

The Problem of Classifying Uyghurs as “Indigenous Peoples”



RUKIYE TURDUSH

The Problem of Classifying Uyghurs as
“Indigenous Peoples”

BY RUKIYE TURDUSH, Director of Research Program, Centre For East Turkistan National
Interest

AUTHOR



Mrs. Turdush holds degrees in multipolar diplomacy from the University of Catalonia, international politics from the University of Windsor, and Chinese history from the East China Normal University in Shanghai. She leads the Canadian East Turkistanian Federation as president. She regularly contributed to the Uyghur Research Institute in previous years. She is the author of *East Turkistan's Right to Sovereignty: Decolonization and Beyond*. Her research interests include China's genocide in East Turkistan and Chinese colonialism.

EDITED BY



Charles Burton. Senior Fellow, Macdonald-Laurier Institute, Centre for Advancing Canada's Interests Abroad and Non-Resident Senior Fellow, European Values Center for Security Policy. PhD 1987 from the University of Toronto after studies at Cambridge University (Oriental Studies) and Fudan University (History of Ancient Chinese Thought Program, Department of Philosophy, class of '77). Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Post-Doctoral Scholar in Political Science at University of Alberta, 1986-88.

He has published extensively on Chinese and North Korean affairs and Canada-China relations and has been commissioned to write reports on matters relating to Canada's relations with China for agencies of the Government of Canada. Charles is a frequent commentator on Chinese affairs in newspapers, radio and TV.

COVER

Uyghur community protest against Chinese occupation on its 72nd National Day
(Photo by Alim Yuksel)

© 2022 Centre for East Turkistan National Interest. All rights reserved.

About Centre for East Turkistan National Interest

The official name of this organization is the Centre for East Turkistan National Interest, and its acronym is CETNI.

CETNI is a non-profit and an independent international research, and a think-tank oriented organization. CETNI was founded by a group of Uyghur academics and experts.

Visit <https://cetni.org/> for more information.

info@cetni.org

www.cetni.org

The Problem of Classifying Uyghurs as “Indigenous Peoples”

The UN General Assembly adopted the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) on September 13, 2007. One hundred forty-three countries voted in support of the UNDRIP, including China. By signing onto this declaration, China officially recognized indigenous peoples’ rights. In December 2008, the Uyghur Human Rights Project published a report defining Uyghurs as “indigenous peoples” to pressure China to guarantee Uyghurs’ rights and to expose China's violations of UNDRIP concerning Uyghurs.¹ In 2010, the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) classified Uyghurs under the category of “ethnic minority and indigenous peoples.”² Since then, some scholars and journalists have also used the term “indigenous peoples” to identify Uyghurs. Moreover, “The Uyghur Tribunal” funded by World Uyghur Congress (WUC) has repeatedly used the term “indigenous peoples” when they refer to Uyghurs in their report.³ However, the term “indigenous peoples” and “indigenous to the land or country” are not political and legal equivalents. The former refers to specific populations native to their land and categorized in UN documents as entitled to certain rights, while the latter plainly refers to all peoples who are indigenous to their country or their land. These certain rights in the UNDRIP are restricted to the domestic structure of the State. Thus, the interchangeable use of these two terms in the case of Uyghurs not only causes confusion as to their national identity but also limits Uyghurs’ ability to advocate for their legal right to restore the independence of

their illegally occupied country. Majority of global Uyghur communities are aware that their aspiration to regain their independence is extremely challenging and sounds idealistic. However, given the ongoing tragic atrocities faced by Uyghurs as a result of Chinese occupation and colonization, there are no alternative ways to preserve their existence as a nation and affirm Uyghur indigeneity to their homeland. They firmly believe that only Independence can be the last resort for Uyghurs facing China's genocide. Therefore, Uyghurs strongly object to being classified as "indigenous peoples."

This report involves the following undertakings to support Uyghurs' demands regarding this classification:

(a) Clarify the meaning of the term "Indigenous to East Turkistan" and "Indigenous Peoples" in the case of Uyghurs.

The term "Indigenous to the Land" and the history of Uyghurs.

The term "indigenous to the land" requires verification by historical facts. Uyghurs' historical and continued roots in East Turkistan is a proof of their indigeneity to East Turkistan. The book *Uyghurlar* (The Uyghurs) in 1989, written by Uyghur historian Turghun Almas and another book *Sherqiy Turkistan Tarihi* (History of East Turkistan) written by Uyghurs historian Muhammad Imin Bughra, both claimed the Uyghurs have 4000 years history in the region.⁴ The European genetics of Kroran "Loulan Beauty," who was buried in the Tarim Basin of East Turkistan over 4000 years ago, refutes China's claim of Han Chinese ties to the region.⁵ China's claim in its White Paper that East Turkistan has been an inseparable part of China since the Han dynasty.⁶ However, the Han dynasty having established a few garrisons only in the eastern part of the southern Tarim basin of East Turkistan in 60 BCE was proved by many historians. For

instance, Uyghur historians and many influential historians of China and Central Asian history, including James Millward, agree that the Chinese Han dynasty's control of a small eastern part of the Tarim Basin for a period of about 125 years has little to do with city-states of entire East Turkistan and the Chinese claim that Xinjiang has been a Chinese territory since the Han dynasty is clearly a distortion of history.⁷ There were city-states and empires before and after the Chinese Han dynasty's invasion, and populations include Saka (Iranian speaking people), Huns (an early form of Altaic/Turkic speaking people, also known Xiongnu), Yuezhi (Tokharian or Indo-European speaking people) and Sogdians.⁸ Although China claims that they had managed the second invasion during the Tang Dynasty which targeted on subjugating the Turfan and north of the Tarim Basin again in 640 AD, however, the Tang ruling house was not originally Han Chinese, but came from the steppe, much like the later Mongol conquerors and the population in East Turkistan was not Han Chinese but largely Tokharian descendants in those areas during the Tang control.⁹

Gok Turk Empire cleaned the influence of Tang dynasty from the region in 751AD and Tang dynasty paid tributes to Eastern Turks "Uyghur Khaganate" established by Uyghurs in Mongolia.¹⁰ Han Chinese rulers of Chinese state was never able expand to the West and invade East Turkistan until People's Republic of China's (PRC) invasion in 1949.

Today's modern Uyghurs are not only descendants of the Turkic tribes of Uyghur Khaganate (Uyghur Federation/Empire) that moved from Mongolia to East Turkistan in the 840s.¹¹ Those early Uyghurs are Eastern Turkic Confederation that descendants of the early form of Gok Turk ancestors raised around A.D. 550, possessed the vast land between Ural and Mongolia and Central Asia from the Altai to the Jaxartes and divided in Eastern and Western

Turkic Confederations.¹² In this regard, Eastern Turkic Confederation established a separate Uyghur Khaganate centered in Mongolia before they migrated to the southwest (East Turkistan) in 840s is not necessarily proving Uyghurs' alien identity to Western Turkic Confederation's territory. After the fall of the Uyghur Khaganate, Uyghurs migrated to East Turkistan and joined with their other Turkic kins and the other indigenous populations. Subsequently, those early Uyghurs had established city-states and kingdoms in East Turkistan with other pre-existing Turkic Tribes, which implies they were from the Turkic Royal clan during the rising of the Gokturk Empire.¹³ The Uyghur Qocho Kingdom (844-1370) in the northeast and the Qarakhanids Dynasty (840s- 1212) in the west were both ruled by modern Uyghur ancestors.¹⁴ The Chagatai Khanate (1220-1405) was ruled by Chingis Khan's second son Chagahtai.¹⁵ Later, his descendants converted to Islam and was Turkicized in East Turkistan. The Yarkent Khanate, also known as the Yarkand Khanate, was a Sunni Muslim Turkic state ruled by Turco- Mongol descendants of Chagatai Khan (1514-1705).¹⁶ The state of Kashgaria (1865-1876) also a Turkic state and governed by the ancestors of modern Uyghurs and has nothing to do with Han Chinese.¹⁷

Following the fall of these independent kingdoms, Manchus ruled East Turkistan for a short period (1884-1911) and changed name of the region to "Xinjiang" which means "newcolony."¹⁸ The majority of the population in the region were ancestors of modern Uyghurs who called themselves *Turk* or *Musulman*, not Uyghurs during those periods.¹⁹ Later, East Turkistan was briefly controlled by Han Chinese warlords dispatched to the region by the nascent government of the Manchu empire. Soon after, Uyghurs and other Turkic people defeated the Han Chinese warlords and established the East Turkistan Republic in 1933 and 1944.²⁰ Prior to

the invasion of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Uyghur population was 75% of the total population and the Chinese population made up only 5.7%.²¹ Thus, Modern Uyghurs were formed by admixture of many early indigenous inhabitants in East Turkistan, including early Saka, Tokharian, Huns, Sogdians, Turkic, and Mongols as historical records indicated.²² China's claim that modern-day Uyghurs are not indigenous to East Turkistan is unfounded as they reject Uyghurs' ethnic formation and historical roots in the region.

UN documents identify over 476 million indigenous peoples living in 90 countries across the world.²³ After decolonization, many independent countries emerged, and the peoples of those independent countries are indigenous to their countries. However, they are not classified or categorized into the population of "Indigenous Peoples." If this classification indicates the peoples who do not have an independent state yet, including the Uyghurs, in that case, the question should be raised here: Why does the UNDRIP not include the right to sovereignty of these peoples through external self-determination based on decolonization?

The definition of "Indigenous Peoples" does not correspond with Uyghurs' identity and their rights.

The UNDRIP does not define indigenous peoples, but self-definition as indigenous is stated as a fundamental criterion in the declaration. Jose R. Martinez Cobo, the Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, provided a definition that is based on the fundamental criterion and other additional criteria in his "Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations." According to his report, each country has its own way of defining its indigenous peoples based on various criteria. His finding

is based on the following criteria for how each country determined which groups should be deemed “indigenous population”:

- Self-identification as an indigenous person and group consciousness
- Lived in a certain part of the country
- Autochthonous inhabitants of their lands
- Distinct culture, language, religion (Some indigenous peoples have diverse traditional forms of religion)
- Common ancestors
- Legally certified (not every country legally certified their identity)
- Disadvantaged, primitive, not developed.²⁴

Some of these definitions apply to Uyghurs, such as having a distinct culture, language, religion, common ancestors, disadvantaged groups of the society, but not all. Not all Indigenous peoples may fit all of these criteria to be defined as Indigenous Peoples according to Cobo’s report. Besides, it is unnecessary that any nation that possesses any of these criteria could be defined and classified as “indigenous peoples.” According to the primary criterion of this definition, Indigenous Peoples should be self-identified. Except for the Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) based in Washington DC, there are no Uyghur institutions or Uyghurs as people who identify themselves as “indigenous peoples”. Moreover, the UHRP is a research-based project and cannot represent the national aspiration of Uyghurs. Neither have they collected consensus from Uyghurs nor did they obtain permission from other East Turkistani/Uyghur organizations before they sought to classify Uyghurs as “indigenous peoples” in their 2008 report. The report inaccurately equalized the terms “indigenous” and “indigenous peoples”

although being indigenous to East Turkistan does not mean being identified as “indigenous peoples” as are classified in the UN documents.

It is important to note that UHRP report described Uyghur indigeneity to East Turkistan with historical facts. However, they have missed the point that achieving independence through external self-determination is the Uyghurs legitimate right because their independent nation state is colonized by People’s Republic of China. Instead, the report claimed “Indigenous Peoples rights per the UN declaration, which is linked to internal self-determination within the domestic context of the state.”²⁵

The “Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination” adopted general recommendations concerning the right to self-determination in 1996. The recommendations distinguished between internal and external self-determination. It defines external self-determination as follows:

The external aspect of self-determination implies that all peoples may determine freely their political status and their place in the international community based upon the principle of equal rights. Thus, the concept of external self-determination provides the legal framework necessary to the liberation of peoples from colonialism and the prohibition of the subjugation of peoples to systems of domination and exploitation.²⁶

The internal aspect of self-determination defines, for example, “the rights of all peoples to pursue their economic, social and cultural development without outside interference.”²⁷ Clearly, internal self-determination shows the relationship between peoples and its government within states.

These internal rights were guaranteed for Indigenous Peoples in article 3 and article 4 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as follows, but not an external self-determination.

Article 3

Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. Because of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.²⁸

Article 4

Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.²⁹

Even though the articles of UNDRIP did not specify the internal or external aspect of the self-determination, it is obvious from the distinction made by the “Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination” adopted general recommendations concerning the right to self-determination in 1996, that the articles in UNDRIP paraphrased self-determination within the internal context of the state.

General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV) of “Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples” paragraph two states:

All peoples have the right to self-determination; because of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.³⁰

Paragraph three of the same resolution clarified further and states, “Inadequacy of political, economic, social or educational preparedness should never serve as a pretext for delaying independence.”³¹ However, do “all peoples” referring to the granting of independence to colonial countries through self-determination include Indigenous Peoples? To obtain the affirmative answer, many indigenous scholars worked hard to equalize the term “indigenous peoples” to “all peoples” within international law. In this view, the UN announced that 1993 would be the Year of International Indigenous Peoples and the term “indigenous population” was changed to “indigenous peoples.”³² However, “indigenous peoples” is not the exact equivalent of “all peoples,” as the rights of Indigenous Peoples are limited to internal self-determination by the UNDRIP. If “all peoples” include “indigenous peoples”, how do we explain the internal self-determination specified in “Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination” that adopted the general recommendations concerning the right to self-determination in 1966? What is the position of UNDRIP? And what is the necessity to adopt this declaration separately to specify Indigenous Peoples rights, if their rights are included in other international laws that address decolonization? Evidently, it is not yet clear that “indigenous peoples” have all these rights accorded to “all peoples” in international law and that there are no clear legitimate legal arguments established for their external self-determination.

Some people even try to equalize the sentence “freely determine their political status” in article 3 of the UNDRIP with independence or gaining statehood and argue that classifying Uyghurs as indigenous peoples does not limit their legitimate right to restore their nation state. However, “independence” under traditional international law was restricted to nation states or colonized nation states. Unlike Uyghurs, “indigenous peoples” have their own unique issues and

treaties between states that they can deal with through U.N. Working Group on Indigenous Populations to advance their political status. “Freely determine their political status” in article 3 of the UNDRIP is ongoing process which can be achieved through participation in all decision making of the government of the nation state under which they live. During this process, the governing institutional order itself be one in which individuals and groups freely determine their political status as UN special rapporteur S. James Anaya, defined constitutive aspects of self-determination in his report titled *A Contemporary Definition of the International Norm of Self-Determination*.³³ Indigenous Peoples political participation of governmental decision-making and their freedom of expression may lead their self-governance in the democratic countries. These statuses are out of the question for Uyghurs since they are unable freely determine their political status under China’s autocratic colonial governing apparatus. Further, unlike Indigenous Peoples issue, the Uyghurs issue is clear cut. Uyghurs need total independence from China to ensure their very existence against the ongoing genocide.

Today’s world is witnessing the Chinese government implementing genocidal policies, incarcerating millions of Uyghurs in concentration camps to be brainwashed, tortured and executed, dramatically reducing the Uyghur population through mass sterilization.³⁴ Removing Uyghur children from their homes and forced Sinicization. China is continuing Uyghur genocide through starvation under the pretext of pandemic quarantine.³⁵ These should prove that preventing genocide is an impossible task if Uyghur issues treated as China’s internal affairs by classifying them as “indigenous peoples.”

There are other criteria that used to define “Indigenous Peoples” in the UN special rapporteur Jose R. Martinez Cobo’s report is not applicable to classify Uyghurs as “indigenous peoples” as

well. For example, many Indigenous Peoples were defined based on the criteria that “people lived in a certain part of the country.” However, with Uyghurs, East Turkistan was colonized by China as part of a pawn of great powers game in 1949, despite the decolonization period during that time.³⁶ Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in East Turkistan are not the people who live in certain parts of China. China invaded East Turkistan, and Chinese immigrants have been sent to settle in all parts of East Turkistan. Unlike “indigenous peoples”, Uyghurs established numerous independent states throughout history, including two independent republics in the 20th century. East Turkistan should therefore be defined as an independent nation state prior to the PRC’s invasion based on the following four criteria defining the state in the Montevideo Convention’s article 1:

- (a) a permanent population
- (b) defined territory
- (c) government and the capacity to enter into relations with the other states.³⁷

The East Turkistan Republics not only represented the permanent people of East Turkistan and its defined territory, they also had created their government structure and established diplomatic relations with other states before China’s invasion.³⁸ The People’s Republic of China had no treaties with Uyghurs and no mandate to transfer the territory of East Turkistan from the Manchu Empire to People’s Republic of China according to *uti possidetis juris* principles.³⁹ Ironically, the United Nations recognized East Turkistan as part of China today despite China’s illegal occupation of the region. However, the recognition was one sided and political, and not legal as there are no representatives from East Turkistan took part in this decision in the UN.⁴⁰

(b) Explore the hidden fact behind China’s rejection of the term “indigenous peoples”

Uyghurs' rejection of defining Uyghurs as "Indigenous Peoples" differs from China's rejection of defining Uyghurs as "Indigenous Peoples." China rejects anything related to the indigeneity of Uyghurs in East Turkistan. In order to create Han ties to the region and eradicates historical facts of Uyghur indigeneity to the land, the Chinese government published a White Paper which distorted Uyghurs history by falsely claiming that modern Uyghurs are only descendants from the historic Uyghurs Federation who immigrated from Mongolia in 840s and merged with the Han people in the Turpan Basin to form the main body of Uyghur ethnic group.⁴¹

However, the White Paper misses the point that Uyghurs belonged to the existing Hunnic-Turkic empire during that time and had moved from north eastern Turkic Khaganate to Western Turkic Khaganate to join the existing Uyghur and other Turkic populations of the empire.⁴²

Another reason behind China not recognizing the term "indigenous peoples" is to avoid ensuring any rights of the "Indigenous Peoples" in UN documents for Uyghurs. If not, they would have been obligated to guarantee Uyghurs those rights and not intentionally implement genocide and crimes against humanity against the Uyghur and other Turkic populations.

However, China skillfully uses the term "indigenous peoples" for its benefit in multilateral and bilateral diplomacy. For instance, each time the Canadian government criticizes China's mass atrocity against the Uyghurs, Chinese diplomats use whataboutism diplomacy by paralleling Canada's cultural genocide against its indigenous peoples over a hundred years ago to today's Uyghur genocide.⁴³ Even though Canada apologized and established the Commission of Truth and Reconciliation, China still continues its genocide against Uyghurs. China thus also acted against its own claim of not recognizing the term "indigenous peoples" and has not been shy to

accept financial aid and loans from the World Bank by defining Uyghurs as “indigenous peoples”. For example, the World Bank issued US\$100 million to China under the name of “Xinjiang Yining Urban Transportation Improvement Project” on April 24, 2012. Safeguard policies triggered by this project were “Indigenous peoples OP/BP 4.10” and Uyghurs was covered by the definition of indigenous peoples under this policy.⁴⁴

Given the fact that China is not democratic country and China’s genocidal intention is proven by its genocidal policies in East Turkistan, it is clear to Uyghurs that accepting to be classified as “indigenous peoples” and expecting to receive basic human rights or any rights guaranteed under the rights of “Indigenous Peoples in the UNDRIP is an absurd fantasy. Uyghurs also aware that being classified as “indigenous peoples” will falsify their genuine national identity and limit their legitimate right to regain their total independence from Chinese colonization. They believe China’s rejection of the term “Indigenous Peoples” and their concept of Uyghurs as an ethnic minority within Chinese territory cannot eradicate the historical fact of China’s illegal occupation of the Uyghur’s independent nation-state East Turkistan Republic and it does not make Uyghurs less indigenous to their occupied country.

(c) Establish the correct definition of Uyghurs’ identity.

The most crucial issue here is that Uyghurs themselves reject classification as “indigenous peoples”. The East Turkistan Youth Congress has launched a petition to reject the “indigenous peoples” classification which received support of over dozens East Turkistani/Uyghur organizations in the diaspora. The petition received 10,000 signatures in the global Uyghur diaspora against the defining of Uyghurs as “indigenous peoples.”⁴⁵ The East Turkistan Government in Exile also published a statement condemning the classification of Uyghurs as

“indigenous peoples” and stated that “Uyghurs should be defined correctly as an illegally occupied nation of East Turkistan.”⁴⁶ Former president of the WUC, Rebiya Kadeer, has also expressed her opposition to defining Uyghurs as “indigenous peoples”. She insisted Uyghurs should be defined as real owners of East Turkistan, but not defined as “Indigenous Peoples” as defined in UN documents by the WUC.⁴⁷ Current President of the WUC Dolkun Isa also stated that Uyghurs should not be defined as “indigenous peoples” when he visited the Uyghur community in Washington, DC, on December 25, 2021.⁴⁸ Executive director of UHRP Omar Kanat also assured Dolkun Isa’s statement during the meeting.⁴⁹ World Uyghur Congress delated UHRP’s report in 2021 from their website after pressure from the Uyghurs.

As we mentioned in previous paragraphs, even though the UHRP is an Uyghur institution, it cannot politically represent the people of East Turkistan, since it is a research-based project. Their report shouldn’t be used as self-definition of Uyghurs as “indigenous peoples”. Based on the Uyghurs’ historical ties to the land, they prefer the term “indigenous” but not to be classified as “indigenous peoples”.

Conclusion:

- China has never had or been willing to guarantee any fundamental human rights for Uyghurs protected by the constitution of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. The current situation of Uyghurs is far beyond than the matter of human rights concern, as China has openly perpetrated genocide in the region since 2017. There is mounting evidence showing millions of Uyghurs are imprisoned and tortured, and the Uyghur population was drastically decreased through mass sterilization. China has ruined the

Uyghur population's basic living and growing conditions by using forced labor and removing Uyghur children from their homes. China is continuing its genocide against the Uyghurs with a new plan: forced starvation under the guise of pandemic quarantine. All these genocidal policies are freely executed and ongoing in front of the world without external pressure, under China's "state integrity" and "internal affairs" "non-interference with each other" principles, which only designated for China's own benefit. Classifying Uyghurs as "indigenous peoples" merely serves to reinforce this "noninterference with each other" trap, as the UNDRIP guarantees only the internal rights of Indigenous Peoples within the states.

- Classifying Uyghurs as "indigenous peoples" restricts their right to restore their independence through external self-determination.
- Classifying Uyghurs as "indigenous peoples" creates opportunistic diplomacy for China, so they can refute any criticism against China's genocide and crime against humanity by comparing current Uyghur genocide to other governments historical mistreatments of their own indigenous peoples. For instance, China constantly compares Uyghur genocide to Canada's cultural genocide against "indigenous peoples" more than a century ago and uses "whataboutism" in response to Canada's criticism of the Uyghur genocide.
- Classifying Uyghurs as "indigenous peoples" rather than illegally occupied nation will allow China to portray its colonialism in East Turkistan as "internal matters" based on Xi Jinping's five principles including "non-interference with each other's internal issues."⁵⁰ This will conceal China's imperialistic character and its hegemonic plan to expand its autocratic governing style to the world as a new world order.

Notes

¹ Uyghur Human Rights Project, “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the Uyghurs of East Turkestan (also known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region or XUAR, People’s Republic of China)”, (Washington DC: Uyghur Human Rights Project, 2008)

² International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, *The Indigenous World*, ed., Caecilie Mikkelsen (New Jersey: IWGIA, 2010), 308

³ Independent People’s Court, “Uyghur Tribunal Judgment,” *Uyghur Tribunal*, December 9, 2021, <https://uyghurtribunal.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/UYGHUR-TRIBUNALJudgment-2022.09.20.pdf>

⁴ Turghun Almas, *Uyghurlar* (Munchen: World Uyghur Congress, 2010), 2; Muhemmed Imin Bughra, *History of East Turkistan*, (Ankara: Emek Ofset Ltd., 1989), 29

⁵ History 101, “Who was the Sleeping Beauty of Loulan?” *History 101*, Oct 25, 2022, accessed oct 23, 2022, <https://www.history101.com/the-beauty-of-loulan/>

⁶ China, The State Council Information Office, *Historical Matters Concerning Xinjiang*, (Beijing, Foreign Language Press Co. Ltd, 2019)

⁷ James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 20-24; Turghun Almas, *Uyghurs*, 220.

⁸ Millward, 16- 19

⁹ The History Files, “Far East Kingdoms: Central Aisa” *The History of Files*, accessed Oct November 1, 2022 <https://www.historyfiles.co.uk/KingListsFarEast/AsiaTocharians.htm>

¹⁰ Millward, 45.

¹¹ Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia*, trans. Naomi Walford (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1970),120-125.

¹² Francis Henry Skrine and Edward Denison Ross, *The Heart of Asia: A History of Russian Turkestan and Central Asian Khanates from the Earliest Times*, (London, New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004) 20; note: originally published in 1899.

¹³ Millward, 26- 4.

¹⁴ *Ibid*; 53

¹⁵ Facts and Details, “Chaghatai Khanate in Central Asia,” *Facts and Details*, last updated august 2020, https://factsanddetails.com/central-asia/Central_Asian_Topics/sub8_8b/entry4509.html#chapter-0

¹⁶ Bano, Majida. “Mughal Relations With the Kashgar Khanate.” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 63 (2002): 1116–19. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44158181>.

¹⁷ Chahryar Adle et al. *History of Civilizations of Central Asia*, Vol. VI, (Paris: UNESCO, 2005), 107.

¹⁸ Kwong, Ki Chiu, *An English and Chinese Dictionary*, (Indiana: Reprinted Publishing LLC, 2012), 67. Original Publishing: Kwong, Ki Chiu, *An English And Chinese Dictionary*, (Shanghai: Wah Cheung; San Francisco: Wing Fung, 1887), 67.

¹⁹ Eric Schluessel, *Land of Strangers: The Civilizing Project of Qing Central Asia*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2020), 11

²⁰ Linda Benson, *The Ili rebellion: The Moslem Challenge to Chinese Authority in Xinjiang, 1944-1949* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 1990): p. 49;

²¹ Central Intelligence Agency Electronic Reading Room, “The Chinese Population of Sinkiang,” May 1, 2013, CIA-RDP82-00047R000200210003-2. <https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/document/cia-rdp82-00047r000200210003-2>;

²² Chinese Academy of Science Headquarters, “5,000-year population history of Xinjiang brought to light in new ancient DNA study,” *EurekaAlert*, March 31, 2022, accessed Nov 2, 2022, <https://www.eurekaalert.org/news-releases/947799>; Mackerras, Colin. *The Uighur empire, according to the Tang dynastic histories: a study in Sino-Uighur relations 744-840*. Australian National University Press, 1972;

²³ United Nations, “Indigenous Peoples,” *Fight Racism*, accessed oct 23, 2022, <https://www.un.org/en/fight-racism/vulnerable-groups/indigenous-peoples>

²⁴ Jose R. Martinez Cobo (Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities) *Study of the Problem of Discrimination Against the Indigenous Populations* UN Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/1982/2/ Add .6.

²⁵ Uyghur Human Rights Project, “United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the Uyghurs of East Turkestan (also known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region or XUAR, People’s Republic of China)”

²⁶ Comm, on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), on Its Forty-Eight Session, U.N.Doc. A/51/18(1996), Para 4.

²⁷ *Id.*

²⁸ United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples UN Doc. A//RES/61/295 (2007) art.3

²⁹ *Id.*; art.4

³⁰ G.A. Res. 1514 (XV), Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, at 67 (Dec.14,1960), <https://www.sfu.ca/~palys/UN-Resolution%201514.pdf>

³¹ *Id.*

³² International Year of the World’s Indigenous peoples, 1993, G.A. res. 47/75, 47 U.N. GAOR Supp. (No. 49) at 32, U.N. Doc. A/47/49 (1992).

³³ S. James Anaya, A Contemporary Definition of the International Norm of Self-Determination, 3 *Transnat’l L. & Contemp. Probs.* 131 (1993), available at <http://scholar.law.colorado.edu/articles/854>

³⁴ “Chinese Police Could Prevent Millions of Minority Births in Xinjiang: Report,” France 24, August 6, 2021, accessed August 6, 2021, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210608chinese-policies-could-prevent-millions-of-minority-births-in-xinjiang-report>

³⁵ Shohret Hoshur, “22 die of starvation in one day under COVID lockdown in Xinjiang’s Ghulja,” *Radio Free Asia*, September 21, 2022, accessed Oct 27, 2022, <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/ghulja-starvation-09212022160907.html>

³⁶ Xiaoyuan Liu, “Reshaping China: American Strategic Thinking and China’s Ethnic Frontiers during World War II” in *Negotiating China’s Destiny in World War II*, ed. Hans van de Ven, Diana Lary, and Stephen R. MacKinnon, (Stanford, California: Stanford University press, 2015), 162-167.

³⁷ Montevideo Convention, art. 1. December. 26, 1933, Treaty Doc. 165 LNTS 19.

³⁸ Rukiye Turdush, *East Turkistan’s Right to Sovereignty: Decolonization and Beyond*, Forthcoming Book (Washington DC: Lexington Books, 2022), 19-25.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 35-39.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ China, The State Council Information Office, *Historical Matters Concerning Xinjiang*,

⁴² Millward, 46-47.

⁴³ Brennan Mac Donald, “China hits back at Canada, calls for UN investigation into crimes against Indigenous people,” *CBC News*, Jun 22, 2021, accessed October 23, 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/china-canada-un-calls-investigation-crimes-indigenouslyghurs-1.6075025>

⁴⁴ *China - Xinjiang Yining Urban Transport Improvement Project (English)*. (Washington, DC: World Bank Group) <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/835961468018646400/ChinaXinjiang-Yining-Urban-Transport-Improvement-Project>
https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/599651468219907060/pdf/Integrated0Saf00Sheet0_Concept0Stage.pdf

⁴⁵ Xelq Imza Herkiti, “World Uyghur Congress Does Not Represent the Collective Interest of Uyghurs,” *Xelq Imza Herkiti(website)*, January 2022, accessed 7 January 2022, <https://xelqimzaherikiti.net>

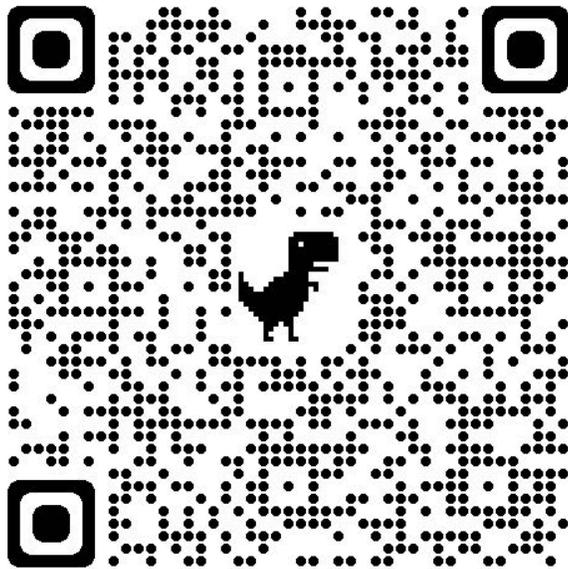
⁴⁶ East Turkistan Government in Exile, “Uyghurs Reject “Indigenous People” Designation, Citing Incompatibility with Fundamental Goal of Restoring East Turkistan’s Independence” *East Turkistan Government in Exile*, December 6, 2021, accessed October 23, 2022, <https://eastturkistan.net/uyghurs-reject-indigenous-people-designation-citing-incompatibility-with-goal-ofrestoring-east-turkistans-independence/>

⁴⁷ Rebiya Kadeer, “Respond to Rumors.” Facebook video, 15:24, October 15, 2022, <https://fb.watch/gxLod9jAfM/>

⁴⁸ Tumaris Almas, “Tumaris Almas Was Live,” Facebook video, 2:05:45-2:06:03, December 5,

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Xi Jinping, *President Xi Jinping's Speech on the 60th Anniversary of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence*, Chinese version (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2014), 1-15.



CENTER FOR EAST TURKISTAN NATIONAL INTEREST

WWW.CETNI.ORG