Tactical Concession	185
4.7 Conclusion.....	190
CHAPTER 5: DECADES OF TURBULENCE: HUMAN RIGHTS IN XINJIANG (1978-2007)	195
5.1 Introduction	195
5.2 Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang Prior to the 1978 Reforms	197
5.3 Deng Xiaoping’s Reforms and Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang in the 1980s	203
5.4 The 1990s Challenges and Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang.....	214
5.5 Global War on Terror and Human Rights in Xinjiang in the 2000s	228
5.6 Conclusion.....	236
CONCLUSION	239
BIBLIOGRAPHY	256
APPENDIX I: MAP OF PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND XINJIANG UYGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION	279
APPENDIX II: MAP OF XINJIANG UYGHUR AUTONOMOUS REGION	280

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
2.1	Population of Five Major Ethnic Groups in Xinjiang (1941-2000)	44
3.1	Major Productions in Xinjiang (1985-2000)	99
3.2	International Tourists to Xinjiang and Foreign Exchange Revenues From Tourism (1985 to 2004)	101
3.3	Industrial Output in Xinjiang in 2001	102
3.4	Demographic Situation in Xinjiang in 1944	107
3.5	Demographic Situation in Xinjiang according to China's Fourth National Census in 1990	109
3.6	Proportional Evolution in Xinjiang's Demography from 1944 to 2000	111
5.1	Transport, Post and Telecommunication Services in Xinjiang (1978-98)	210
5.2	Uyghur-Han Income Inequality by Selected Groups for 2010 (in yuan)	221
5.3	Comparison of Xinjiang's Education Level with other Provinces	224
5.4	Ethnic Composition in the Standing Committee of the Communist Party of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in 2000	228

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure No.</u>		<u>Page No.</u>
1.1	A Model Explaining the Relations between the External and Internal Actors in Influencing State's Human Rights Policy	21
1.2	Internationalization of the Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang	23
2.1	Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang (since 2001)	49
2.2	Political Evolution in Xinjiang (1758-1978)	77
2.3	China Intensifies Crackdowns in Xinjiang since 2001	79
3.1	Internal Factors that have Influenced the Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang (1978-2007)	82
3.2	Change of Population Trend among Uyghur and Han Population in Xinjiang (1949-2000)	113
3.3	Factors that have contributed to the Ethnic Unrest in Xinjiang	114
4.1	External Factors that have Influenced the Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang (1978-2007)	141
4.2	Internationalization of the Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang and Boomerang Throws	153
4.3	Transnational Human Rights Networks on Xinjiang	154
4.4	Methods Commonly used by Transnational Human Rights Networks	181
4.5	China's Reaction to the Internationalisation of Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang	186
5.1	Evolution of Human Rights Conditions in Xinjiang 1978-2007	197

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAHR	Arab Association for Human Rights
AI	Amnesty International
AOHR	Arab Organisation for Human Rights
APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
CBM	Confidence Building Measures
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CHRC	Congressional Human Rights Caucus
CNPC	Chinese National Petroleum Corporation
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIA	Chinese Islamic Association
CIRI	Cingranelli-Richards
ETIM	Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement
ETIP	Eastern Turkestan Islamic Party
ETLA	East Turkestan Liberation Army
ETLC	East Turkestan Liberation Committee
ETNFC	East Turkestan National Front Centre
ETPRP	East Turkestan People's Revolutionary Party
ETR	East Turkestan Republic
ETU	East Turkestan Union
ETYNSA	East Turkestan Youth National Salvation Army
EU	European Union
EXMD	East Xinjiang Military District
FTR	Free Turkestan Radio
HRIC	Human Rights in China
HRW	Human Rights Watch
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Crescent
IGO	International Governmental Organisation
IMU	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IHF	International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights
IHRC	Islamic Human Rights Commission
IPO	International Progress Organisation
ISHR	International Service for Human Rights
IUUCIS	International Uyghur Union of the Commonwealth Independent States
INA	Ining National Army
JI	Jamaat-e- Islami
JUA	Japanese Uyghur Association
KMT	Koumintang Party
LSETI	League for the Struggle for East Turkestan Independence
MRGI	Minority Right Group International
NAC	Nationalities Affairs Commission
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NPC	National People's Congress

NRPTT	Nonviolent Radical Party, Transnational and Transparty
NXMD	Northern Xinjiang Military District
OIC	Organisation Islamic Conference
OLU	Organisation for the Liberation of Uighurstan
PDLS	People's Democratic League of Sinkiang
PTS	Political Terror Scale
PLA	People Liberation Army
PUIC	Parliamentary Union of the OIC
RFA	Radio Free Asia
PRC	People's Republic of China
ROC	Republic of China
SLPD	Sinkiang League for Peace and Democracy
SP	State's Policy
SXMD	Southern Xinjiang Military District
TAR	Tibet Autonomous Region
TIRET	Turkish Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan
TKM	Turkestan Liberation Movement
UAA	Uyghur American Association
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UFO	Uyghurstan Freedom Organisation
UHRP	Uyghur Human Rights Project
UHTDZ	Urumqi High Technology Development Zone
UMR	Urumqi Military Region
UN	United Nations
UNCERD	United Nations on the Elimination of Radical Discrimination
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNDU	Uyghur Netherlands Democratic Union
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNIE	United Nations Independent Expert
USA	United States of America
USCIRF	United States Commission on Religious Freedom
USSR	Soviet Union
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation
WUC	World Uyghur Congress
WUNN	World Uyghur Network News
WUXAR	Women's Union of the Xinjiang Autonomous Region United Nations
XCP	Xinjiang Communist Party
XIA	Xinjiang Islamic Association
XPCC	Xinjiang Production-Construction Corps
XPRC	Xinjiang Provincial Revolutionary Committee
XUAR	Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Xinjiang or Sinkiang is situated at the northwest of China about 4000 km from Beijing. Xinjiang is also the largest province in China, covering about 617, 800 square miles (1, 600, 000 square km) or 1/6 of the total Chinese territory. Although Xinjiang is considered as one of the most isolated regions in the world, its location is in one of the most strategic areas in terms of China's security and defence as it shares its borders with eight countries. These countries are Mongolia and Kazakhstan to the northwest, Russia to the north, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to the west and Afghanistan, India and Pakistan (Jammu Kashmir) to the southwest. There are no other provinces in China that has as many international borders as Xinjiang. Hence, Xinjiang is an important province in terms of its role in China's security.

Xinjiang is located on the ancient 'Silk Road' which was a popular route between the East and the West used by traders and travellers such as Ibnu Batuta and Marco Polo. Xinjiang was formerly known as His-yu and became a Chinese territory during the Manchu dynasty in the mid-eighteenth century and was administered by the military. In 1884, it was declared a Chinese province and was the last area to be permanently occupied by China. Hence, its original name His-yu was changed to Xinjiang which means 'New Borders' in Chinese. Western explorers such as Sir Aurel Stain and Sven Hedin referred to the area as 'Chinese Turkestan' or East Turkestan. In 1911, after the fall of the Manchu dynasty, Xinjiang became part of the Republic of China under the Koumintang Party (KMT). It is the only Chinese province that is

located in Central Asia and is currently known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

Ethnicity in Xinjiang can be divided into two main categories: the Turkic people who are natives of Xinjiang and non-Turkic people such as the Han Chinese, Russians, Manchurians and Indians. The Turkic people are made up of the Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kirghizs, Uzbeks and Tajiks with the Uyghurs being the largest. The Uyghurs in Xinjiang are Muslims and they share common heritage, language and religion with other Turkics living in Central Asia. Urumqi, the provincial capital of Xinjiang, is connected to other important cities in the province such as Kashgar, Turfan, Yarlán and Ili.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took control of Xinjiang from the KMT and declared that Xinjiang was to be an autonomous region in 1955. However, major decisions were still made by the CCP led by the Han Chinese and not the Uyghurs from Xinjiang. The CCP implemented aggressive assimilation policies in the 1960s especially during the Cultural Revolution¹ during which the Uyghurs were subjected to serious abuses at the hands of the authorities. These abuses included violent military campaigns, religious persecutions and extra-judicial killings that have claimed thousands of lives. Thousands more were subjected to torture, disappearances

¹ The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution or also known as Cultural Revolution was launched by Mao Zedong the Chairman of the Communist Party of China in May 1966. The aim of the Cultural Revolution was to strengthen Mao Zedong's leadership within the party. The Cultural Revolution was a struggle for power between Mao and his radical supporters on one hand and the moderates led by Liu Shaoqi and Deng Xiaoping on the other. Mao established the youth militia known as the Red Guards to overthrow the moderate leaders such as Liu Shaoqi and take control of the party apparatus. The Red Guards seized control of the state by replacing the Central Committee of Communist Party with the Cultural Revolution Committee. Party members who were perceived as moderates were persecuted. Apart from party members, educators, artists and religious leaders were also purged and killed. The Cultural Revolution resulted in as many as half a million people dead. The Cultural Revolution ended in October 1976 with the demise of Mao Zedong.

and arbitrary detention. Because of this, the Uyghurs faced problems maintaining their cultural and linguistic identity. The central government also exploited the region's natural resources which resulted in environmental damage, displacement and the loss of livelihood for the Uyghurs. Meanwhile, Uyghurs living in exile since the 1960s continued to mobilise international support for their struggle by highlighting the human rights abuses in Xinjiang.

In 1978, Deng Xiaoping took over the leadership of China after the demise of Mao Zedong in 1976. It brought about dramatic changes in the human rights situation in China. These changes especially for the Uyghurs included freedom in performing religious obligations such as pilgrimage and the freedom to practice their culture and language. Hence, there was an improvement in human rights conditions in Xinjiang. However, in the late 1990s, the CCP reverted to harsh policies once again. They declared the policy of 'Strike Hard' which sanctioned the use of torture and arbitrary detentions as well as extra-judicial killings against the Uyghurs.

This study examines the internal and external factors that have influenced China's policies on the human rights conditions in Xinjiang from 1978 until 2007. Most of the previous research on this area² offer little elaboration on the interplay of internal and external factors that influence the Chinese policies toward the human rights conditions in Xinjiang. The timeframe of the study is divided into three periods. The first period begins with Deng Xiaoping taking over the administration of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in the 1980s. During Deng Xiaoping's administration there were political and economic reforms which granted freedom for the Uyghurs to practice their culture and religion. The second period is during Jiang Zemin's administration in the 1990s, followed by Hu Jintao who completed his first

² Michael Dillon, *Xinjiang-China's Muslim far Northwest* (London: Routledge Curzon, 2004). See also Frederick Starr (ed.), *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland* (London: M.E. Sharp, 2004).

term as the President of People's Republic of China in 2007 and was re-elected again the same year.

The timeframe ranging between 1978 and 2007 highlights three different administrations. Therefore, the aim is to analyse the changes in the human rights condition in Xinjiang under three different administrations and the factors that have caused the changes. This study focuses on the timeframe between 1978 and 2007 because during this period, there was an improvement in the human rights conditions in Xinjiang after Mao Zedong's repressive policies such as the Cultural Revolution. It was during Deng Xiaoping's administration that the People's Republic of China demonstrated an interest in human rights by ratifying many international human rights treaties and became a member of Human Rights Commission in 1982.³ For example, since the early 1980s, China has granted more freedom to minorities such as granting them rights to openly practice their religion and culture. China has also ratified several human rights conventions such as the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. China adopted these policies because it was convinced that by liberalising its human rights policies, it would attract foreign investments, especially from developed states, which was necessary to fulfil Deng Xiaoping's plan to modernise China.

However, in the late 1990s, subsequent Chinese leaders like Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao had reverted to harsh policies, such as the 'Strike Hard' policy which had worsened human rights conditions in Xinjiang.

³ Ann Kent, *Between Freedom and Subsistence China and Human Rights* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1993), 103.

1.3 JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the fact that Xinjiang has a long and rich history, there is a dearth of scholarly works on the Uyghurs of Xinjiang. There are very few works that are concerned with human rights abuses in Xinjiang when compared to research on human rights abuses in Tibet. Although both the Uyghurs and the Tibetans harbour similar hopes in receiving better treatment eventually, many are unaware that in reality, the Uyghurs living in Xinjiang encounter harsher treatment from the Chinese authorities compared to the Tibetans. Hence, this study on the changes in the human rights conditions in Xinjiang hopes to provide a fresh look towards research relating to minorities in China.

The Chinese occupied Xinjiang for a much longer period as they were already in power 201 years earlier than their occupation of Tibet. The Chinese annexed Xinjiang in the mid-1750s whereas Tibet was only annexed in 1955. The study of the Uyghurs living under the Chinese authorities and their struggle for survival has not received the attention it truly deserves. Unlike Tibet, whose plight has been highlighted due to serious campaigning efforts by the Buddhist Dalai Lama, the Uyghurs, who are Muslims, have been largely ignored.

This study varies from previous works such as *Xinjiang-China's Muslim Far Northwest* by Michael Dillon⁴ and *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland* edited by S. Frederick Starr⁵. These and other works have elaborated largely on the Uyghur's sufferings under Chinese rule and their quest for independence. Beside reporting on the suffering of the Uyghurs, the present study also examines the internal and external factors which have influenced China's policy towards the human rights conditions in Xinjiang. Xinjiang has been selected for this study because it offers a unique case

⁴ Michael Dillon, *Xinjiang-China's Muslim far northwest* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004).

⁵ Frederick Starr (ed.), *Xinjiang: China's Muslim borderland* (London: M.E. Sharp, 2004).

study which allows for the analysis of the contributing factors, which have influenced human rights policies under three different administrations.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The objective of the study is to analyse several pertinent issues regarding human rights in Xinjiang, particularly the role of internal and external factors:

- i) What is the condition of human rights in Xinjiang?
- ii) In what ways are the human rights conditions in Xinjiang different between 1978 and 2007?
- iii) What are the internal and external factors that have influenced China's policy towards human rights condition in Xinjiang since 1978?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study intends to enlighten the intellectual community⁶ who are interested in the political development and human rights changes in Xinjiang between 1978 and 2007. It also hopes to inform the members of the *Ummah* living in other parts of the world in regards to the problems faced by their fellow Muslims in Xinjiang. It is important to note that much attention has been given by Muslim scholars on the situation in Palestine and the Balkans compared to the minority situation in Xinjiang, China. This study intends to provide a fresh look towards research relating to Muslim minorities in China.

⁶ Scholars, academics and researchers who are interested in human rights and minorities in China, particularly Xinjiang.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

This study demonstrates that the Uyghurs' struggle to preserve their rights in maintaining their cultural and religious identity has not waned in spite of China's policies of subjugation. Unlike previous studies which only concentrated on major revolts or specific periods of Chinese administration in Xinjiang, this study attempts to analyse the internal and external factors that influence the changes in human rights conditions in Xinjiang.

The works by Owen Lattimore⁷, Linda Benson⁸, Allen S. Whitting⁹, Peter C. Perdue¹⁰, Andrew D. W Forbes¹¹ and Aittchen Wu¹² focus on major revolts in Xinjiang and provide useful information regarding the historical background of Xinjiang prior to 1949. Owen Lattimore has laid out the arguments on Xinjiang's geopolitical importance. After more than half a century since Lattimore published his work in 1950, the geopolitics and economy of Xinjiang remain important to China and Russia. Besides, his work also focuses on the revolts and separatist movements in the province during the 1930s and 1940s. Lattimore also explains the method used by the Chinese to antagonise the Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Uzbeks and Mongols against each other in Xinjiang thus making the Chinese administration in the province much easier. Such Chinese policy is known as *Yiyizi* or 'use the barbarian to flight the barbarian' (please refer to Chapter Two).

⁷ Owen Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia* (Boston: Little Brown, 1950).

⁸ Linda Benson, *The Ili Rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xiniang, 1944-1945* (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1990).

⁹ Allen S. Whitting, *Sinkiang: Pawn or Pivot?* (Boston: Little Brown and Co, 1980).

¹⁰ Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Canada: Belknap Press, 2005).

¹¹ Andrew Forbes, *Warlords and Muslims in Chinese Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

¹² Aittchen Wu, *Turkestan Tumult* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1984).

Morris Rossabi¹³ analyses the Chinese relations with Xinjiang and Central Asia. It is noteworthy to mention that Rossabi argues that there is a continuity of policy toward Xinjiang from the dynastic, to the Koumintang, to the communist regimes in China. According to Rossabi, the Chinese policy has undergone some transformation toward the region but has remained essentially motivated by economic and strategic interests. On a similar note, Rossabi also argues that the Uyghurs have always rejected the Chinese administration. However, Lucian Pye¹⁴ is convinced that Chinese policy in Xinjiang is motivated by security concerns. Pye acknowledges the importance of economic interests and ideological motivations as sources of Chinese policy in Xinjiang but he stresses that the geopolitical and security considerations toward the historic threats from the Uyghurs dominate economic and ideological concerns.

Apart from Pye, June Teufel Dreyer¹⁵ also analyses the Chinese policy in Xinjiang and the historical relations between them and the Uyghurs. Dreyer argues that on one the hand, the policy of ‘Sinification’ with the aim to induce ethnic minorities in Xinjiang to integrate has resulted in nationalistic reactions and ethnic clashes; on the other hand, efforts to accommodate differences by adopting a more pluralist approach and allowing ethnic diversity to flourish equally has produced separatist movements. Dreyer calls this dilemma as ‘China’s paradox’.

Another prominent scholar on China’s policy towards Xinjiang is Donald McMillen. In his work, *Chinese Communist Power and Policy in Xinjiang*¹⁶, McMillen

¹³ Morris, Rossabi, *China and Inner Asia from 1368 to the Present Day* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975).

¹⁴ Lucian Pye, “China: Ethnic Minorities and National Security,” in *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience*, edited by N. Clazer and D.P. Moyhahan (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1975).

¹⁵ June Teufel Dreyer, *China’s Political System: Modernization and Tradition* (London: MacMillan Press, Ltd. 1976).

¹⁶ Donald, McMillen, *Chinese Communist Power and Policy in Xinjiang* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1979).

looks at the PRC's policy in Xinjiang especially during the administration of Wang Enmao who was the CCP's First Secretary and Political Commissar in Xinjiang during the 1950s and later in the 1980s for the second time. According to McMillen, the central policies were reinterpreted in order to accommodate the ethnicity and strategic realities of the province. McMillen considers Wang Enmao as a capable and effective leader who was able to balance the demands of the central party policy and the complex ethnic relations in Xinjiang.

Apart from *Chinese Communist Power and Policy in Xinjiang*, Mcmillen has written numerous chapters in books and articles on Xinjiang; among them were "China, Xinjiang and Central Asia-'glocaity' in the year 2008" in Colin Mackerras and Michael Clarke's *China, Xinjiang and Central Asia*,¹⁷ "The Urumchi military region defence and security in China's west" published in *Asian Survey*¹⁸ and "Xinjiang and Wang Enmao: New direction in power and integration?" published in *The China Quarterly*.¹⁹

While McMillen focuses on the PRC's policies, Graham Fuller²⁰ and Richard Walsh²¹ highlight the impact of the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991 towards Xinjiang. According to Fuller and Walsh, since the collapse of the Soviet Union, China has reaffirmed its commitment to the inclusiveness of Xinjiang as part of China and its willingness to defend it at all cost including violating human rights norms. At

¹⁷ Donald, McMillen, "China, Xinjiang and Central Asia-'glocaity' in the Year 2008," in Colin Mackerras and Michael Clarke (eds.). *China, Xinjiang and Central Asia* (London: Routledge Contemporary China Series 2009).

¹⁸ Donald, McMillen, "The Urumchi Military Region Defence and Security in China's West," in *Asian Survey*, no. 22 (August 1982): 8-25.

¹⁹ Donald, McMillen, "Xinjiang and Wang Enmao: New direction in power and integration?" in *The China Quarterly*, no. 99 (September 1989): 74-103.

²⁰ Graham Fuller, *Central Asia: The New Geopolitics* (Santa Monica: Rand Cooperation, 1992).

²¹ Richard, Walsh, "China and the New Geopolitics of Central Asia," in *Asian Survey*, vol. 33, no.3 (March 1993), pp. 272-284.

the same time, China has adopted a pragmatic approach to the newly independent Central Asian republics.

They argue that China aspires to be a major regional actor among the Central Asian republics. Fuller argues that Xinjiang plays a significant role in fulfilling China's aspiration while Walsh considers Xinjiang as a bridge or link between Central Asia and China. Like previous scholars such as Lattimore, Walsh also claims that Xinjiang has now become a pivotal region for economic cooperation between China and Central Asia, especially with the re-creation of the 'Silk Road' trade and Xinjiang has becoming the staging area for China to project its power in the region.

Ji Ping²² conducted a sociological survey of the Uyghur-Han ethnic relations in Xinjiang. Ji Ping discovers great spatial separation that exists between the Uyghurs and the Hans and this was reflected in the socioeconomic and educational status. Ji Ping also maintains that despite the various reconciliatory efforts undertaken by the government to improve the Uyghur-Han relations, a high degree of resentment still exists between them. Another interesting point highlighted in Ji Ping's study is the continuous resentment that exists between the Hans and the Uyghurs that provides a fertile ground for further ethnic conflicts and separatist activities in Xinjiang.

At present, most of the books on Xinjiang such as *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland* edited by S. Frederick Starr,²³ emphasises on the integration policies adopted by the Chinese government in Xinjiang and problems which have arisen due to these policies. This book in particular analyses the policies of signification implemented by Beijing and the reactions of the Uyghurs. Similarly, works by

²² Ji Ping, "Frontier Migration and Ethnic Assimilation: A Case of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region of China," Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Brown University (1990).

²³ Frederick Starr (ed.), *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland* (London: M.E. Sharp, 2004).